

Monthly Motivation: Xinniella Khubchandani (class of 2014)



Having studied Economics at University, Xinniella joined one of the world's largest consulting firms before taking on a role at BCS Consulting.

What have you done since leaving Putney?

Having first studied Economics at A Level and appreciating its influence in all areas of our lives, I decided to continue with the subject at The University of Nottingham.

After graduating, I joined the consulting graduate programme at one of the world's largest consulting firms, [Accenture](#), where I worked in various roles on technology programmes at major banking clients. After two years, I made the move to an employee-owned management consulting firm [BCS Consulting](#), where I am currently working on a banking client project around developing a framework to improve the bank's resilience.

What does management consulting involve, and what does an average day look like for you?

Management consulting involves working with businesses and other organisations to improve their performance through solving complex problems. Given the breadth and variety of projects in consulting, there isn't really such a thing as an 'average day'!

I am usually based in a client office - starting the day with a catch-up call to the project team in which we discuss our progress updates and priorities for the day. After that, the day usually includes a combination of independent and collaborative work, which often includes preparing material for client presentations, interviewing client stakeholders to gather information, and analysing data. In addition to client work, a couple of hours each week are spent on training, either through formal sessions or self-guided learning covering both technical and non-technical skills, and on business development work.

What have you enjoyed most about consulting so far?

Through exposure to a wide variety of projects and roles, as well a chance to see first-hand how different clients operate, working as a consultant has granted me access to a wealth of knowledge without having to change jobs. I've already enjoyed directly working with, and learning from, a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds.

Outside of client work, frequent networking events are fun opportunities to build relationships with colleagues outside of my project teams and make friends! I have also enjoyed getting involved in extracurricular activities such as organising events, writing newsletters and taking part in charity initiatives, building my skills and contributing to the firm.

What challenges have you encountered along the way and how do you feel your time at school prepared you for them?

Compared to other jobs, consulting has an element of uncertainty, with less consistent structure. I often haven't known what my next assignment is or where it will be based until the end of a project. When it is time to join a new client engagement, as a junior colleague it's quite likely that you'll find yourself working on a brand new topic with a steep learning curve and a completely different team of colleagues.

Though this can be challenging at times, being exposed to a wide range of fields at Putney High encouraged me to be curious, take a proactive approach to learning, and be unafraid to ask questions.

What would be your recommendations for students / alumnae who want to do what you do?

Whilst consulting is a popular choice amongst Economics and Business graduates, it is a broad area and includes many different specialisations - you do not have to study a particular subject to pursue this career path.

For those considering a career in consulting, I'd recommend:

1. Developing commercial awareness - Keep up with key developments in industries you're interested in.
2. Building leadership, teamwork and communication skills - Don't underestimate the importance of extracurricular activities at school and university to build these essential non-technical skills that consulting firms look for.
3. Researching the different types of consulting - Investigate the various specialisms to gain more insight into consulting and start to think about which types might be of interest to you. Take a look at consulting firms' websites for upcoming recruitment events and information on internship and work experience opportunities. There are also some great resources explaining the world of consulting on social media.