

# RAKESH PATEL

**ROLE:** NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR  
(SUPPORT FOR THE NHS NETWORKS)

**STREAM:** TECHNICAL/ENGINEERING

**STUDIED:** COMPUTING FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
AT LEEDS UNIVERSITY



## Monday

Stroll into the office and set up my laptop and desk, ready for the day. Check emails and the group email inbox and action any Business as Usual requests (technical networks requests). This usually involves performing validation checks by logging into the firewalls and ensuring that there are no network issues reported from NHS Trusts.

Every week is different with the support teams. One week it could be working on making improvements to the network management systems in the data centres to ensure that we have full visibility of the devices. If there are incidents reported from the trusts, then the network monitoring solutions need to be checked for any alarms generated. This usually starts the process for hands-on checking of network devices and, if necessary, coordinating the resolution of the issue. Finding a resolution is tremendously satisfying if you know that NHS Trusts are dependent on your fixes, and being able to do this in a timely manner will reap major rewards.

The next week could be troubleshooting a connectivity issue that is preventing an NHS Trust from logging into the Patient Management System. Incidents such as these are high impact and require immediate resolution as this could be preventing the clinicians from obtaining critical information for their patients. This sort of troubleshooting will involve logging onto the switches and routers following basic checks, such as liaising with other resolving groups.

Need to raise a network change request for making a change to the live environment to fix an issue for a colleague. Not making this change will increase the financial risk that CSC faces if there is a service failure to the application. No pressure! This will need to be represented at the Change Advisory Board (CAB) meeting on Thursday and will need the relevant lines of service approvals. I will prepare before the CAB call, as there will be many questions from many team leads.

Careful planning will also be required to ensure minimal disruption for user acceptance and for the technical feasibility assessment.

I attend a conference call to discuss changes to fix the issue and to provide assurance to project managers. The PMs will be relying on me to get this right, as I have the relevant technical knowledge and knowledge of the network environment.

Taekwondo and leadership training in the evening to keep fit, relax the mind, and take a step towards achieving my personal goals.



## **Tuesday**

Team meeting to provide updates to my line manager and other team members. Good time to pick up any additional work and mention any concerns.

Write up detailed work plan for the network fix in Excel (step-by-step plan required detailing both technical and management aspects). The change requires resources from other teams, so I will set-up a meeting for the team to ensure they are happy with what they need to do on the night of the fix. Also, I will need to carry out an impact assessment to ensure that we do not affect the client/service provided by CSC. Writing the work plan will require liaising with various team leads (helps build your network) to confirm the impact assessment and to provide service assurance.

Submit the change to start the approval process. Chase account-level management for their approval. Although management are very busy, it is key to emphasise the importance of this change and to push for their approval. A successful change will mean reduced financial risk to CSC.

Kickboxing training in the evening, then weight training at the gym.

## **Wednesday**

Chase approvals for the change on Friday. Ensure that all teams are happy with the work I am planning to implement. Answer questions to account-level and service management team via telephone and email as required.

Client on-site today. They have an issue connecting to the internet and my line manager has suggested using our private network. This will need configuring to allow the client to connect to the internet which is required for a meeting with the CSC team. I will need to obtain the details of the client's laptop and configure the security on the private network to allow the connection. Doing this immediately will demonstrate the commitment CSC has to its clients. A very simple task, yet a significant activity to impress the client.

Spent a few hours on cost-cutting investigations (car sharing). Started to develop a business plan to propose to the Operations Board to try and secure investment (extracurricular activities). Liaised with third-parties (called them directly) and investigated other similar initiatives for CSC by contacting the leads of HR, Marketing and Consulting, etc. Hopefully I can save the company some money by proposing to implement a car sharing tool to facilitate car sharing amongst staff to reduce expense claims. This will require developing a business case which will be seen by the UK Operations Board (Board with CIO). Have lunch with the team and catch up on other activities on the account and discuss the weekend.

Taekwondo training in the evening. Assist teaching the juniors and adults. Helps develop confidence and builds social network outside work.

## **Thursday**

Represent Network Change at the Change Advisory meeting, providing details on what work will be completed, reasons for change and an impact assessment. This call will have representatives from all technical lines of service, service delivery managers, and, often, account-level management. It is important to be prepared for questions to ensure that all approvals are in-line for the change on Friday. If full approval cannot be gained, then the change cannot be completed as requested.

Continue business as usual activities and final preparation work for the change tomorrow night.

I then attend an unplanned meeting called by the project management team for the change I have raised. Senior management will be attending the meeting to finalise the work plan and to ensure that all CSC employees are made aware of the change and the potential impact it may have.

Sparring training in the evening.

## **Friday**

Business as usual work. Finish troubleshooting the issue for the client who is unable to log into the patient administration system and confirm resolution with them. Need to ensure that this is completed within the agreed resolution time to ensure CSC is not hit by a financial penalty.

Continue liaising with a third-party provider on the car sharing initiative and try to negotiate a good deal (pending approval from the CSC UK Ops Board). Attend weekly team call to update on the progress of this which will be presented back to the Chief Operating Officer.

Complete change out-of-hours, as planned, ensuring minimal disruption to the client. Will need to set up a conference call as multiple resources will be working from different locations. This will need coordinating as per the work plan to ensure that we carry out the work as agreed by senior management and also to ensure timely resolution. Any problems should be noted and dealt with accordingly. Changes often do not go as planned and when working in the live environment it's important to resolve any issues ASAP, as they could mean services to the NHS Trusts are affected.

Relax with friends in the late evening following the successful change. Will need to perform follow-up activities the following Monday (answer questions, ensure the project managers have the up-to-date details, etc.)