

(August 6th, 2012)

If you know someone who you think would benefit from being an Insider, feel free to forward this PDF to them so they can sign up [here](#).

Quick Tips for our Insider friends!

Hey Insiders!

This bi-weekly Quick Tips is coming to you from Redmond, where we're at home without flying for at least two months – a rare occurrence for us. We're back in the work groove again after our vacation in Europe so expect to see blog posts coming from us starting later this month. Why? Because today is the start of our 4-week summer class schedule in Bellevue, WA so we're going to be pretty busy this month! Lots of folks start arriving today and over these four weeks we have attendees from numerous states, Canada, Costa Rica, the UK, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Saudi Arabia – wow!

We've now got two more courses online with [Pluralsight](#), one by Joe ([SQL Server: Transact-SQL Basic Data Retrieval](#)) and one by Jonathan ([SQL Server: Collecting and Analyzing Trace Data](#)) – check them out! That takes our online course total to four, with 5 more coming online by the end of September. I'll be blogging more about our plans with Pluralsight in the next week or two.

I've just kicked off another health check **special offer** – see [here](#) for details.

The most recent book I've read is Irvine Welsh's *Skagboys*. This is the prequel to the blockbuster *Trainspotting* novel from the mid-1990s. It introduces the familiar faces from the book/movie and shows how they got into heroin addiction (skag is slang for heroin) and their lives spiraled out of control. It's a fantastic book, but not for the faint-hearted at all – it's written in colloquial Scots, littered with four-letter words, and will be hard going for most people reading it. However, if you can stomach it, it's well worth it for insight into the Edinburgh drug culture of the 1980s and 1990s.

Please [let us know](#) if you liked what you read/saw here and/or have any suggestions for future Quick Tips.

Note: you can get all the prior Insider newsletters [here](#).

Paul's Ponderings

Now that we're back from vacation it's time for me to take back the reins of the 'ponderings' section of the newsletter.

Kimberly and I have a very busy life – what with working (running our business, teaching, writing, mentoring, and blogging), traveling, hobbies (Lego, reading, electronics, robotics, diving, bird-watching, photography ...), kids, and all the other things that take up time in life. I

recently decided that I was spreading myself too thinly on the writing front and something had to give. I realized that I didn't have enough time for my main blog so Kimberly and I decided to bring to put an end our SQL Server Magazine Q&A blog after two years of making weekly posts. I think this is going to give me more time to spend on in-depth posts on my main blog – something I've missed doing so much this year.

What's interesting about this is my recognition that I was just trying to do too much and something was suffering as a consequence – my main blog – and taking steps to fix the situation.

I think that many of you out there may also be spreading yourselves too thinly in some areas of your lives and should take a moment for some introspection to see whether some activity can be set aside to free up time for more important ones. We're all constantly under pressure to do more and more but there's a limit to how much one can do and still remain effective in all the activities.

Furthermore, I think this is very relevant for a SQL Server newsletter, as many companies have been downsizing their DBA/development/technical staff, leaving fewer people to do more work. This can lead to people being spread too thinly, and becoming ineffectual in some aspects of their jobs.

Call to action: If this is describing you, what can you give up that will allow you to focus on the more important aspects of your job? For example, in one of the [newsletters](#) from December 2011, I discussed automation tools that can relieve you of the burden of many database maintenance activities. And also, consider extending your pondering to your life – is there something that takes up a bunch of your time that you could forego to allow you to focus on the more important things? You may not realize you're being spread too thinly.

I'm curious to hear your thoughts about being spread too thinly, so please feel free to [drop me a line](#), treated confidentially of course.

Video Demo

There's continuing confusion around some of the error log messages that DBCC CHECKDB generates so in this short demo video I explain how they're benign and what they actually mean. The video is around 3 minutes long.

I produced the video in WMV and MOV formats so everyone can watch. You can get the videos:

- For WMV: [here](#)
- For MOV: [here](#)

You can download the demo code zip [here](#).

Enjoy!

SQLskills Offerings

Here are our remaining classes for 2012, with IE1 and IE2 having sold out:

- August 20-24, 2012: High Availability & Disaster Recovery (**IE3**) in Bellevue, WA – USA
- August 20-24, 2012: Immersion Event for Business Intelligence (**IEBI**) in Bellevue, WA – USA
- August 27-31, 2012: Development Support (**IE4**) in Bellevue, WA – USA

We hope to see you in Bellevue this month; otherwise we'll plan to see you in 2013! We're planning to release our 2013 calendar in September.

As a note for those of you who really want us to come to *your* city... we'd LOVE to. However, we just can't be everywhere (we wish we could!). Having said that though, these events are truly *immersion* events and if there isn't one in your city, it might be a good thing to consider the travel and time away. Being in a hotel for the event allows you to participate in evening events, network with your colleagues and focus on the class without the usual requirements of being in your hometown.

To make it easier on you, we work hard to book with hotels where the nightly sleeping costs are reasonable, where you won't need a rental car and in hub cities where flights are cheaper (e.g. Chicago/London/San Francisco/Charlotte). Our Bellevue/Seattle courses are a bit of a departure from this as it's not a major hub city but we balance that with the fact that it's during the summer and many of our past attendees have combined their visit with summer family travel. August in the Pacific Northwest is absolutely stunning (and, it's not disappointing so far this summer!!) and we can give you all sorts of recommendations for sight-seeing if you're interested!

So, that's it for now. We're excited to be starting our Bellevue Immersion Event series and then we'll be getting our 2013 schedule finalized. We hope to see you soon!

See [here](#) for all the details.

Summary

We hope you've enjoyed this issue - we really enjoy putting these together.

If there is anything else you're interested in, we'd love to hear from you - [drop us a line](#).

Thanks,
Paul and Kimberly

Paul@SQLskills.com and Kimberly@SQLskills.com