



## Life as a Junior Consultant at 2020 Delivery

Keen to know more about what day-to-day life as a consultant at 2020 Delivery is like?

Amy Carmichael, a Junior Consultant, takes us through her week at work...



One of my favourite things about working at 2020 Delivery is that no two weeks are the same. This does, however, make it difficult to describe my job to friends or in a blog post. Hopefully this will give you a taste of the great mix of things we get to do each week: problem solving for public sector clients, internal projects to improve the impact we can deliver as a company, pro bono work, training or chats with Directors to help our personal development, and socials!

For my current project, I'm working with a Principal Consultant (PC) to train and mentor NHS staff (doctors, nurses, physios, pharmacists, social workers, managers) in three hospitals. We're supporting them to run their own improvement projects with the aim of decreasing A&E wait times. I've previously worked on operational projects at two of these hospitals, so it's great to go back and see these hospitals in a stronger position. I'm also enjoying working with some of the same staff again, combining their expertise with our tools and with what we learnt last time.

### Monday

We kick off the week by delivering 'Leading Improvements' training to the final group of mentees. This teaches the simple tools we use every day to plan, break down and solve problems, and communicate with stakeholders. The idea of training people much further into their careers than me was daunting at first, but the PC I'm working with makes sure I know what to do and feel supported. It's a small chatty group, and I find it really interesting to hear about the barriers to improvement our mentees often face in the NHS. It's also fun to see that the group values the tips I've learnt from just 6 months here. The key message that you need to understand the problem you are trying to solve before you design a solution, and that there are simple tools you can use to do this, really energises the mentees.

After finishing the training, we review the feedback the mentees gave us and note down what we would recommend changing for the next time. We then dial in to a call with the senior clients from each hospital and update them on how the training was received. We talk through the projects the mentees will begin working on this week, ensuring that they are focusing on the hospitals' priorities and that they will have the right support to make real improvements in the short 6-week timescale.

Mondays always tire me out, so I head home, bulk cook some meals for the week, watch some TV and head to bed early.





## Tuesday

My first mentoring session is with a Stroke General Manager who I've worked with before. She wants to reduce the time it takes stroke patients to get from A&E to the stroke ward. After using a Problem Definition Sheet to scope her project and work out who we need to involve, we spend the rest of the session setting out how her stroke data can be analysed to find the most common cause of patients being delayed in reaching the stroke ward. I enjoy mentoring as a way of consulting, as you get to work with frontline staff with lots of NHS experience (but less project management experience) to do all the most interesting, tricky problem solving packed into an hour.

In the afternoon, I attend the hospital's Urgent Care Programme Board. This gives me a chance to see how our mentees' projects fit in with other improvements and changes happening in the hospital. The Chair puts me on the spot and asks me to give an update from 2020 Delivery which isn't on the agenda, so I'm glad I brought along some summary handouts just in case. I finish the day with a mentoring session spent thinking about how to persuade surgery consultants to try something new. I introduce my mentee to the **influence model**, and by thinking about what helps people change their behaviour we come up with some new ideas that she is excited about.

I jump on the train to London and make it back just in time for my musical improv class. As well as being really fun, I use a lot of the skills I learn here in my work too – for example, listening to and building on others' ideas instead of pushing my own, and proceeding confidently in ambiguity.

## Wednesday

I'm working from the 2020 office in London today and the slightly later start means I can squeeze in a morning run. I arrive slightly out of breath at our office, which is located in a WeWork building. My favourite things about WeWork are the free barista coffee, and that there's always the buzz of lots of people around even if most of my 2020 colleagues are working on client sites. I spend the morning interviewing a few people hoping to join the company. My case interview is based on the first project I worked on here, so I find it really interesting to see how differently people approach and structure the problem.

In the afternoon, I focus on my pro bono work – we are each allowed to take one day of pro bono time a month. I'm a trustee of a mediation charity, and at the moment I'm reviewing the comms strategy to ensure that those most in need of mediation services are aware of what we offer. The charity receives most of its referrals from the local authority, so it's a good way to learn about the public sector from another perspective.

After work, I head to a new vegan burger place in Shoreditch for dinner and a good catch up with an old project team.





### Thursday



My favourite of three mentoring sessions this morning focusses on hypothesis trees, which are our way of setting out our best guess at the solution to a problem and testing it. I'm mentoring a social worker who has developed an IT-based solution to ensure patients are transferred to the right care setting after discharge. By going through the hypothesis tree, we realise that her solution will need a behaviour change strategy as well as a technological change if it is to be successful, and we begin to plan this.



After lunch, I quickly analyse the latest performance data from the three hospitals we are working with and put together a slide pack to update NHS Improvement on how the project is going. The PC on the project gives me helpful feedback on changing the slide titles to make the message really clear, and we send out the pack in time for a conference call with NHSI.



After the call, I head back to London for a social with the Junior Cohort (made up of Junior Consultants and Consultants). We have these about 4 times a year – this time, we're at a WWII themed cocktail bar where you have to crack codes to order your drinks.

### Friday



The whole company works at our office on Fridays, giving us the chance to learn from each other's projects, work on internal projects together, and catch up. I have a meeting with my career manager – a member of the Leadership Team who I spend an hour with every 6 weeks or so to discuss my personal development. We review my goals and agree that some extra Excel training would help me develop further, which he'll talk to the rest of the Leadership Team about. It's great to have this continual space and support to reflect and improve.

Before lunch, the whole company comes together for an impact viva, reviewing the impact and learnings of a project that has recently finished. This week we hear about the benefits from investing in radiology reporting, from patient experience to hospital finances.



I spend the afternoon interviewing colleagues about their experience of how we set up and kick off our client projects at 2020. This is part of an internal strategy piece looking at how we can use great project kick off meetings to maximise impact and staff experience. I pick out the common themes and make some slides to present to our Strategy and Client committee next week. I finish off my busy week with drinks with colleagues in the communal WeWork area, and begin to unwind for the weekend...



If this sounds like a week you'd enjoy, take a look at our Careers page [here](#).

