

CCIE at Age 21: Zeeshan Zanaullah's Story

“Our father bought our family computer initially for his video recording business. I started using the machine at home at first for games, but then I also used to corrupt the machine and then fix everything again on my own,” says 21-year-old Zeeshan Sanauallah, CCIE #25196. He earned his Cisco CCIE® in 2009. Sanauallah's early family experiences inspired him to attend classes at the local learning institute in Karachi, Pakistan, where he still lives. “I was working on going into a career in web design, and my teacher was working on his Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE) certification. He would bring books into the class and talk with me about what IT and networking was all about,” says Sanauallah. An early turning point for Sanauallah was when one of his distant relatives, who already worked in IT, advised him to steer toward a Cisco CCNA® certification. “I found the subject matter much more interesting and appealing,” he says. Sanauallah earned his CCNA at age 15 and had to prove himself to the CCNA class instructor, who initially turned him away, insisting that he was too young and that he would be wasting his money to attend a class at such an early age. “At the end of a few weeks time, I found myself helping the older students in the class [in their 20s] to learn the concepts.” Sanauallah says his personal connections with instructors and relatives, as well as online resources, were useful tools for CCIE preparation. “The Cisco Learning Network and blogs really helped me in getting my CCIE certification,” he says. “I used to read blogs to get motivated. The Cisco Learning Network, blogs, and online community really helped me out. These resources will continue to be helpful to me as I move on to studying for upcoming Cisco certifications.” Sanauallah now works for Future Technology, a Premier Cisco Partner in Pakistan. As a result of his experience and certifications, he is the team lead for the Routing Team. He works with individuals of all ages and finds friends who share his passion for technology. “In my work life, I find very few people who started their careers as early as I started,” he says. “I study Cisco because I love it. I study technology because I have a real passion for it. Money is important, but what motivates me most is the technical challenge.” Sanauallah says that he plans to pursue a Cisco CCDE® after many more years of work and network design experience. He is now working on his CCIE Security certification to help with his job at Future Technology. As a personal interest, the blueprint topics that are associated with the CCIE Service Provider are next on his list. As a final area of focus, Sanauallah is in search of a Learning Partner in Pakistan who is willing to sponsor him so that he can become a Certified Cisco Systems Instructor. With as much passion as he has for technology, it is a lot for him to look forward to in the coming years. From <https://learningnetwork.cisco.com/docs/DOC-6112>