

A week in the life of: Arif Saiyad, founder and CEO of ASA Ventures and Callix

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Saiyad mixes business meetings during the week with family escapes at the weekend

Arif Saiyad

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Sunday

Getting up and out of bed in the morning has always been easy for me. I get up at 6:00am and find myself in front of a screen with a coffee in my hand to review my personalised dashboard. Not only does the dashboard help me identify potential companies or start-ups that I would like to meet but also helps me keep a track of all the companies under the ASA umbrella. After shooting out a quick email with instructions to my team, I sit down for a typical English breakfast with my family before I leave for my office in Dubai Silicon Oasis.

Monday

At ASA Ventures we are consistently trying to empower aspiring entrepreneurs towards achieving their business goals. Today I dedicate a significant amount of time to researching different technologies and ideas that are floating in the market and are very likely to be successful. I lend an ear to ambitious entrepreneurs, understand their goals and devise a strategic plan that will enable them to realise their goals. During the second half of the day I

head out with a few team members to attend an industry event that is going on in the city. I believe it is important for us to be meeting new people and keeping up with current discussions.

Tuesday

Mid-week entails a lot of back-to-back meetings, and from 10am to 12pm I meet with investors to update them on the progress and developments that have occurred since our last catch up. It is important to keep them updated as they empower ASA Ventures. I am fortunate to have a strong support system from my associates that allows me to extend my assistance to start-ups. I try to reserve my evenings for my family and I strive to teach my children something new every day. I always package the lesson in a creative and fun way so that they can comprehend at their young age.

Wednesday

We have recently launched Callix, a new tool that bridges the gap between businesses and their customers, in an efficient and cost-effective manner. We are in the process of enhancing this service and today have our weekly meeting to analyse our progress and strategise the way forward. We will be launching the app soon on the Android and iOS platforms, which means we are busy developing the app with our technical team. The app enables users to access their dashboard on their smartphones.

Thursday

From the six to eight meetings I have scheduled today, more than half I would call 'catch-up' meetings with my department heads. We discuss the sales division, partnerships and projects in the pipeline along with our expansion plans. My team is continuously brainstorming to identify potential opportunities and map out new markets to expand our business. I also make time to catch up on discussions from around the world. I have varied interests but watching and engaging in debates for me is truly intriguing.

Friday

Most families plan their weekend days in advance, but we don't. Every Friday we are out and about in the town and I like to have the element of surprise on my side. My family never knows where I will be taking them; it could either be a new attraction in Dubai or a quiet escape to Ras Al Khaimah. We strictly also follow a 'no screen' rule, which helps us engage in quality conversations and bond with each other.

Saturday

The first half of the day I play catch up, whether it is with my team or business associates. These are casual meet ups to take stock of what is happening and what we need to focus on in the coming week. In the late afternoon, I spend time with friends that I may have overlooked and end the weekend on a positive note. This gives me the opportunity to look forward to the week ahead.