

ROSE NASH

ROLE: PROJECT LEAD (NETWORK RAIL ACCOUNT)
STREAM: PROJECT MANAGEMENT
STUDIED: ZOOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM



Monday

I catch the bus to Euston station where the Network Rail office is situated. We all hot desk on our account, which is great for getting to know your teammates.

The first thing to get done on a Monday morning as a project manager is to submit status and financial reports for the previous week. As I'm still in training, I will often receive some mentoring from senior PMs on the account – they're busy too, but always willing to give me a hand. After all, it's in the nature of a PM to ask lots of questions!

There's enough time to catch up with emails before my mid-morning meeting with one of my project teams. By now we've all got to know each other pretty well, despite some members working over 200 miles away from London! During the conference call, I request updates from the engineers on any work that has taken place over the weekend. The criticality of some of the Network Rail applications means that I have to schedule some tasks out of hours so as to reduce the impact on the service.

I'll review my project plans to ensure I have made all necessary arrangements for the rest of the week.

On a Monday night I have a session with my personal trainer. She's trying to get me to sign up for a half marathon. I'm going to have to put in a lot more training before I'm good enough for that!

Tuesday

Today I have a meeting with a project manager from Network Rail so I visit his office. I've been assigned a new project so I want to speak to him about his expectations. I've run a similar project before so I'm fine to go by myself. If the request is more complicated, I'll ask one of our solution architects to accompany me.

After the meeting, I'll write up notes and put together a draft solution. I circulate this around the lines of service to make sure I've not missed anything and that my quotes for labour effort are realistic. Once this has gone through internal review, we get issues back to the client for approval. It's my responsibility to ensure a project team is brought together in time for execution of the plan that the Network Rail PM and myself have drawn up.

On a Tuesday night I always see my old university housemates for a catch up. We are all working in London now so we'll generally head to Camden or Soho.



Wednesday

Mid-week signals the time to check that all the tasks I've planned to take place for my projects are under way. If not, I will make some calls to ensure that everything is kept on track.

A call is held every Wednesday afternoon with an accompanying PowerPoint pack to teach employees about finances. I find it really useful seeing as A level maths seems like a long time ago now! If I've got meetings that clash with this session, there is the opportunity to listen to it again at any time.

After work on a Wednesday I'll head to the gym for an hour or so. Then my housemates and I go out for dinner. I feel like I deserve it after exercising!

Thursday

Thursday is always busy. I will have conference calls where face to face meetings aren't possible with all the Network Rail PMs to provide them with a status report. I'll ask them if they're satisfied with project progress and flag up any risks or issues that I can foresee. All of this then needs to be documented and agreed with the client.

In the afternoon we have an account meeting. This is the best time to find out what is happening in the other work streams. A member of the account management team will often give a presentation and we get the opportunity to put forward any queries.

Seeing as a large number of the account is on-site for the Thursday meeting, we'll go for drinks at one of the nearby pubs. Often we'll meet up with the Department of Health account and it will turn into a bar crawl. Fingers crossed, we'll see some comedy dance moves by the end of the night!

Friday

Last day of the working week is generally spent working from home. Not an excuse to slack off though – I have back-to-back calls all morning with different lines of service. One of my projects has been running for a few months and is nearly complete. Closing down a project ready for the system implemented to go-live takes a lot of coordination. I submit requests for resources to work on my new project and start writing up weekly reports in preparation for Monday.

Time to celebrate the weekend! I'll have my friends round mine for dinner and drinks, and then go out to a club.