

RTA

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP CASE STUDY

Strategic Leadership Practices and Their Role in Enhancing Innovation and Organisational Excellence: A Case Study of Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA)



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1. Introduction

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) is a company that works in a context of fast urbanisation, technological innovation, sustainability challenges, customer expectations and the demand for a seamless mobility journey. In this context, leadership is not just about overseeing operations; it is about establishing the direction, coordinating complex stakeholders, influencing the culture, developing future capacity, and translating strategic priorities into tangible, public value. Considering the public-sector context of RTA, it is a suitable example for exploring the contribution strategic leadership practices can make in the context of innovation and organisational excellence.

Strategic leadership is about the leaders at the top of the organisation being able to anticipate, envision, stay flexible, think strategically and collaborate with others to begin the process of change that will provide a sustainable future for the organisation. Modern studies focus on the factors of senior leaders' decisions regarding structure, resources, priorities, governance and organisational climate (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021). Leadership support also plays an important role in public organisations – innovation often involves coordinating across formal rules, multiple stakeholders and accountability systems (Park, Cho, & Lee, 2021; Sazzad, Rajan, & Demircioglu, 2021).

RTA's current direction displays many of these characteristics. Its updated Strategic Plan 2024–2030 focuses on “integrated and innovative mobility” and a “future-proof organisation”, and its digital and artificial intelligence and research and innovation strategies continue in these directions, towards specific portfolios of initiatives (RTA, 2023; RTA, 2024a; RTA, 2025c; RTA, 2025e). These programs are not just technological endeavours. They also need leadership decisions on talent, governance, partnerships, experimentation, service design, service management and performance.

The case is also relevant to organisational excellence. Leadership has been shown to have a positive relationship with organisational excellence. At the same time, strategic planning is an important channel through which leadership can be manifested in performance results in the UAE public sector (Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2021). RTA's recent performance indicators (747.1 million riders on public transport, shared mobility and taxis in 2024; 96% customer satisfaction on the digital channels; and recognition of its innovation infrastructure at a global level) offer measurable results on which strategic leadership practices can be discussed (RTA, 2025a; RTA, 2025b; RTA, 2026).



Figure 1. Analytical framework for the RTA case study.

Source: Developed for this case study based on Cortes & Herrmann (2021) and Al-Dhaafri & Alosani (2021).

1.1 Company Background

The Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) is a public authority of the Government of Dubai that plans, manages and provides the road, transport and traffic needs of the Emirate. RTA was founded in 2005 and is a legal entity under Dubai law. It covers the domain of road infrastructure, public transport, rail, licensing, traffic systems and related mobility services. The current institutional vision of RTA is to be the “World Leader in Seamless and Sustainable Mobility”, and its mission is to make the journey safe, provide innovative and sustainable mobility solutions and create a world-class customer journey (RTA, 2023).

Scale is a key point to consider with RTA's ability to be strategically coordinated. The authority is responsible for or controls a multimodal system that includes metro, tram, bus, marine transportation, taxi, shared mobility, roads and digital services. In 2024, a total of 747.1 million passengers used the combined public-transport, shared-mobility and taxi system, of which 37% took the bus on the Metro, 27% taxi, 7.5% shared mobility, 2.5% marine transport and 1% the Tram (RTA, 2025a). Leadership challenges include safety, capacity, digital integration, customer experience, sustainability and cross-sector partnerships within this diverse and large system.

