(January 4th, 2016)

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,

Happy New Year!

This newsletter is coming to you from Redmond, where we had a great time over the holidays chilling out with family and relaxing around the house – I hope you had a great holiday as well!

I published my traditional end-of-year blog posts for 2015; consider doing something similar just so that you have a record of your year. It's great fun to do:

- 2015: the year in books
- 2015 review: the year by the numbers

We've got a lot of new content, Pluralsight courses, and projects planned for 2016 so we're looking forward to 2016 being an exciting year! I wish you the best of luck in achieving your new goals.

Our classes are filling up in Chicago (April/May), London (June), and Bellevue (September), including two brand new classes on SSIS, and we're running an expanded (to five days) IEPDS class on Practical Data Science. Schedule details are here and you can read more on the new SSIS classes here.

In fact, we've **added another Chicago IEPTO1 during the week of May 16th** as the one in April has only one seat left. We've also added an **IEPTO1 course in Dublin** in October – see here for details.

The two latest books I've read are Daniel Silva's *The Confessor*, and Patrick O'Brian's *The Mauritius Command*.

Silva's book is the third in his series about Israeli secret agent Gabriel Allon, and is just as good as the first two. In this one, Allon gets mixed up in a series of murders around investigations of the Catholic Church's tolerance of (and according to the book, in the case of some priests, probable complicity in) the Holocaust during WWII. Fast paced, action packed, and highly recommended!

O'Brian's book is the fourth in the superb Aubrey-Maturin series. This book sees them in the Indian Ocean taking on a French squadron to conquer La Reunion and Mauritius, with Jack flying a broad pendant as a Commodore. Highly recommended for fans of the genre.

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

Paul's Ponderings

(This editorial is adapted from the one at the start of 2014.)

At the start of every New Year it's always tempting to come up with a series of resolutions about things you're going to start doing, and it's tempting for me to write an editorial about planning to do new things. It's really easy to come up with ideas for cool things to start doing, which is why it's the easy route to take at the start of a new year.

But before you go too crazy with new ideas, consider a post mortem of your goals and plans from 2015. Look back at the year and see what didn't go well, and then figure out how to improve on those things. In my opinion, that's going to have a more positive effect on your life than continuing to do poorly on those things, and also try to add new things as well. (*Kimberly comment: the SQL development team could learn from this too…☺*)

One of the things I had reinforced through the year while I mentored 50+ people in the SQL community is that *everyone* has something with which they need help or advice. I strongly advise you to get a mentor outside your management chain (and preferably outside your company) – someone to whom you can bounce questions and one that has no vested interest – other than just helping you out.

And I'm not just talking about things in your work life; I'm also talking about things in your personal life. Here are some examples of things that may not have gone too well in 2015, just to get you thinking:

- Your work/life balance
- The support your immediate manager gave you
- Your interactions with some of your colleagues
- Your interest in some aspects of your job
- Your career/skills development
- Keeping on top of performance fires
- Keeping track of goals and to-do lists
- Saying 'no' when you're already overloaded
- Accepting a poor status quo at work instead of looking for a better job
- Finding time for disaster recovery planning/testing
- Finding time for all the little things that it's easy to procrastinate about
- Finding time for your hobbies
- Finding time and motivation to become/stay healthy
- Keeping in touch with old friends and distant family

- Finding time to reads some books or learn something new that's non-work
- Your work/life balance (again, because it's *so* important)

All of these can cause significant amounts of stress, so fixing them should be the first priority.

Call to action: Before you set cool, new goals for 2016 (whether at work or at home), fix the stuff from 2015 that was broken or didn't go so well. Not only will it feel good but it'll also reduce stress. And try to get a mentor!

Video Demo

The demo video this time is pulled from Jonathan's excellent Pluralsight course *SQL Server: Advanced Extended Events* and shows how to use Extended Events for debugging lock escalation problems.

The video is just under 8 minutes long and you can get it in WMV format here.

The demo code is available here.

Enjoy!

SQLskills Offerings

We've released all of our 2016 classes for registration, listed below. It's possible that we might add one or two classes in Chicago in November, but that will depend on the Fall conference schedule as well as demand.

To help your boss understand the importance of focused, technical training, we've also added a few 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

- **IE0**: Immersion Event for Junior/Accidental DBAs
    - April 25-27
- **IEPTO1**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
    - April 25-29 **NOTE: Only one seat remaining!**
- **IEBI**: Immersion Event on Business Intelligence
    - April 25-29

- **IEPTO2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2
  - May 2-6
- ****NEW** IESSIS1**: Immersion Event on Learning SQL Server Integration Services
  - May 2-6
- **IEPDS**: Immersion Event on Practical Data Science
  - May 9-13
  - **NOTE: This is now five days in length.**
- **IEHADR**: Immersion Event on High Availability and Disaster Recovery
  - May 9-13
- **IEPTO1**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
  - April 25-29 **NEW!!**

London, UK

- **IEPTO1:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
  - June 13-17
- **IEPTO2:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2
  - June 20-24

Bellevue, WA

- **IEPTO1:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
  - September 12-16
- **IEPTO2:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2
  - September 19-23
- ****NEW** IESSIS2:** Immersion Event on Advanced SQL Server Integration Services
  - September 19-22

Dublin, Ireland

- **IEPTO1:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
  - October 3-7 **NEW!!**

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

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