

(March 30th, 2015)

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 newsletter is coming to you from Redmond, where we're in the middle of a seven week stretch at home – a rarity for us! Apart from work, I've been doing all kinds of things including starting off my mentoring project and reading a bunch of books.

Another Pluralsight course has been published – our 40th! This one's from Jonathan and is on using Change Data Capture. You can see an example video demo from it below and check out the course [here](#).

Our Chicago classes are almost all sold out, with seats remaining only in our IEHADR and IEBI classes. The Bellevue classes are filling up fast so don't delay registering to avoid disappointment.

If you need a warm getaway and an infusion of great technical content, consider joining us for our popular SQLintersection and DEVintersection conferences, in Scottsdale, AZ this May – see [here](#) for details. Our SQLintersection show will mainly focus on the troubleshooting and performance problems that we know you're facing today but will also highlight best practices in architecture, design, and SQL Server 2014. For a total of 6 full days – you can immerse yourself into great content with speakers that you know will deliver! Also, use the discount code "SQLskills" and you can save \$50 off registration!

The two most recent books I've read are Hugh Howey's [Wool](#), and Charles Stross' [Halting State](#), and I highly recommend both of them.

Howey's book is a really interesting, dystopian tale about survivors living in a 140-story deep, hermetically-sealed silo in the ground. We don't find out exactly what they're survivors of, but that's detailed in the prequel book [Shift](#), which I'll get to in April. Hard to describe the story without giving away some of the plot twists. Suffice it to say I enjoyed it so much I bought the prequel and sequel immediately!

Stross' writes very different sci-fi from Howey. His books are set in the near future, and this one's especially cool for me as it is set in Edinburgh, where I lived for 8 years. The premise is a robbery takes place inside an online multi-player world and the investigation quickly gets tangled up in all kinds of nefariousness and goes south quickly. It's highly entertaining and there's very believable technology in play. Again, I already have the sequel waiting to be read...

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

Paul's Ponderings

It's been about six weeks since I started my mentoring "class of 2015" with 54 people and I've only just finished digesting all the information everyone sent me about themselves and what they want help with, and kicking off individual mentoring plans.

One thing that came up again and again was that most of the people involved haven't had a formal mentor before. I find that very unfortunate, because having a good mentor is one of the coolest things that can happen during your career, and being a good mentor to someone is one of the most fulfilling things you can do in your career.

You may not think you'd be good as a mentor, but if you step back and think about all the things you've done in your professional life, all the people you've dealt with, job change decisions you've made, projects you've worked on, and just the sum total of all the experiences you've had, I think you'll find that you have more to offer as a mentor to someone than you might initially suppose.

Another thing to think about when considering being a mentor is that mentoring someone is also a way for you to grow yourself. It's a commitment to help someone, and you're responsible for giving good advice and helping them solve problems that they have. And don't just think technical mentoring – there are a huge number of areas where you can help someone outside of just answering technical questions and offering technical advice. I've found that non-technical mentoring is more fulfilling even than technical mentoring, to be honest, and my non-SQLskills mentoring is all non-technical.

One of the questions I asked all my mentees is what they want help with and to help them I gave some suggestions, based on areas I've helped people with over the past 15 years or so (I didn't start non-technical mentoring until I joined Microsoft back in 1999). Here's the list:

- General career development
- Deciding whether or not to change jobs
- Becoming a consultant
- Résumé review and enhancement
- How to hire people
- Increasing influence
- Learning how to work with their manager
- Communication skills (e.g. writing emails, writing documents, writing clearly)
- Community exposure
- Value of certifications
- Managing a team
- Persuasion skills
- Questioning skills
- Dealing with stress and frustration
- Work/life balance

- Blogging
- Presentation skills and public speaking
- Time management
- Evaluating SQL Server skill set
- Goal setting
- Dealing with people
- Mentoring people

Now think of all the experiences you've had, and whether you'd be able to offer advice to someone on any of these subjects. I bet the answer is 'yes' to at least a few of them. And that means you'd be able to mentor someone who would benefit from your help.

Call to action: Consider mentoring someone. There's probably someone in your organization, in your group of friends, or in your local SQL Server community and online acquaintances who would love to have a mentor. Maybe talk to you user group about a mentoring-focused meeting and then having folks pair up? Or, just have the UG discuss issues as a whole? Consider getting a mentor. It doesn't matter how senior you may think you are; there are always areas where you can improve and benefit from the advice of someone else.

Video Demo

The demo video this time is from Jonathan's brand new Pluralsight course [SQL Server: Change Data Capture](#). This demo is from the course module on performance tuning and optimization of CDC operations and shows the detrimental impact that DML triggers can have on the amount of data that's captured.

The video is just over 4 minutes long and you can get it in WMV format [here](#).

Enjoy!

SQLskills Offerings

We've released most of our classes for 2015. We are likely to add one more domestic delivery of IEPTO1 in the 2nd half of the year but that is currently the only course we're considering.

Finally, to help your boss understand the importance of focused, technical training, we've added a few new items to help you justify spending your training dollars with us:

- [Letter to your boss explaining why SQLskills training is worthwhile](#)
- [Community blog posts about our classes](#)
- [Immersion Event FAQ](#)

Upcoming Immersion Events

Chicago, IL

- April 27-29, 2015: **IE0**: Immersion Event for the Accidental/Junior DBA **SOLD OUT!**
- April 27-May 1, 2015: **IEPTO1**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1 (formerly IE1) **SOLD OUT!**
- May 4-8, 2015: **IEPTO2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2 (formerly IE2) **SOLD OUT!**
- May 4-8, 2015: **IEBI**: Immersion Event on Business Intelligence **5 seats remaining!**
- May 11-15, 2015: **IEHADR**: Immersion Event on High Availability and Disaster Recovery (formerly IE3) **4 seats remaining!**

Bellevue, WA

- June 8-12, 2015: **IEPTO1**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1 (formerly IE1)
- June 15-19, 2015: **IEPTO2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2 (formerly IE2)

London, UK

- August 24-28, 2015: **IEPTO1**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1 (formerly IE1)

Dublin, Ireland

- October 12-16, 2015: **IEPTO2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2 (formerly IE2)

See [here](#) for the main Immersion Event Calendar page that allows you to drill through to each class for more details and registration links.

Spring SQLintersection

This year our Spring SQLintersection conference will be the week of May 17th in Scottsdale, AZ. See [here](#) for details. Don't forget to use the discount code "SQLskills" (without the quotes and it isn't case-sensitive) and you can save \$50 off registration. We hope to see you there!

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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