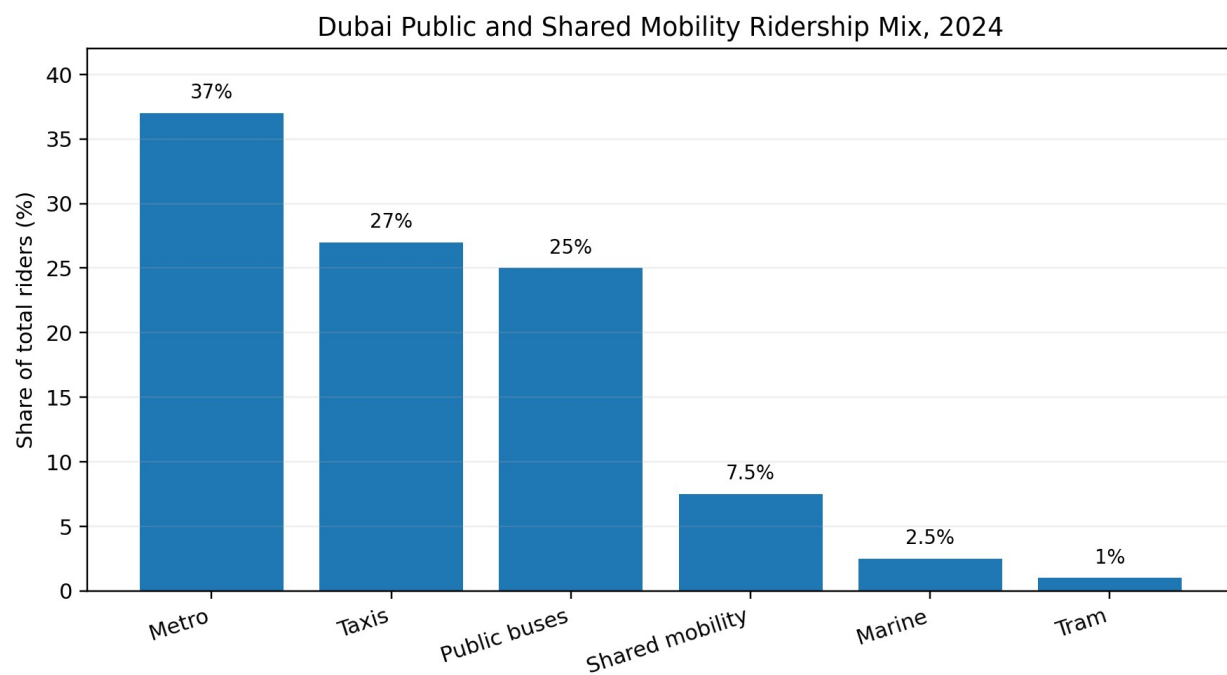


Figure 2. Dubai public and shared mobility ridership mix, 2024.

Source: RTA (2025a).

1.2 Aim and Research Questions

This project is designed to investigate the strategic leadership practices at RTA and how they relate to the capability of innovation and organisational excellence. As per the course brief, the case also addresses issues of leadership problems, leadership style, followers' expectations, and leadership dos and don'ts. The following research questions will inform the report and can be directly applied in the interview with an RTA decision maker:

Revised empirical design: the case study will use two semi-structured interviews with two RTA CEO/sector-CEO-level senior decision makers. Using the same core interview guide with both

participants allows the report to compare leadership perspectives, identify convergent and contrasting themes, and strengthen triangulation with documentary evidence.

- RQ1: What major leadership challenges does RTA face when aligning people, strategy, technology and service delivery?
- RQ2: What leadership approaches are used to implement long-term mobility, digital and innovation strategies?
- RQ3: How do senior leaders create conditions that enable innovation, experimentation and cross-sector collaboration?
- RQ4: How do leadership practices contribute to organisational excellence, including customer experience, operational effectiveness and future readiness?
- RQ5: What follower behaviours and capabilities are most important for the successful execution of RTA's strategy?
- RQ6: Based on leadership experience at RTA, what practices should leaders consistently do and what should they avoid?

2. Method

The Course Specification calls for a case analysis of an empirical leadership situation using one or more detailed interviews with a CEO or another organisational decision maker. To strengthen the empirical evidence in this case, the revised design uses two semi-structured qualitative interviews with two RTA CEO/sector-CEO-level senior decision makers. Each interview follows the same core question set and suggested probes so that the responses can be compared systematically across leadership issues, leadership style, innovation, ideal followers, organisational excellence, and leadership dos and don'ts.

The empirical component is organised around Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2. For each participant, the final submitted report must record the verified name (or agreed anonymous identifier), exact job title, interview date, location/platform, duration, access method, consent status, and whether quotations may be attributed. Because verified interview transcripts and logistics were not supplied with the source file, this revision does not invent names, quotations, dates, or answers. The profile below is ready to be completed immediately after the two genuine interviews.

