



A Week in the life of Nicola Hardy (Consultant)

Monday

On Monday I went to the office as we had a Learn and Share on Strategy. These are always busy days in the office as it's a rare chance to catch up with colleagues. We have a 'Learn and Share' about every 6 weeks and they cover a range of subjects. They're a great way to keep our thinking fresh and relevant and an opportunity to share the vast amounts of knowledge and experience that lies within the team!

After lunch and a chat I dug out the materials for the Development Centre I was observing at on Tuesday. It's been a few months since we have done this DC for this particular client so I needed to get my head back into their context and scenarios which is around health - and out of the finance one I have done most recently!

Tuesday

I was up at 5:00 on Tuesday for an 8:00 start in Holborn. Today I was observing at a Development Centre for the Department of Health. We have only done this DC twice before, it's for HEOs and SEOs whose Management Development Programme was developed following the success of those we run at Grade 6/7 and SCS levels. It was a great day, this is the type of work I love and we have a great project team made up of BCL, a partner consultancy and the People Capability Team at DH. Once the day was over it was straight home to finish writing up my observer report forms.

Wednesday

Back to London today but not so early! We always meet the day following a Development Centre for the 'Wash Up'. This is where all the observers get together and discuss each candidate. Following this meeting we each have to write two feedback reports and then meet with those two people to discuss the day and begin setting development objectives for the rest of the programme.

After this meeting I went to meet a colleague so that we could talk about a piece of work we have been asked to do around evaluating a programme we are running for the Home Office.

Thursday

On Thursday I went to UKBA in West London. We are working on a programme that is running concurrently in four different regions and I am part of the project team for West London and South East England. This is a really interesting piece of work, the main objective being to introduce a new performance measurement framework. BCL are working in partnership with another consultancy on this project and our work is around capability so we are working on the behavioural side of things making sure that people feel supported and have the relevant skills for the changes.

Days on this project can vary from coaching individuals to running workshops for teams to booking people onto workshops. Today was a combination of designing a workshop I will be running next week, capturing some of our successes so far and meeting with the client and our partnering consultancy to talk about how things are going and key themes that are emerging so far.

Friday

Another day in the office, nice on a Friday, partly as I have usually run out of smart clothes by this time of the week! I had blocked the morning out to write my feedback reports following the DC earlier in the week. I find that if I don't do them soon after the event they take much longer. Once these were done I spent some time on the design of a new programme we are about to run for the Department of Health. It's another version of the Leadership and Management Development Programmes, this time for staff at AO and EO levels. I'm really looking forward to getting started on this programme as the others have all been so well received; it's great to be involved in such a well respected programme!