

Every job has its advantages and disadvantages. Read through your case study, making notes on any advantages or disadvantages of that job. Some may be obvious, but you may need to infer others from the text.

Accountant

The first thing I do is check emails, as it's important that clients' queries are answered quickly. Clients also expect an efficient service in the on-demand economy, so leaving unanswered emails for 3 or 4 days is not an option in the life of an accountant. At times it can be a juggling act between prioritising work by the deadline and by the order the work was received from the client - this is a key part of what an accountant does.

It's important that I keep up to date with finance industry news or changes to tax legislation. I spend about 30 minutes before work reading every day to stay right up to date.

During the day, I am mostly at my desk, I usually have my lunch in the office. I have to carry out a range of accounting tasks such as VAT returns, reviewing accounts, tax returns, client queries over email and telephone and occasional meetings.

The best about accounting is the logical approach to the work, i.e. taking something that is disorderly in some way and straightening it out. It's also really rewarding to be able to advise small business owners to help them succeed.

Management Consultant

I get into the office at around 8.30am, but that's usually the only constant, as every day tends to be different. My work is very project based, which means I mostly work within teams. I may work with numerous teams simultaneously when I'm working on a number of projects. Many meetings are required to complete these projects, sometimes with my teams, and at other times with the client we are working for. There are always multiple tasks that need to be completed so a good level of organisation is absolutely key. At particularly busy times it can get a little stressful meeting deadlines.

Luckily, I get to work on multiple different projects across multiple industries, which means I get exposed to so many different things. However, I'm rarely seen as an expert, as my clients tend to have a lot more industry specific knowledge than I do.

Business Development Manager

My role is quite varied day to day, and depends a lot on who our potential clients are. Generally, when a new client makes an enquiry, I have to liaise with the appropriate team managers and recommend a bespoke approach for the client. From here, I'll write a proposal that outlines our suggestions and costs. Sometimes, I'll need to visit prospective clients and pitch our proposals to them. Because of this, being able to communicate effectively is one of the most crucial skills for the job. Sometimes, though, I may not have a list of clients waiting to be pitched to, and have to make a real effort to identify, make contact with, and bring on board new clients. This can be a very tedious task, especially when prospective clients are unfamiliar with our business.

An important part of my job is relationship management. I meet frequently with all of our clients to ensure they are happy with the service we provide, and get feedback on anything else we can help with. As you might have figured out, this can involve spending a considerable amount of time travelling around the country.

Marketing Manager

As soon as I arrive at the office I spend roughly 30 minutes checking and responding to emails. I work for a global organisation, so often receive emails overnight, particularly from the US.

I have to constantly keep up with trends, so a good amount of my time is spent conducting research and analysis within the industries I work with.

I especially enjoy creating and implementing marketing campaigns, as it allows me to express my creativity. The flip side of that is that everyone has an opinion on the marketing strategy that you have created, and it doesn't always go down well. Whilst I've created successful campaigns, there have been times where I've also had to develop a thick skin.

As the manager of a team, I have to allocate both financial and human resources effectively. It really helps to have good people management and budgetary skills.

Stretch

Can some of the advantages you have identified be seen as a disadvantage, or vice versa? What personal characteristics might make someone see these as an advantage or disadvantage?