

A group of our consultants got together to discuss the questions they are most frequently asked during recruitment. We hope their answers will help you understand what working at 2020 Delivery is like.

What sort of clients do you work for?

- All our clients are public sector. Most of my work has involved working with the NHS.
- Most of my time has been spent in health as well, but I've worked in central government and education too.

Where do you work?

- We all usually spend Fridays at our We Work office near Waterloo in London. The rest of the week is normally on client sites.
- Most of our clients are within an hour's travel of London, but some projects are further afield in the UK – and this can sometimes mean staying over for a few nights a week.

What does the day-to-day work consist of?

- A combination of project management, client engagement and analysis, which usually involves testing hypotheses and analysing data.
- I start my day by reading emails and articles whilst on the train. On arrival, I run working sessions with my client. This includes process mapping, hypothesis testing and helping them through analytics. Every week is different, but there's always some sort of joint problem solving with clients.
- We usually work in small teams of 3-4 people. Typically: a junior consultant, a more senior consultant, a project manager and then a director overseeing the project.

How do you differ from other consultancies?

- It feels like you're trusted and listened to more. We can all influence how the company is run and we get involved in lots of internal work, including strategy development, recruitment decisions and any charity commitments that the company chooses to pursue.

- You work directly with the clients from the start, even at a junior level. On my second day, I was in front of a client and on my third day I was having 1-to-1 meetings with them. Of course, I was given support, but I think I had real client-facing opportunities much earlier than I would have had at any other firm.

How is the work/life balance?

- In the year-and-a-half I've been here, my weekly hours have ranged between 40 and 65 hours.
- Mine have been around the same, only going over that when you're pushing on a big project and there are deadlines to meet.
- You can have slightly longer weeks if you're travelling, or if there's a major deadline, but you usually have some control over your hours. I try to keep my normal weeks manageable so I can stretch hours up when I need to.
- Quite a few people have also arranged some sort of flexible working, such as working four-day weeks due to childcare or studying. Others have arranged extra unpaid leave for things like travelling. I think this an advantage of the flat hierarchy: people are comfortable bringing up this sort of request with the leadership team.

What backgrounds do people have?

- There's a wide range of backgrounds. I joined after working in the public sector for a few years. Others came with consulting experience, or from working in business. And others join fresh from university.
- Everyone is very clever, but you can demonstrate that in a lot of different ways. You don't have to be an Oxbridge graduate or have a Master's degree.
- I agree. You should be numerate, but you don't need to have a science degree.

What are the people like to work with?

- It's a really friendly company. It is easy to say that, but it's a genuinely different culture than I've seen elsewhere. It's a flat hierarchy. A director would offer to make a junior consultant a cup of tea when they come in, and it's the same with ideas – everyone listens to everyone else.
- Everyone gets on well and are people are very social. We try to spend some time together on a Friday after work.

- We have a range of informal and company-organised events – several dinners over the year, social events like paintball and go karting, and an annual overnight away.

How is your career managed?

- A member of the leadership team will be your career manager. You meet up with them every 6 weeks. I find that helpful to sound out ideas on how I am progressing and to pick up on things from my project.
- I've found the career manager mechanism a useful way of asking for things that will help my development, like getting staffed to a particular type of project, or being given the time and funding to do a training course. It's a good channel for directing your own career.

What training do you get?

- Everyone starts with a three-day intensive training course called 'Delivering Fast Effective Projects' where you learn the core consulting tools for breaking down and analysing problems. There are several other core courses on things like using Excel and PowerPoint, visualising data, and client engagement. Most of all, you learn on the job, through coaching and support from your project manager and career manager.
- Yes, there are a set of core training courses that you will tend to cover in your first 12-18 months, and the Company also experiments with new and different courses. We also like to support the talents of each individual and you can request courses that will be of particular benefit to you.

What is career progression like?

- As a junior consultant, you effectively start as an apprentice consultant, not an analyst locked away in a back office. Instead, you are directly involved with a project – autonomous tasks, meeting clients and real responsibility for the project outcome.
- The role evolves as you move up. You're doing the same sorts of things but with less oversight, and with the balance shifting towards more project management and client development work.
- Very broadly, people spend about two years at each grade, but promotion is based on merit rather than on time served. It all comes down to demonstrating the sector knowledge and consulting skills required of the next grade.
- There's also no 'up or out' feel to the company. We don't take on dozens of juniors and then sack half each year. We develop individual strengths. As the

Company is small and growing, there's room for people to move up. One of our current Directors started off as an intern at the company.

What's it like being an intern?

- It's very similar to the junior consultant role. You get stuck in to a project from the start. As an intern, I had real workstreams to manage and I worked with clients – my friends with internships in larger corporations didn't get this level of responsibility.
- We offer internships with an eye to future recruitment – a sort of extended job interview. It's definitely not compulsory to apply first as an intern, as we take on more junior consultants than we offer internships. But it's a great way for both the intern and the company to decide whether there's a good match.

I have some work experience. What level should I apply for?

- Don't worry too much about this. If you are coming directly from university or with very limited work experience, apply through the junior consultant route. Otherwise, apply as an experienced hire. Essentially, we interview every candidate the same way and assess the appropriate level during the selection process.
- Many junior consultant applicants have some experience of work too and others have completed internships, but neither are necessary. Just make sure your application demonstrates responsibility and achievements from other areas of your life.

What can you tell me about the online Problem Solving Test?

- The PST is an hour long, multiple choice test, consisting mostly of numerical reasoning. It's based on a case along the lines of a client project. Everyone must complete the test, whatever level they are applying for.
- Practice working under timed conditions before you take the test as people get flustered when the timer is counting down.

What happens in an interview?

- If your online application is successful, we'll invite you to interview with us. The first round consists of two case study interviews. Each will ask questions about you and your experience, as well as taking you through a case study. The second round consists of two further interviews, together with a presentation and a chance to chat more informally over coffee with a member of the team.

- The case study element is really important. I strongly encourage all candidates to research and practise case interviews if they haven't come across them before; there are plenty of great resources on the internet to help you prepare.
- It's also worth practising your mental maths. Your case will include some numerical problems to solve and you won't have a calculator. The questions are not that complicated, but some people do get flustered by them.
- As well as the interview questions, you'll get a chance to ask about the Company and get to know us. What finally made up my mind to join the Company was how friendly and positive the whole interview experience was.