2.1 Interviewee Profile and Interview Logistics

Field	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2
Verified name / ID	[Complete after genuine interview]	[Complete after genuine interview]
Exact title	[CEO / Sector CEO / verified senior decision-maker title]	[CEO / Sector CEO / verified senior decision-maker title]
Interview date	[Date]	[Date]
Location / platform	[Location / platform]	[Location / platform]
Duration	[Minutes]	[Minutes]
Access method	[How access was gained]	[How access was gained]
Consent / quotation status	[Consent and attribution status]	[Consent and attribution status]

The analysis uses a common coding framework for both interviews. Responses from Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2 are coded under five areas: leadership issues, leadership style, ideal followers, leadership dos and don'ts, and the relationship between strategic leadership, innovation and organisational excellence. A cross-interview comparison is then used to identify points of agreement, differences in perspective, and experience-based examples. Documentary evidence from RTA sources and peer-reviewed literature is used to triangulate, support or challenge the interview evidence rather than replace it.

2.2 Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

Both interviews should use the guide in Appendix A. Main questions are asked consistently to both participants, while the probes are follow-up prompts used only when clarification, an example, or greater depth is needed. After transcription or detailed note-taking, the two responses should be compared theme by theme. At least two authentic quotations from each participant should be retained where consent permits, especially for leadership style, leadership challenges, follower expectations and practical leadership lessons.

Evidence Source	Purpose in the Case	How It Should Be Used With Two Interviews
RTA Strategic Plan (2024)–2030	Strategic direction, future-proof organisation, integrated mobility	Compare both interviewees' statements with stated strategic priorities.
RTA Digital Strategy / AI Strategy 2030	Technology portfolio, governance and future capability	Validate how both leaders prioritise, resource and govern digital initiatives; note similarities and differences.
RTA Sustainability Report 2024	Innovation culture, customer happiness and sustainability indicators	Link both leadership narratives to measurable organisational outcomes.
RTA official performance releases	Ridership, digital revenue, customer satisfaction and operational outcomes	Use as objective evidence supporting or challenging claims made by Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2.
Peer-reviewed leadership literature	Theoretical interpretation of leadership style and innovation/excellence	Interpret both interviewees' findings without forcing them into theoretical labels.

Table 1. Evidence framework used in the case study.

3. Findings

The final Findings section should combine three evidence streams: documentary evidence, Interviewee 1, and Interviewee 2. For each theme, report where the two senior leaders agree, where their perspectives differ, and which examples or quotations best explain the leadership practice in context. The documentary analysis below provides the evidence base; verified interview evidence should be inserted in the marked integration points after the two interviews.

3.1 Leadership Issues

The first leadership challenge is strategic alignment in a big and technologically complex mobility system. The direction of development and RTA's strategic direction need to be aligned with the development priorities of Dubai, the sector strategies, agency plans, project portfolios and day-to-day service delivery. The Strategic Plan 2024–2030 is clearly connected to the wider development plans for Dubai and the UAE, and RTA's digital, AI and R&D plans are specific portfolios that reflect this direction. It presents a classic strategic-leadership dilemma: maintaining a unified direction of the enterprise while giving the specialist units sufficient autonomy to be innovative. Thus, strategic planning serves as an integrating mechanism between senior leadership and organisational performance, as is evidenced in the public sector in Dubai (Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2021).

The second is between the speed of innovation and public-sector accountability. RTA is engaging in cutting-edge areas like robotics, Artificial Intelligence, autonomous mobility and data analytics. It has 24 initiatives

under its Digital Strategy across seven technology areas and 81 projects and initiatives under its AI Strategy 2030, which is based on six strategic pillars: RTA, 2024a; RTA, 2025c. Leaders need to have the capacity to allow for experimentation without compromising governance, safety, cyber security, procurement discipline or public accountability in such portfolios. This balance is reflected in RTA's R&D and Innovation Strategy 2030, which focuses on strengthening both governance processes and strategic alignment, whilst ensuring responsible allocation of research and innovation resources and oversight, and helping to increase the level of research and innovation maturity (RTA, 2025e).

Organisational culture and organisational innovation behaviour are the third problem. Innovation is not just about new technology; it is about making it safe for people to break routines, cross boundaries, learn from failure and push ideas forward. The principles of innovation focus on RTA's, the real, relevant problem of the customer or the mobility problem, collaboration openly with partners, and lessons learned from successes and failures are documented. The required innovation resources are made available, and innovation is treated as a team activity (RTA, 2024b). These findings align with those found in public sector studies, which reveal that leader commitment and support to innovative action and organisational learning are key to the development of a sustained culture of innovation (Park et al., 2021).

