

Anna Johnston
Randall S Peterson

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Commercial International Bank: Leading transformation in turbulent times

Without data, you're just another person with an opinion.

— W Edwards Deming

On 25 January 2011 cries of “Irhal!” (Leave!) swept across Tahrir (“Liberation”) Square. Over 18 days, the usually buzzing plaza at the heart of Cairo became the cradle of the Egyptian revolution. Across the country, from Alexandria to Suez, pro-democracy campaigners chanted in harmony. For millions, there was no turning back. It was time for historic change.

It is now well known that young, tech-savvy revolutionaries wanting to speak out against police brutality triggered the uprising. When the Arab Spring erupted, the young and hopeful’s movement caught a wave. Among those who rallied in Cairo were transport workers, ambulance drivers and bank employees.

The Central Bank of Egypt ordered banks across the country to close following a strike by employees of the National Bank. They called for better working conditions and higher wages but had one dominant request: an end to an era of fierce repression under President Hosni Mubarak’s regime.

Demonstrations took place day and night – long past the curfew. Protesters erected tents, brought clothes and blankets and unfurled carefully scripted banners calling for profound change.

Riots led to chaos. On the ground, people were blinded by the acrid burn of tear gas. They ran from hurling rocks. The low rumble of military tanks vibrated on the streets. To those caught up in the fray, sensory onslaught was nothing compared to the authoritarian onslaught they had endured for 30 years.

Anna Johnston is a Research Associate of London Business School. Dr Randall S Peterson is Professor of Organisational Behaviour and Academic Director of the Leadership Institute. This case was written under the auspices of the Leadership Institute at the London Business School.

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