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've just wrapped up the last of our public Immersion Events this year (IE1 through IE4, plus IEBI). But it's no time for resting because we're all launching into our next major project…

This morning SQLskills and Pluralsight announced a new partnership to bring our entire SQL Server corpus of knowledge online as a huge series of online training courses. Over the next 3-4 years we'll be recording many hundreds of hours of content, which will be available exclusively through Pluralsight, and for free to Immersion Event attendees from 2013 onwards. And, we're sending a special offer to all past attendees as well – lots of exciting announcements this week!

Furthermore, to celebrate the new partnership, Pluralsight is giving **everyone** access to three of our existing courses completely **FREE**! How cool is that? You can watch my Wait Statistics course, Jon's SQL Trace course, and Joe's Basic Data Retrieval course for 30 days, and all you have to do is follow us on Twitter before September 11th.

You can read more about our decision to create online training, our partnership with Pluralsight, how this complements our Immersion Events, and **sign up for the free offer over on my blog: SQLskills training goes online worldwide (and free in September!)**

And in the midst of all this, I've still been reading! The most recent book I've read is Nigel Tranter's *The Bruce Trilogy*. The book is huge, over 1000 pages, and covers the life of Robert Bruce from King Edward I's dismissal of King John Baliol with Robert Bruce as the Earl of Carrick, through the Wars of Independence and beyond. This is an epic tail, and masterfully told, which has been a page-turner for me over the last week. I strongly recommend this to all history fans, and especially those with an interest in Scotland that would like to know what really happened around the time of the *Braveheart* movie, which although good, takes artistic license to a whole new level!

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

In this week's newsletter, I want to let you know that sometimes I think you have to be willing to take a risk to get to a better place in life, especially in your career. Let me tell you a story…

Five years ago I left Microsoft, on August 31st, 2007, just over a month after marrying Kimberly. Leaving Microsoft after almost 9 nine years was a hard decision to make because I really enjoyed working there, and really liked managing teams, but it wasn't allowing me to get closer to my life goals. I'd learned a huge amount since leaving DEC to join Microsoft, not least how to manage people and teams effectively and compassionately.

But my life at Microsoft was lacking. I'd realized that there were some things I wanted from my job that indicated I might have to leave Microsoft and join Kimberly:

- My career passion had become presenting. Conferences, classes, consulting – I loved it. I also loved (and still love) SQL Server and helping people with it, so doing full-time training, consulting and conferences purely on SQL Server would be the perfect job.
- Kimberly and I wanted to work together. We'd done a lot of co-presenting at conferences and found we work incredibly well together. What better way to spend more time with each other than to run her company together, do all our worldwide consulting/training work together, build new areas of the business, expand in new locales, and so on.
- My other life's passions are my two girls (7 and almost 6, back in 2007). I'd missed a lot of things with them over the last few years leading up to shipping SQL Server 2005 and it became of over-riding importance to me that I get to spend more time with them and be available for school trips, etc. during the regular work day. And, four to five weeks of vacation a year didn't cut it anymore given my personal situation. This was the clincher.

I spent a lot of time thinking through the ramifications of staying or leaving, and once I decided to leave, in May 2007, I let the SQL team know my plans so they had three months to transition all my responsibilities to others.

This was a risky step to take, even with Kimberly's well-established business, as I was a senior manager at Microsoft, with a great compensation package, lots of responsibility, and a strong career ahead of me. We were really concerned about the possibility of failure, but being able to go back to Microsoft was always a possibility. Thankfully that wasn't required, and hopefully won't be in future either!

And then on September 3rd, I had my first day as a small-business owner, joining Kimberly running SQLskills.com. And you know the rest of the story; otherwise you wouldn't be reading this newsletter. I took the risk and ended up in a better place.

Call to action: Think about where you are in your career, what your life goals are, and whether you're going to be able to work towards them in the job you currently have. If the answer is no, start thinking about what it would take to move to a position (not necessarily in another company) where you're moving towards your goals. Assess the risks and the rewards. And, if the rewards outweigh the risks, consider taking that leap towards your goals!

I'm curious to hear your thoughts about taking risks and moving on, so please feel free to [drop me a line](#), treated confidentially of course.

Video Demo

In this video Jonathan shows the importance of having the correct failover policy configuration for SQL Agent as a service in a failover cluster, and explains why you might not want to accept the default configuration for your own failover cluster. The video is around 5 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](#)

There is no demo code this time.

Enjoy!

SQLskills Offerings

Apart from our Pluralsight partnership announcement, and the free courses offer, we'll be releasing our 2013 Immersion Event calendar later this week – watch our blogs as well as the next Insider newsletter for details!

So, that's it for now. We hope to see you soon!

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

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