



**LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY**  
**CAREER  
DEVELOPMENT  
CENTER**

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**Major:** Political Science  
**Job Title:** Delivery Manager

**Tell us about your career story:**

What is the day in the life like at your job? What are typical job responsibilities for someone in this role?

Most days are different, but the general days start with a Stand Up, where you hear the teams plans for the day and any blockers. I'll ensure as part of mine that any key activities due are flagged, both due that day or in the next few. After that, it depends! I will adjust the budgets based on invoices/figures once a month, meet with external companies to ensure they are delivering on their contracts, work with team members to plan out their work and then map out how they all relate, ensure all risks have been flagged and are being managed... I am the organizational cog in the middle of the team. The responsibilities match up with that. A good Project Manager will focus on delivery of the plan, but that means that Risks and Dependencies must also be kept logged. Finance and Commercial responsibilities are usually on the edges of the project, and depending on resource and experience you may not have to manage these. There is also the expectation to 'muck in' when needed – I have written Operating Models, assisted with writing Legislation, functional-tested an IT system... the core responsibilities are similar but applied very differently depending what project you're working on

**What do you love about your job?**

I love that I get to make a difference. I've laid a piece of legislation (my name is on a law!), built an IT system to help in an emergency/prevent them, run a key national system, spent 3 months in Brussels assisting with diplomacy... Working in Government allows you to work in such a variety of interesting areas, many of which don't exist outside of government.

Project Management/Delivery combines well with this. You work on something different every day, which keeps it fresh even if you are on a 2-3 year project. Also there is a framework of tools (finance spreadsheets, contract registers, Microsoft Project) that make it easily transferable, so you can get straight into the meaty areas quicker rather than adjusting to a new role.

**What is challenging about your role?**

The scope of work can be huge. I was working on an IT system which worked between 10

government departments, and had to share information with 5 other countries. Managing the expectations of all those people to make sure they were happy is a challenge, even when things aren't going wrong. There must be value in everything which is done. There are very strict rules on approvals for budget and to progress work (the red tape of government is no myth!) and so you must quantifiably prove that what you want to do or are doing still adds that value. If your project is going to be 6 months to a year late, does it still give the benefits needed to make it worth it? Getting people to accurately plan out what they want to do in a level of detail is hard. As a Project Manager I ensure projects are delivered on time, to cost and deliver the benefits they should. People can work how much things should cost and why they do them but pinning people to how long they will take and holding them to that can cause issues.

**What are the benefits of working in this field?**

The work-life balance is great; I have more annual leave than most, and flexible working (from home, 4 day week with compressed hours, job-sharing for part time people) is encouraged. The training and opportunities to grow are much easier to find than the private sector – I have done 4 formal qualifications in 2 years which were all funded, and I have been given responsibilities that most junior staff would not be (running key national systems, multi-million pound contract negotiations, meeting ministers). As well as being able to work on projects and in areas that don't exist in the Private sector! Job security is complete after passing probation, and pension/401k contributions are better than the private sector (as a tradeoff for lower pay).

**What experiences did you have that prepared you for this role? What types of activities were you involved in at Lipscomb or during college that helped develop your skills? And/or what about your first jobs helped you obtain a more desired career?**

An understanding of how Government works is helpful, but not key (an Intro class would be fun, and there is a great 400 level Poli Sci course which takes you to DC and shows you how the bureaucracy works. Or the Model UN!).

There is a big focus on 'Big Picture' thinking. If you can display how you do that (be it taking other courses and showing how they come together to make a coherent plan, working at a place and pulling together multiple areas, or showing how extra-curriculars and your life fit together) then that will help. Otherwise the same areas as a normal job – working at pace, delivering a quality service... Specifically to me, a big thing was coaching with the Middle and High School Soccer teams. It's a great time and shows bringing together many different areas to help be a successful program.

My first job pushed me this way as I was working in an Arms Length Body (Government but not), and enjoyed making a difference. I enjoyed making sure everything was on time and as good as it can be, so the move into full Project Management and Central Government made sense. If you feel you're making sure everyone is on task, or even just the friend making sure you all do different things every now and then, you are doing some of the basics of this career path!

**What do you see happening in the future for these types of careers?**

In the US in particular, Project Delivery is quickly growing and becoming a more recognized profession. Formal qualifications are available such as PMP (Project Management Professional) and PRINCE2 which are transferable globally. There are many more roles coming up in non- construction areas, especially in IT but also in Sales Delivery. It is an area where there will continue to be growth even as other areas are automated, especially in Nashville where companies are moving in and starting up new project.

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Government roles are more difficult to predict, as more or less roles depends on which party is in power! There will always be work within the Public Sector though, and the areas will always be changing. In Tennessee there are less of these roles, but many State Government roles. Many roles in DC will be more Policy focused, which are slower moving.

**What advice do you have for a student considering a career in your profession?**

As said earlier, an understanding of how Government works is helpful, but not key!

And for both Delivery focused roles and Government work, it will be difficult, mainly around people. There are some people who take these jobs for the benefits, and others who will play with the processes to make it work for their interest... 'See the Bigger Picture' and continue making the positive changes which are why you wanted to go in this direction. If you want to work on things that make a real difference to many people (not always tangible or visible, but very important) then this is the work area for you.

**What advice do you have for international students?**

Embrace your time at LU and Nashville in all ways possible. Try everything, and don't say no without a good reason – food at High Rise in the night, soccer intramurals, some of the different classes, even Thanksgiving at a friends (they genuinely do mean it when they invite you, it's not juts being polite). It's a place where you can have some amazing times, and make some amazing friends. Plan your courses out. If you are smart, you can do a minor which is a great way to study something different an additional. Some courses are only offered rarely, it can be worth delaying a Bible class to do a Sports Law class which is only going to be available once in your time there. And discuss with your recruiter and department heads, as you may be able to test out of some of the Gen Eds such as Trigonometry.