The fourth is related to talent and future ability. The technology strategy generates demand for AI, Data, Autonomous systems, and Innovation-management skills. RTA's strategic agenda thus also ties readiness for the future with attracting, developing and retaining talent. It is a challenge to recruit the right people, but also to get the specialists to work as part of multidisciplinary teams, and to make sure that managers are not motivated by short-term results and discouraged by experimentation and long-term learning. Research on strategic leadership also highlights the relevance of resource allocation, organisational structure and the decisions made by the top management teams in influencing the innovation process (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

Last but not least, there are challenges with stakeholder complexity as a leadership issue. The results of RTA rely on the linkages with Dubai Government entities, technology suppliers, transportation operators, universities, start-ups, customers and infrastructure partners. Partnerships with academia, the private sector and start-ups are clearly mentioned in the R&D and Innovation Strategy 2030. Effectiveness of leadership implies boundary spanning behaviour—trust building, goal setting, managing interdependency and ensuring clarity of public value—with external partners.

Two-interview integration – Leadership issues: compare the most difficult leadership challenges identified by Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2. Add at least one verified example from each participant showing the challenge, the leadership response, and the lesson learned. Note explicitly whether the two leaders prioritise the same issues or different ones.

Leadership Issue	Documentary Evidence at RTA	Leadership Implication
Strategic alignment	Enterprise plan plus digital, AI, R&D and sector strategies	Maintain common priorities while coordinating specialised portfolios
Innovation vs. accountability	Advanced technology experimentation under governance and safety requirements	Create controlled experimentation, clear decision rights and risk boundaries
Culture and learning	Innovation principles emphasise problem solving, collaboration and learning from failure.	Model learning behaviour and protect constructive experimentation
Talent and capability	Future-proof organisation, AI/data/autonomous mobility priorities	Invest in specialist capability and cross-functional development

Stakeholder complexity	Partnerships with government, academia, the private sector and start-ups	Use collaborative leadership and shared governance mechanisms
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Table 2. Major leadership issues identified from documentary evidence.

3.2 Leadership Style

The paper on the strategic and transformational type of orientation is more coherent than one of the pure strategic or transformational leadership. RTA's long-term planning, the concept of a portfolio, its Dubai-level priorities and its future-readiness agenda and focus on its organisational capabilities demonstrate strategic leadership. The repeated emphasis on an ambitious future vision, technology-driven change, culture of innovation and capability development of employees are transformational indicators. The UAE public sector has also observed positive relationships between transformational leadership and institutional excellence (Karam & Kitana, 2020), while more recent qualitative evidence from UAE government and semi-government leaders does point to innovation-driven and transformational leaders being significant in regard to public-sector innovation (Al-Maazmi & Hashmi, 2024).

However, there are also powerful situational and transactional aspects. Public transport is safety-critical and very operational — leaders cannot only rely on inspiration & empowerment. The key elements of performance standards, operational controls, punctuality, compliance, risk management and formal accountability are all important. The leadership approach thus seems to be dependent on the task: more exploratory and collaborative for innovative and future-mobility tasks, more structured and performance-oriented for safety, reliability and regulated operations. This mixture aligns with Northouse (2021), who claims that leadership effectiveness relies on the relationship between the leader's behaviour and the needs of the followers and situational requirements.

RTA also incorporates other participative and boundary-spanning elements in its workshops, co-creations, partnerships, innovation accelerators and interactions with technology companies, universities, and start-ups. These mechanisms share know-how and enhance the quality and level of difficult choices. The course brief, however, does appropriately caution an interviewee that they cannot use theoretical terms like 'transformational' or 'situational'. The group should, in the actual interview, then ask questions related to behaviour—for instance, how decisions are made, how employees are motivated, how leaders react to failure, and when they centralise or delegate decisions—and then interpret the responses based on leadership theory.

Two-interview integration – Leadership style: use behaviour-based evidence from both interviews rather than asking the participants to label themselves with leadership theories. Compare how each leader describes vision, delegation, participation, monitoring, empowerment and centralisation. Include at least two authentic quotations from each participant where consent permits, then interpret the responses using strategic, transformational, transactional and situational leadership concepts.

