



A week in the life of a... Director

Monday

The week starts with a **call to a new client about a request for a proposal (RFP)*** in the therapy area of osteo-arthritic pain. We discuss what market intelligence they have already and what they need to find out with this project. Feels great to get a referral from someone I've known for many years but has rarely commissioned us directly. I grab some time with another Director to brainstorm an appropriate methodology.

Late morning, have a meeting with the project team on a study we're working on in RA, in Australia, Germany, Brazil and the UK. Get feedback on the initial interviews, look at how the schedule is working and check that all the team members are on track with tasks and deadlines.

I've been spearheading a response to a **Request for Information (RFI)*** from a major client. This is the end of a lengthy and arduous negotiation with the client's procurement team, which has led to us being awarded preferred supplier status for one of their research areas. Need to double check the agreed cost model and communicate with our internal key account team across offices, to discuss how we should respond to requests for proposals moving forward. We need to maximise the opportunity with this client.

*RFPs can come from a variety of sources, but usually involve building relationships with clients over time to keep them interested in what RP has to offer

*RFIs can vary from a couple of pages of questions about what we offer through to massive Excel spreadsheets that we coordinate along with input from Marketing, Finance and Compliance

Tuesday

Spend the morning **helping set up a new quantitative study** to assess demand for our client's new product in anaemia related to chronic kidney disease. It's now expanded to 9 European markets with the likelihood of adding Japan. Have a meeting with Compliance to complete an online risk assessment around IT security in response to the client's request. Also have a discussion with the project team to finalise the questionnaire and set up pilot interviews, update the proposal to reflect the increased scope of the project with new costs and then send it to the client for approval.

In the afternoon (and through Wednesday) I start working on our proposal for the osteo-arthritic pain RFP. Set aside a good chunk of time, but a range of other tasks intervene, including an urgent call to a client, whose medics have concerns about the methodology we've proposed. Also have to sign off invoices and review costs for another **proposal***. We need to prioritise proposal writing, as that's where all our revenue comes from, whilst making sure all other project and non-project related issues don't slip.

*Typically a proposal can take 1-2 days to write depending on the complexity and client requirements

Wednesday

Catch up with an Associate Director who is one of my line reports to ensure they are on track with their objectives and discuss feedback on their team. Also have **a meeting with our Recruitment Manager to discuss some initiatives and ideas for finding new talent***. A fellow Director receives a tricky RFP and wants to discuss how they should best approach it. Three of us head into the breakout area to throw around some ideas and identify any innovative methodologies that could help differentiate us. Love the way that Directors and Associate Directors are willing to pose each other challenges and swap ideas. It helps get the brain working and builds our sense of working in a collaborative and innovative environment. Despite aiming to get it completed in the afternoon, the proposal finally goes out at 10pm!

*As a continually expanding business, we are always on the lookout for researchers with the requisite skills and passion to help support our growth

Thursday

The morning starts with a trip to High Wycombe, for a kick-off meeting with a client for a new study in Prostate Cancer. This will build on prior work with their assets, looking at how best to position their portfolio across a range of indications. Take advantage of being in their offices to catch up with a couple of other clients, talking about some of our new developments and hoping to be well positioned when they are ready to send out RFPs for upcoming projects.

Back home hold a meeting with the project team to plan timelines, tasks and roles, ensuring that the people on the team are clear about the objectives and that they are being given the opportunity to utilise and expand their skills and experience.

In the afternoon, have **a brainstorming meeting with the project team** on a qualitative message test project we are conducting with a long-term client in multiple myeloma*. Also have to review another quant report, and start to think about how to synthesise vast amount of data into actions the client can take to maximise uptake when the product launches. At any one time, I may be managing 7-10 projects, at various stages of completion from kick-off to reporting.

As head of RP's Innovation Steering Committee. I talk to a supplier we recently identified, who has developed a new virtual reality tool that could be an innovative approach for us to use with our clients. Right at the end of the day, a new RFP arrives out of the blue, which I need to talk to the client about and brainstorm with other Directors to see how we may handle it.



Brainstorming with the project team

** Although familiar with this client's needs, the project is looking at the asset in a new indication. We need to look at the initial findings from the research and see what insights we are getting, how best to present the narrative and consider recommendations and next steps for the client*

Friday

First thing, **interview a candidate for a Market Access position*** who seems promising so set up a date for a second interview! Spend the rest of the morning checking on the status of my currently running projects. With multiple projects running concurrently and a responsibility to continually bring in new business, I need to juggle a lot of balls to ensure clients are satisfied and come back to us! Two projects require immediate attention – upload some compliance documentation to a client's portal for an oncology project, then meet with the team to draw out the story for the research and how best to present the findings. For a detail aid project which has recently been presented and finalised to the client, I was asked to synthesise the key insights and upload the summary to their client portal, so they could be utilised by the wider marketing group. Also check in with clients on the status of some outstanding proposals, including one in Type 1 Diabetes that I'm very keen to win!

Rest of the day is spent with our marketing team, discussing how best to package and position some of our newer innovative offerings, building on the meetings we've had with suppliers. We're currently looking into applications of VR and AR, especially in communications and device testing and also the use of natural language processing in social media analysis. Of great interest to me is the work we are doing with a specialist in Behavioural Science, supporting us to embed key principles of behavioural economics into our research design and analytics. I believe this will be integral to many market research projects moving forwards, as it gets us much closer to true future behaviour.

All in all, not a bad week – 2 new RFPs, a proposal sent out, 2 proposals nearly finished and I'm confident that the ideas we've been discussing in the innovation stream are really going to add to our offering.

** As well as being responsible for European ad hoc work, I oversee our market access offering, which is expanding and a key area of our business. Market access is about ensuring pharmaceutical medicines have the best opportunity to reach patients who need them*

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