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Day in the Life: Varsha Gupta

Interviews and Profiles





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RB

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

6:00 am

My alarm clock rings, and I hit snooze for another 10 minutes. Finally, I wake up to check my personal and office phones. **Then I head to the living room, stretch, and practice yoga and meditation. This helps me refocus, boosts my mental clarity, and prepares me for the day ahead.**

7:00 am

I make my morning coffee, watch the news, and prepare my key focus points for the day. I also quickly respond to a few work emails.

8:00 am

I make oats porridge in almond milk with blueberries and almond flakes as garnish for my breakfast, and I pack last night's leftovers of chickpea couscous salad with grilled vegetables for my lunch. **I then quickly shower, get ready, offer my morning prayers, and set off to the office, which is a 15-minute drive, while listening to world news on the radio.**

9:00 am

At my office desk, I note today's priorities, knowing some of them will shift as last-minute work will undoubtedly come from some stakeholder. I have five meetings today, but I am very sure I will have a few impromptu ones as well. I check my email and answer the ones that only require quick, two-line replies.

10:00 am

I attend my first meeting to discuss the RFP from the telecom provider in relation to hub, network, and mobile services vis-a-vis an exit mechanism and charges for each service in the agreement. This review was initiated to provide business cost-saving after reviewing historic arrangements.

11:00 am

My first meeting is quickly followed by a second meeting to discuss the RFP from another telecom provider, comparing it with the first offer and understanding the exit mechanism for transitioning from the second service provider to the initial one.

12:00 pm

Our key distributor in Egypt has requested amendments to the Advance Facility Agreement, requiring review. A quick call with the finance director follows. We align the commercial terms. **I eat lunch at my desk whilst revising the agreement and send it to external counsel for comments.**

1:00 pm

A quick coffee break before the day's third meeting, this one with the general manager, finance director, and commercial controller to discuss the potential termination of the Iranian distributor. We formulate a strategy for continuity and minimum disruption to the business.

2:00 pm

The Durex Category marketing manager offers input on a marketing post for the Durex FIFA campaign. **I have a couple of impromptu catch-up calls with my marketing and R&D colleagues for my comments on a storyboard and the claims that will be advertised in Dettol TV campaigns.**

3:00 pm

The fourth meeting of the day is a presentation and discussion on an anti-counterfeiting strategy for the region. The general manager and I demonstrate what works in the region and what does not, followed by recent success stories.

4:00 pm

I review our legal cost tracker to determine how much of our annual spend remains. I also prepare the budget presentation for 2019 to present to management.

5:00 pm

An anonymous whistleblower complaint arrives! It's about factory operations in Bahrain. I have a quick Skype chat with HQ, review the allegations, devise an investigation strategy, formulate questions, and organize calls with people in the business.

6:00 pm

Finally, I browse my inbox, which by now has numerous unread emails, to check if any matters require immediate attention today. I print documents for an early morning meeting with the external counsel on a distributor consolidation project. Then I update key legal matter reports and the litigation tracker for the Middle East. This is sent to HQ as part of a quarterly regional reporting.

7:00 pm

My last call for the day is with the HQ category development legal and global marketing team on a new product launch initiative, discussing the methodology and substantiation behind claims and signing off for my region.

8:00 pm

My working day ends with a drive home whilst listening to my favourite music channel, Virgin Radio, which helps me to switch off. I prepare a quinoa salad for dinner and catch up with my parents on Skype. I check my phone and respond to a few private messages, then check my office phone and accept a meeting invite from the country manager. Tomorrow, we will discuss the distributor consolidation exercise. Afterward, I put my office phone on silent and put it in my handbag.

9:00 pm

Whilst I have my dinner, I catch up on Grey's Anatomy. This always helps me to unwind before hitting the bed.

11:00 pm

I take a magnesium tablet to get a good night's sleep.



Staff

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