Observed Practice	Leadership Interpretation	Evidence Status
Long-term mobility and digital direction	Strategic leadership	Strong documentary evidence
Ambitious future vision and change orientation	Transformational tendencies	Strong documentary evidence
Strict standards for safety, reliability and performance	Transactional / task-oriented elements	Strong contextual evidence

Different approaches for innovation vs operations	Situational/contingency orientation	Reasoned interpretation; interview validation needed
Co-creation and partnerships	Participative / boundary-spanning behavior	Strong documentary evidence

Table 3. Leadership-style indicators in the RTA case.

3.3 Ideal Followers

RTA's approach suggests that the best followers are not the recipients of instructions. The company requires people with the capability to execute with discipline and learn, work collaboratively and think forward. Operational followers are expected to be reliable, safety-conscious, responsible and responsive. They should also be curious, digitally literate, experimenters, and willing to collaborate across organisations in innovation-rich environments. This combination is a reflection of the normal circumstances of a PTA that needs to be innovative, but also continue service.

Based on the evidence, five follower attributes emerge: First, Strategic alignment: Staff need to be aware of how their role helps to facilitate smooth and sustainable mobility. Second, accountability: outcomes should be the responsibility of individuals, and risks should be raised early. Third, knowledge agility – the ability of the staff to adapt to the changes of AI, data and autonomous systems. The fourth element is collaborative behaviour: when creating multidisciplinary projects, the employee needs to share knowledge with colleagues from other agencies, sectors and external partners. Fifth, customer and public-value orientation – innovation should address meaningful mobility challenges and enhance the mobility user experience instead of technology for technology's sake.

Two-interview integration – Ideal followers: report how Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2 describe high-performing followers. Compare their expectations regarding initiative, accountability, learning agility, collaboration, communication and customer/public-value orientation, and identify the follower behaviours that each leader believes make execution more difficult.

Ideal Follower Attribute	Why It Matters at RTA	Example Behavior
Strategic alignment	Connects daily decisions to enterprise mobility goals	Uses strategic priorities when choosing between competing tasks
Accountability	Supports safety, service reliability and public trust	Escalates issues early and takes ownership of corrective action
Learning agility	Keeps pace with AI, data and future mobility technologies	Seeks training, tests new tools and shares lessons learned
Collaboration	Enables cross-functional and external innovation	Works effectively with technology, operations and partner teams
Customer/public-value orientation	Keeps innovation focused on real user needs	Uses feedback and service data to improve journeys

Table 4. Follower behaviours aligned with RTA's strategic context.

3.4 Dos and Don'ts in Leadership

The evidence provided in the document confirms a set of practical guidance in terms of what to do and what not to do, which should be validated directly with the interviewee. Leaders need to ensure that their long-

term vision and their decisions about how to work are aligned; ensure that governance is in place that allows for experimentation without fear; invest in future capabilities; incorporate data and evidence from customers into decision-making; work across institutional boundaries; communicate their expectations clearly; and accept that innovation is about learning and not just about their outcomes. These practices promote innovation and excellence as they link exploration with disciplined execution.

However, leaders should never view innovation as a technology-buy exercise, leaving innovation as disconnected vectors and projects or banning all failed innovations as if they were preventable mistakes. These centralising decisions need specialist knowledge or only consider short-term performance metrics. In addition, research on public-sector innovation has raised concerns that performance measures that prioritise short-term performance over sustainable innovation can lead to negative outcomes over time (Park et al, 2021). The consequence is that RTA leaders must have differentiated performance logic, with zero tolerance for avoidable safety and compliance failures, but intelligent tolerance for well-governed experimentation in uncertain innovation settings.

Two-interview integration – Dos and don'ts: obtain three practical leadership “dos” and three “don'ts” from each participant. For each item, request a real experience or lesson learned without asking for confidential information. The final report should distinguish shared advice from participant-specific advice and connect both to the documentary evidence and leadership literature.

Do	Do Not
Translate vision into clear priorities and decision rules	Rely on slogans without linking them to resource allocation
Create safe, governed spaces for experimentation.	Treat every unsuccessful experiment as misconduct or incompetence.
Develop talent for AI, data, sustainability and future mobility	Assume technology alone creates innovation capability
Use customer evidence, operational data and feedback loops	Make strategic decisions without testing assumptions
Collaborate across agencies, academia, industry and start-ups	Allow partnerships to operate without clear accountability
Balance empowerment with safety and performance discipline	Use the same leadership behaviour for every task and context

Table 5. Evidence-informed leadership dos and don'ts for interview validation.

