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'Failure is a pivotal stage in the path to success'

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Arif Saiyad, the CEO of ASA Ventures, tells us about the importance of perseverance, work-life balance... and what he has in common with Tony Stark!

How do you typically start your workday?

I always check Pulse, ASA's integrated smart software. This tool gives me a complete overview of all my companies' activities so that I can monitor their performance. If you recall, in Marvel's Ironman, Tony Stark has an AI assistant named J.A.R.V.I.S, who aids him in the functioning of his overall business and a major portion of his personal life, especially his product conception. Pulse provides me with J.A.R.V.I.S.-like assistance by providing optimum visibility into the performance of companies.

Describe your work in a sentence.

I provide entrepreneurs with a platform to launch their own ventures. Of course, there is more to it than that, but I am just trying to follow the instructions here!

What is your favourite thing about your job?

Getting to experience and witness a new and innovative tool before everyone else. There's nothing more exciting than getting that exclusive feel of a nascent idea, product, or service before it hits the market and eventually becomes a trend. Who doesn't like exclusivity?

What has been your most challenging experience to date and how did you resolve it?

Honestly, the biggest challenge so far is to outdo what ASA has done in the last couple of years. But I am very confident that the team I have is unstoppable and always ready to reach new realms.

What advice would you give your younger self, if you could?

"Just keep swimming," as Dory in Finding Nemo would say. In life, we have to accept that we will experience many setbacks before reaching that moment of glory. Failure should not be seen as the opposite of success. It should rather be seen as a pivotal stage in the path to success. Perseverance is what will take you to the other side, because when things don't work out, we get inventive and innovative. So make use of that and don't be afraid to embrace the change. Opportunities only come when you are receptive to stimuli, i.e. change!

How do you maintain a work-life balance?

In today's world, it is not easy to maintain a work-life balance, especially when you are working independently. The responsibilities are more. Yet, as a rule of thumb, I always try to keep my Fridays free. It's a general rule that even extends to my team. I don't like a team that's all work and no play.

Any advice for youngsters getting into the professional arena?

Don't be afraid of failure. Fear of failure is what cripples most people, even those with the best ideas and skills. You're not getting anywhere if you limit yourself just because you're afraid of doing something wrong. Making small steps is better than doing nothing at all.

A fictional character you think would make for a good role model - and why?

I think a mixture of Tony Stark and John Oldman from The Man from Earth. Tony Stark is brilliant and is always testing out something new, being a scientist and engineer. If you mix those smarts and spunk with John Oldman's humility, broad perspective of life and mysterious workings, you've got the complete package!

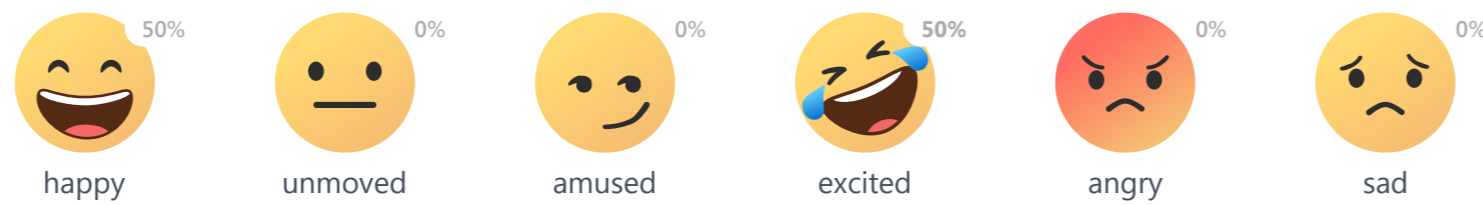
What is your greatest dream, professionally?

I dream of a stronger start-up culture and ecosystem in Dubai. I believe that this city has great potential for becoming a new start-up and innovation hub. There is a lot of talent in the region. I want to be here for them and empower them to achieve.

- Staff reporter

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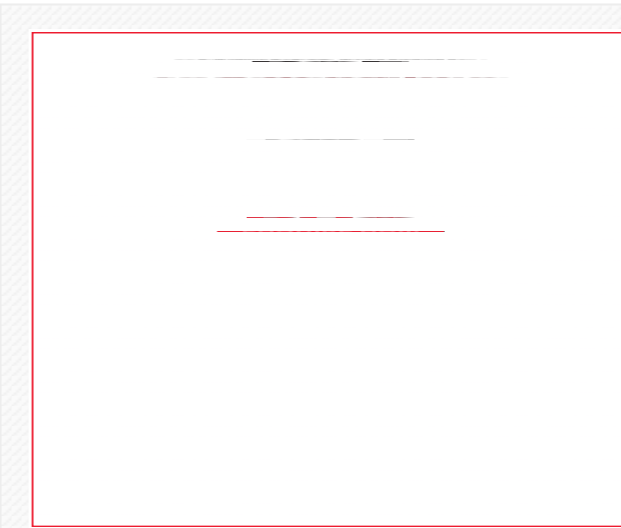
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