

The importance of living a balanced life #1



Sajid Shaikh, VP of Engineering at SIOS Technology Corp.

Sajid Shaikh, VP of Engineering at SIOS Technology Corp. We asked Sajid, who says he loves both work and family, about maintaining a good work-life balance.

Encounters with computer science

- Please tell us about Sajid's history.

Sajid: I grew up in Mumbai (formerly known as Bombay), India, in a family of four with my parents and older brother. Mumbai is a populous metropolis with a bustling city center, but my family lived in a relatively peaceful suburb. In the summer of 2023, I visited Japan for the first time and found many similarities with my birthplace, such as the hot and humid climate and the traffic in Tokyo, where the SIOS headquarters is located. What is different is that all the city blocks in Tokyo are well-maintained and clean.

My father was a senior scientific officer at a nuclear research institute, and my mother was a teacher and later principal of a girls' high school. My parents, especially my mother, have taught me how important education is. The teachings have been passed on to my children. I became interested in computer science because of my older brother who was studying computer science in university. Shortly after I entered high school, he showed me a textbook he was using in class, and I tried some exercises on algorithms. I was able to solve them so well that I thought I might be suited to programming. Later, I also studied computer science in university and earned a bachelor's degree.

- You oversee a team of engineers at STC. What sparked your interest in management and leadership?

Sajid: After graduating from university, I worked for a subsidiary of a major British telecommunications group, then eventually moved to a software product development company in the United States. One day, I was asked to go on a business trip at short notice to attend week-long meetings on behalf of my department manager. During that business trip, I gave a presentation on new, innovative ideas about our product that solved some key problems for our customers, summarized the plan with the meeting participants, then returned and led the team to successfully complete the project to implement the new features in the product. I found this entire experience rewarding, and I began to hone my management and leadership skills, to build teams to take on more challenging tasks. I then worked as a senior leader and manager in Engineering for several years before joining STC in 2019.

Living a balanced life

- What do you keep in mind in maintaining work-life balance?

Sajid: I love my work and my family. I believe that parenting is the most important and challenging opportunity to take on leadership in life and is a valuable experience that comes first. In my case, two things happened all together, I started my journey as a manager and my first child was born at almost the same time. I remember the first time was very difficult. It is impossible to maintain a balance between work and family when you are spending the same amount of time as you did when you were living alone as a married couple.

Influenced by books, I have developed a habit of thinking on weekends about "what are the really important priorities in life". The point is to get a bird's eye view of yourself. For example, when you look back on your life, what do you want to be proud of? Was it working late at the office, or spending more time with your family and raising your children? We all die at some point. What kind of person do you want to be remembered as when you die? "He was a hard worker." "He was a loving father." "He was a good husband."--. To keep your priorities in life, think about what is important to your family as well as to society, then look back on the week, decide what you need to do the next week, and write it on your calendar. When you work backwards from your goal and get clear on the priorities and what needs to be done, it is easier to find the keystone of where you need to strike a balance.

I am rather introverted. That is also why I rarely touch social networking sites. I use that time to do things that are higher on my priority list. I have come to realize that my introverted nature has been good for maintaining a balance between work and family.

[\(continued in #2\)](#)