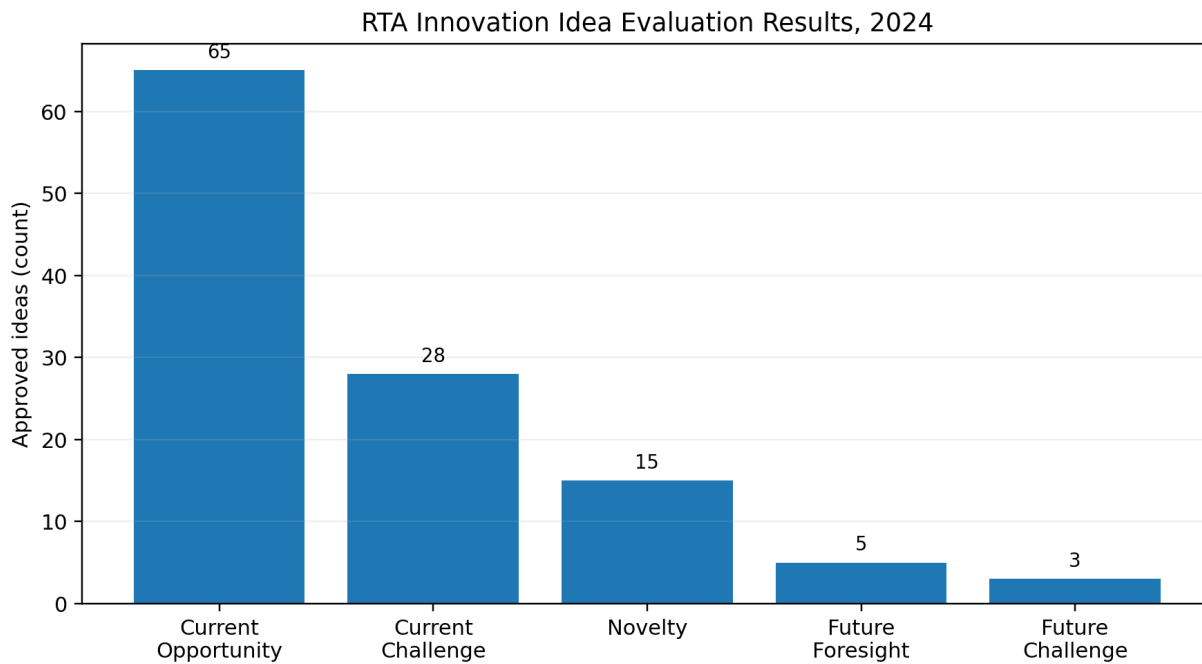


Figure 3. RTA innovation idea evaluation results reported for 2024.

Source: RTA Sustainability Report 2024 (RTA, 2025d).

4. Discussion: Strategic Leadership, Innovation and Organisational Excellence

The RTA experience indicates a positive correlation between strategic leadership and the capability of innovation and organisational excellence. The development of strategic leadership gives direction and creates the organisational structure in which innovation happens. This architecture can be found at RTA, such as enterprise strategy, digital and AI-driven portfolios, innovation governance, talent priorities, partnership mechanisms, and performance systems that are customer-oriented. As Cortes and Herrmann (2021) explain, senior leadership can drive innovation directly in their decisions, but also indirectly in the mechanisms and structures which impact the identification, selection, and resource allocation for ideas, and their implementation.

Innovation, in turn, seems to have a positive impact on organisational excellence when it enhances the quality of services, operational efficiency, accessibility, sustainability and customer experience. As a concrete example, RTA's digital performance in 2024 was recorded at AED 4.427 billion in digital revenue, 679.6 million transactions through digital channels, growth in app usage, and a digital channels' customer satisfaction level of 96% (RTA, 2025b). These results are not intended to show that leadership was the sole determinant for performance; other factors such as infrastructure investments, employee expertise, vendors, regulation and customer adoption play a role. They do, however, align with a leadership system which has embedded digital transformation as a strategic priority and sustained it through governance, investment and integration.

