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Leading with precision

Dr Shadi Alfar on elevating engineering
through values, vision, and accuracy

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VISION, PRECISION, AND IMPORTANTLY, **IMPACT**

With global experience spanning Germany to the Gulf, Dr Shadi Alfar is elevating engineering leadership through vision, precision, and people-first values

Words by Julianne Tolentino

Dr Shadi Alfar walks through life with a simple belief. A belief that doing great work meant achieving beyond technical brilliance. For him, nothing is greater than valuing people and looking far, far ahead.

As Dr Shadi Alfar reflects on a career that has carried him across continents and industries over more than two decades, he sees this belief as the constant thread weaving through every chapter. From the factory floors of Germany's automotive

giants to the ambitious cityscapes of the Middle East, his journey has been guided not just by skill and strategy, but by a profound respect for those around him, and a vision that always reached beyond the horizon.

Today, as the Founder and Chairman of JMC and Partners, Dr Alfar leads a growing consultancy with a strong presence in the region, shaping massive projects across Saudi Arabia and the wider Middle East.

Yet this chapter is only the latest evolution in a journey defined by global perspectives and timeless leadership principles.

EARLY FOUNDATIONS

The story begins in Germany, where Dr Alfar honed his skills among the industrial titans of engineering—Siemens, Mercedes, Bosch and Volkswagen. Working on robotics control projects for automotive manufacturing plants, he absorbed lessons that went far beyond technical expertise.

“Working in Germany early in my career, particularly with industry giants like Siemens and Mercedes, instilled in me the importance of precision, discipline, and collaboration,” he says. “Later, transitioning to the dynamic markets of the UAE and Saudi Arabia taught me adaptability, cultural sensitivity, and the value of building trust-based relationships.”

This duality, technical precision combined with emotional intelligence, would become a hallmark of his leadership style, allowing him to move between different sectors, teams and geographies seamlessly.

These early experiences planted the seeds for a leadership philosophy that would prioritise not just outcomes, but the quality of relationships and the integrity of processes.

THE BIRTH OF A VISION

Building on his foundation in Germany, Dr Alfar moved to the UAE in 2003, a period of exponential growth for the region. His roles at KEO International

“I believe in leading by example, fostering an environment of mutual respect, and empowering my team to innovate and take ownership”

Consultants and later Atkins Global saw him leading major urban, infrastructure and industrial developments at a time when the Gulf’s ambitions were soaring.

His expertise soon caught the attention of Saudi Arabia’s burgeoning markets, and in 2013, Dr Alfar relocated to the kingdom to take on pivotal roles tied to the country’s evolving transformation agenda.

However, even amid the exciting pace of national development, the entrepreneurial itch grew stronger. After co-founding Smart Home, one of the UAE’s first smart technology companies, the idea of creating a consultancy that merged visionary leadership with operational excellence began to crystallise.

“The tipping point was my desire to create a platform where I could fully align my vision with the evolving needs of clients and markets,” he explains. “Founding JMC and Partners was a natural progression—allowing me to combine my expertise with a more agile and client-focused approach.”

Since its founding in 2018, JMC and Partners has earned a reputation for delivering complex projects while anticipating client needs, aligning closely with Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 ambitions, and forging partnerships with globally respected firms like DG Jones Consultancy.

LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY

Underpinning every project, partnership and plan is Dr Alfar’s clear leadership philosophy,



Since its establishment, JMC and Partners has earned a reputation for delivering complex projects in the region



Dr Shadi Alfar, Founder and Chairman, JMC and Partners

one rooted in timeless values.

“Integrity, vision, and resilience are the cornerstones of my leadership philosophy,” he says. “I believe in leading by example, fostering an environment of mutual respect, and empowering my team to innovate and take ownership.”

In an industry where timelines are tight and stakes are high, Dr Alfar puts emphasis on empowerment over micromanagement.

His leadership style is deliberately decentralised, trusting teams to perform while focusing his energy on strategy and client relationships.

It’s a philosophy that drives company success, enabling personal balance that individuals need to thrive. Outside the boardroom, Dr Alfar recharges by travelling, spending time with family, reading, and indulging his love of cinema. “Maintaining balance comes down to setting

