

The importance of living a balanced #2 (Click [here](#) for #1)



Sajid Shaikh, VP of Engineering at SIOS Technology Corp.

Sajid Shaikh VP of Engineering at SIOS Technology Corp. We asked him what he tries to do every day as a father and husband raising four children and as a graduate student studying while balancing work and family.

To strengthen family ties

- What do you keep in mind when raising your children?

Sajid: I believe there are two core needs in life. One is a sense of belonging, of having a place where you feel safe. The other is to have someone recognize your value and significance. When children squirm or rebel, at least one of the two is usually lacking.

Of course, one's value and significance change with age and experience, and my 17-year-old son now voluntarily mows the grass and shovels the snow around the house without me having to say a word. I am sure that he feels his role and sense of fulfillment by being entrusted by those around him.

During the week, it is difficult to get everyone together at the dinner table because each family member has their own schedule, but every Friday night we all get together as a family. This is an opportunity for us to review the week's events and share our plans for the following week. We observe at least one positive thing about each other. These rules within our family have been worked out through trial and error. There is no one answer to parenting. The days of learning are likely to continue.

Facing the midlife crisis

- You entered graduate school at the age of 43 while balancing work and family.

Sajid: Yes, I am currently studying for my master's degree in data science at the University of Illinois. I decided to go to graduate school because I am now at the halfway point in my professional life, and I am beginning to think about where I want to be in 5 or 10 years and what will I accomplish in the second half of my career. It is true that we live in an age in which we can easily obtain a wide range of knowledge via the Internet at any time. However, I thought that it would be useful for me to build a foundation for my life by concentrating my knowledge systematically at a specialized educational institution with deadlines for obtaining a master's degree. However, I could not put all my time into academics, so I enrolled at the University of Illinois, which offers a four-year program that can be taken online, in order to balance work and education. Fortunately, my family is very supportive. I study at night after the children go to bed and on weekends. The new insights and discoveries I gain through my studies are very exciting. The learning and experience gained through study and research is also used to develop management and leadership talents at STC.

What is needed to evolve

- What do you keep in mind when you take on a challenge?

Sajid: Do not suddenly head out with a high goal. Imagine the bench press. It is dangerous for an inexperienced person to try to lift 200 kg out of the blue. The initial goal is to start with a reasonable weight, then increase the weight gradually as your body adapts and you gain muscle strength.

It is not easy for an organization to suddenly set extremely lofty goals and achieve them all. It is important to think big, but to start with small experiments, learn from those and progressively execute, inspecting and adapting periodically to stay in touch with reality. These are the principles of Lean and Agile that can be applied successfully to so many endeavors in life.

We also value one-on-one dialogue and discussion with individual members because one-on-one dialogue allows people to express things in a way that is comfortable and free from misunderstanding. Even if there is a misunderstanding, it can be explained more clearly. Knowing each other's thoughts and experiences helps foster trust. In a good trusting relationship, work can be processed faster, conversations can be livelier, and various hurdles can be overcome by everyone.

I am looking forward to the challenge of continuing to help STC and SIOS evolve even further.