Likewise, the innovation portfolio of RTA is not just about projects but a setup for institutionalisation. There are 116 ideas that have been evaluated/approved in the Sustainability Report 2024, 137 registrations, and 58 proof-of-concept trials conducted in 2024 (RTA, 2025d; RTA, 2025e) in the R&D and Innovation Strategy 2030. The signs of the innovation as a repeatable organisational capability are evident in these indicators.

Further evidence of that capability has been recognised by the outside world, with RTA receiving the award at the World's Best Innovation Hub in 2025 at the GIMI Innovation Awards (RTA, 2026).

Operational results are also a part of organisational excellence. In 2024, public transport, shared mobility, and taxis transported 747.1 million passengers, while the Dubai Metro transported 275.4 million passengers. In addition, RTA reported a 99.7% Metro Punctuality Rate in the context of the Blue Line Milestone, indicating that innovation for the future can coexist with high expectations for the reliability of the current system (RTA, 2025a; RTA, 2025f). It is one of the key dilemmas of strategic leadership, and it's the dual requirement to explore the future and exploit and improve the present.

The case therefore provides three propositions to be examined across the two interviews. First, strategic clarity is expected to be strongest when translated into portfolio-level priorities, governance and resource choices rather than remaining only a vision statement. Second, innovation culture is expected to depend not only on technology budgets but also on leadership behaviour toward experimentation, cross-functional cooperation and learning. Third, organisational excellence is expected to reflect the combined effect of innovation, disciplined performance, safety, accountability and customer focus. Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2 should be compared against these propositions, and any differences between their perspectives should be discussed rather than forced into a single conclusion.

Cross-interview discussion requirement: the final discussion should explicitly identify (1) themes supported by both leaders, (2) themes where their perspectives differ, (3) examples that reinforce or challenge the documentary evidence, and (4) how the combined evidence relates to the leadership literature. This comparison is the main added value of using two senior decision makers rather than relying on one perspective.

Indicator	Reported Result	Relevance to Excellence
Public/shared mobility + taxi riders, 2024	747.1 million; +6.4% vs. 2023	Scale, adoption and mobility-system effectiveness
Digital revenues, 2024	AED 4.427 billion; +16%	Digital adoption and service-channel maturity
Digital customer satisfaction, 2024	96%	Customer experience and service quality
AI Strategy 2030	81 projects/initiatives across 6 pillars	Future readiness and technology-enabled transformation
R&D/innovation activity	58 proof-of-concept trials in 2024; 137 IP registrations	Institutionalised innovation capability
Innovation Hub recognition	Ranked first in the GIMI "Best Innovation Hub" category	External recognition of the innovation ecosystem

Table 6. Selected RTA indicators relevant to innovation and organisational excellence.

5. Conclusion

The case study explored how strategic leadership practices can contribute to innovation and organisational excellence in Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority. RTA's leadership system has been found to be long-term strategic, future-oriented, with technology portfolios, innovation governance, capability development, external partnerships, customer focus and high operational accountability. The demands of transport operations for safety and performance are also situation and transactional in nature, as are the practices of strategic and transformational leadership.

The analysis focuses on the following challenges in leadership: coordinating a multi-modal complex system, balancing experimentation with public accountability, maintaining an innovation culture, developing future skills and managing a broad stakeholder network. RTA's answer seems to be an organisational structure where strategy, digital transformation, AI, R&D, sustainability and customer experience are linked with clear plans and achievable results. There are indications of ridership, digital performance, innovation activity and external recognition that give a good basis for organisational excellence, but there is no causal attribution that can be found from documentary evidence.

The empirical requirement is structured around two genuine interviews with two RTA CEO/sector-CEO-level senior decision makers. Once the verified interview details, examples and quotations are inserted, the conclusion should compare both leaders' perspectives with the documentary and academic evidence, highlighting areas of convergence and divergence. The report should only state that the two interviews were completed after the interviews have actually taken place and their details have been verified; no interview data should be fabricated.

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Roads and Transport Authority. (2026, February 6). Winning the World's Best Innovation Hub Award.[\[Source\]](#)

Appendix A. Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Use the following core questions with both RTA CEO/sector-CEO-level decision makers. Ask the same main questions to both participants to support comparison, then use the suggested probes only as follow-up prompts when more detail, clarification or a concrete example is needed. Record each participant's exact title, interview date, location/platform, duration, access method, consent and quotation-attribution preference. Ask follow-up questions for examples rather than accepting general statements.

