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## Context to the nugget

In any profession, it is important to understand how to spend time on the right priorities. People often get consumed by the urgent and miss out on the critical. That pie chart looks different across professions. Karthik talks about how he spends his time as a Venture Investor and as an entrepreneur at Blume Ventures.

## Transcription

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**Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): Why don't we double click on the life of a VC investor? How does the pie-chart of time look like, in terms of where you spend energy and time?**

Karthik Reddy (KR): I wear two hats every day, which is that of the entrepreneur and my day job which is like going and actually managing a portfolio in a pipeline process like a VC. Some of my peers have the good fortune of having the fund-raising, the organization-building not be a part of their role. In my case, unfortunately, that's part and parcel and there are obviously seasonal peaks and ups and downs. So, we've just normalized that. Like when I'm going to China for a week, it's all a particular type of learning and job. If I am going to the US for two weeks, it's almost all investor related. It spikes at 50%.

So, longer term, over the year, I think, what's happening is, I am spending about 20% on fund-raising which is my raw material, who are my investors. It's not like a typical start-up which has investors, who might spend 5% of their time on investors. I have to spend 20, because that's my business. Money is my raw material. So, they are my customers too. So, I have a two-sided marketplace, for taking capital and giving capital. So, I have to cater to the entrepreneur wanting to love me and my investor wanting to love me, eventually. That's when a great VC firm is made, so I have to focus on that aspect. And then, the running of the business, the administration of the business, small things like logo, the brand, what you do for agreements, what should the menu be, everything. You have to have a final checkpoint, because your brand's at stake.

So, I would say, the fundraising is clearly 20%, I would say the organizational stuff is 15 to 20%. So, that unfortunately takes away — unfortunately I say because I would rather do the other part 100% but it's a trade-off. I mean, would I work for someone else or do I work for myself and get the upside. That's a trade-off. So, 40% goes towards my entrepreneurial hat, which is, I have to run the business, I have to bring in the moolah. It's like the CEO kind of hat. It's not like there is a CEO role, but I am saying.

**DJ: It's an institution-building kind of hat.**

KR: Correct. And then, the other 60%, I would say is one-third pipeline, two-third portfolio. So, the pipeline, once in a while, you feel like I don't need to invest right now, so I should now just take a break from it, but actually it's your fodder for learning. So, if you're not meeting enough young people, different technologies, often enough, you can get rusty very quickly in this industry.

DJ: **That's how you stay current in the market, right?**

KR: Absolutely! That's our business. We have to be ahead of the curve. So, if you are not seeing what's at the peripheral edge of the curve, then you're already behind. So, you can't distance yourself too much, but on the other hand, your money is already sunk into your portfolio, so that is the biggest chunk. I think, if you go to one level lower, since we're on the topic, I think, the other two parts will shrink to about 10–15% at most, what value they're giving back to the organization. And they would also similarly have a two-third, one-third split, but it will be of a much bigger chunk of their time, more like 80–90% of the time is available, unlike 60% of all time.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: The one thing I often get leaders to reflect on is their pie chart of time. There are three pieces to this; 1) What the role needs; 2) what you are doing currently and 3) what you would ideally want to be doing. If 2 and 3 are in sync but very different from 1, then you are possibly having fun at work but there is possibly a performance disconnect; If 1 and 2 are aligned and very different from 3, then you are possibly delivering on the job but not having as much fun doing it. It calls to question, the long term tenability of your job/career and begs the question - should you be doing something else. So, just watching those three pie charts at various points in time can be helpful as you navigate through your career.

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## End of nugget transcription

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## Karthik Reddy - Nuggets

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## About Deepak Jayaraman

Deepak seeks to unlock human potential of senior executive's / leadership teams by working with them as an Executive Coach / Sounding Board / Transition Advisor. You can know more about his work [here](#).

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