2018

Founding year of JMC and Partners



Aerial rendered image of the Sela Falcon City in Malham, Riyadh



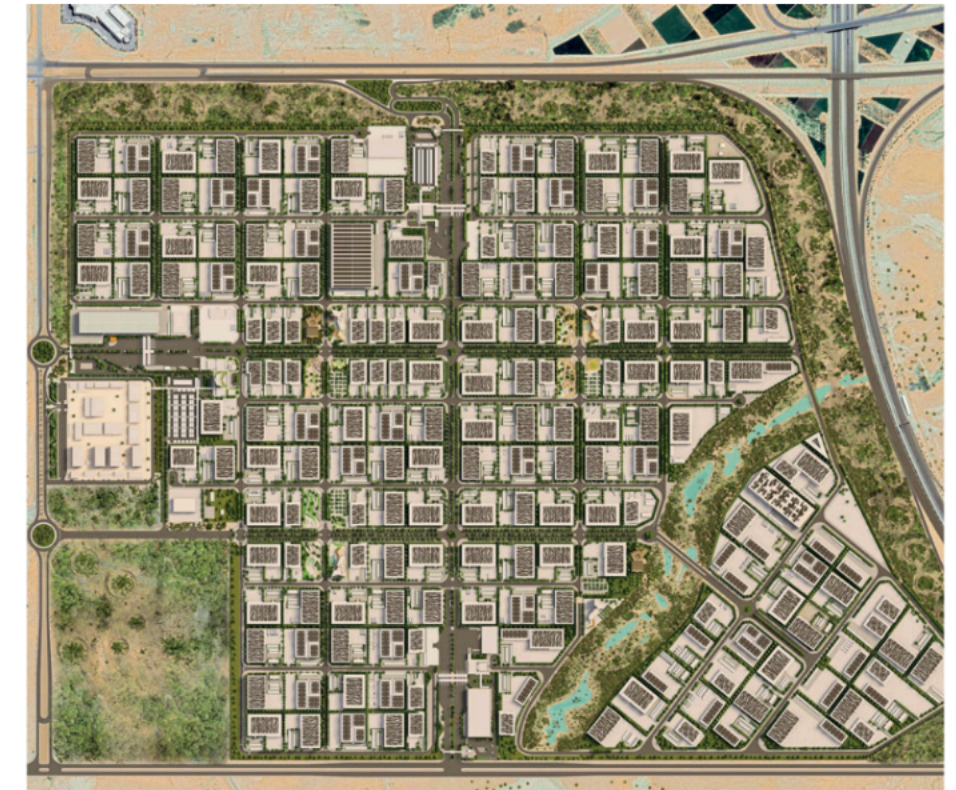
A rendering of the KAIA Masterplan

clear priorities and boundaries. I've learned to delegate effectively and trust my team which allows me to focus on strategic decisions while also dedicating quality time to my family," he reveals.

This commitment to personal growth and balance echoes through his organisation, fostering a culture that sees wellbeing and ambition not as opposing forces, but as complementary drivers of success.

FUTURE-FOCUSED

As Saudi Arabia pushes forward with its Vision 2030 goals, the stakes have never been higher. Leading PIF-linked urban and logistics projects, Dr Alfar has a front-row seat to the scale, speed, and complexity involved in actualising this vision.



Top view render of the KKIA Integrated Logistics Zone

"The unspoken challenge lies in balancing ambition with execution. Vision 2030's scale and speed are unprecedented, requiring seamless coordination among stakeholders, adaptability to evolving priorities, and an unwavering focus on quality," he reflects.

To meet these challenges, JMC and Partners is embracing the future, integrating AI-driven models to streamline project planning and modular construction methods to accelerate timelines without compromising quality.

"AI can optimise planning, streamline workflows, and predict project risks, ensuring speed and quality are maintained," he says.

"Modular construction accelerates timelines by allowing off-site production of components while maintaining high standards."

For Dr Alfar, innovation goes beyond efficiency; it's about national empowerment. "Both approaches also support Saudisation by enabling targeted training programmes for local


talent in advanced technologies, fostering a skilled workforce that drives sustainable development," he notes.

In this way, technology becomes not just a means to an end, but a catalyst for a more skilled, resilient future workforce.

ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

When asked what advice he would offer to his younger self—or to aspiring engineers and entrepreneurs today—Dr Alfar is both thoughtful and candid in his response.

"I would tell my younger self to embrace challenges and view setbacks as opportunities for growth. Success is a journey, not a destination, and every experience—whether positive or negative—teaches valuable lessons. Stay curious, remain adaptable, and never stop investing in yourself, because the ability to learn and evolve is your most powerful asset," he shares.

Looking ahead, it is clear that the combination of technical rigour, global insight, and human-centred leadership that defines Dr Alfar's journey will continue to shape the Middle East's future—one project, one partnership, and one empowered team at a time. 

“

Integrity, vision, and resilience are the cornerstones of my leadership philosophy”

Construction Week

السعودية

الريادة بحرفية وإتقان

الدكتور شادي الفار يتحدث عن النهوض بالهندسة من خلال
ترسيخ القيم، واستشراف الرؤية، والالتزام بالدقة