Theme	Main Question	Suggested Probe (use as needed with both interviewees)
A. Leadership issues	What are the most difficult leadership challenges RTA currently faces in delivering its strategy?	Probe: communication, accountability, hiring/retention, strategic alignment, culture, execution, safety, and technology change.
A. Leadership issues	How do you keep different agencies, sectors and partner organisations aligned with RTA's strategic priorities?	Probe: governance forums, KPIs, decision rights, escalation and communication.
A. Leadership issues	Can you describe a recent strategic initiative where implementation was more difficult than expected?	Probe: what happened, leadership response, lessons learned.
B. Leadership style	How would you describe the way you lead when the organisation is facing major change?	Probe: vision, participation, delegation, incentives, monitoring.
B. Leadership style	Does your leadership approach change between innovation projects and safety-critical operations?	Probe: When do you empower, when do you centralise, and why?
B. Leadership style	How do you motivate employees to support long-term transformation while maintaining current service performance?	Probe: recognition, development, purpose, targets.
C. Innovation	What conditions have been most important in building RTA's innovation capability?	Probe: culture, governance, funding, partnerships, experimentation, data.
C. Innovation	How does RTA decide which innovative ideas should move from concept to pilot and then to scale?	Probe: criteria, sponsorship, risk and evidence.
D. Ideal followers	What behaviours distinguish employees who perform exceptionally well under your leadership?	Probe: initiative, accountability, collaboration, learning, customer focus.
D. Ideal followers	What follower behaviour makes leadership and execution more difficult?	Probe: resistance, silos, lack of ownership, poor communication.
E. Excellence	Which indicators best tell you that leadership is producing organisational excellence?	Probe: customer happiness, safety, reliability, efficiency, innovation maturity, employee capability.
F. Dos/Don'ts	Based on your experience, what are the three most important things leaders should always do?	Ask for a real example for each.
F. Dos/Don'ts	What leadership mistakes should managers in large public organisations avoid?	Ask for a lesson learned without requesting confidential details.
Closing	If you could give one piece of advice to a future public-sector leader,	Use this as a potential concluding

	what would it be?	quotation and compare the advice given by Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2.
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Appendix A1. Two-Interview Comparison Sheet

Complete this comparison only with verified evidence from the two genuine interviews. It is designed to support the written analysis, oral presentation and discussion by making similarities and differences between the two senior leaders easy to identify.

Theme	Interviewee 1 – verified evidence	Interviewee 2 – verified evidence	Cross-interview interpretation
Leadership challenges	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Agreement, difference, and link to documentary/literature evidence]
Leadership style / decision behaviour	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Agreement, difference, and link to documentary/literature evidence]
Innovation and experimentation	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Agreement, difference, and link to documentary/literature evidence]
Ideal follower behaviours	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Agreement, difference, and link to documentary/literature evidence]
Organisational excellence indicators	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Agreement, difference, and link to documentary/literature evidence]
Leadership dos and don'ts	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Verified response / example / quotation]	[Agreement, difference, and link to documentary/literature evidence]

Appendix B. Evidence Matrix

Case Requirement	Evidence in the Revised Two-Interview Design	Evidence Required from Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2
Leadership problems	Alignment, governance, culture, talent and stakeholder complexity identified from RTA sources	Direct recent examples from both participants, including how each leader responded; compare shared and differing challenges.
Leadership style	Strategic/transformational indicators with situational and transactional elements	Behaviour-based answers from both participants and at least 2 authentic quotations from each, where consent permits.
Ideal followers	Strategic alignment, accountability, learning agility, collaboration, customer orientation	Each participant's own description of expected follower behaviours and behaviours that make execution difficult.

Dos and don'ts	Evidence-informed list based on public-sector innovation literature and RTA context	Experience-based dos/don'ts from both participants, with real examples or lessons learned where possible.
Method	Document review completed; common two-interview protocol prepared.	For both interviews: verified name/identifier, exact title, number contacted, access method, date/platform, duration, consent and quotation status.
Conclusion	Documentary synthesis of strategic leadership → innovation → excellence	Revise conclusions to compare literature and documentary evidence explicitly with findings from both interviews, including convergence and divergence.