(September 22nd, 2020)

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

Note: As an Insider, you can read all prior Insider newsletters here.

Quick Tips for our Insider friends!

SQLskills Adds Verified Badging, Continues to Celebrate 25 Years, and Presents Super September Savings!

From Kimberly:

If you attended training in 2012 or later, you will have already received an email from us regarding the badge(s) that you have waiting for you! However, some of you used different emails when you registered and we've had a lot of bounces! So, you might need to contact US for complete details. Also, it's important to know that we're only badging for courses delivered on supported versions of SQL Server (currently, SQL Server 2012 and higher) so classes delivered in 2010 and 2011 aren't eligible for badges as they were focused on the now-unsupported versions SQL Server 2008/2008R2.

These verified credentials / badging are through Credly/YourAcclaim; this is the same company through which you receive / display your Microsoft certification badges. Check out my detailed blog post here, including the anatomy of our SQLskills badges. And, for those of you that don't have a login on YourAcclaim yet – creating one is FREE and EASY and can be done when you receive your *issued badge email* from me.

So, how do you receive your badge(s) for courses on SQL Server 2012 and higher?

Enter your details on our "BadgeMe" page here.

I'll triple check your name, course dates, etc. and then send you your official badge! You can link this to your LinkedIn "Licenses and Certifications," tweet your credential, display it on FaceBook, send it in email, and even print a certificate to PDF directly on YourAcclaim (once you've accepted the badge – there's a SHARE button at the top of the credential page on your dashboard). These are a GREAT way to display your knowledge and credentials to your peers!

Here's an example of our IEPTO1 badge for SQL Server 2019:

In addition to the great content, we really hope you enjoy this new benefit of having attended a SQLskills Immersion Event. And, of course, let me know if you have any questions about these new badges or our upcoming courses.

Updating your SQL skills to SQL Server 2019

For those of you who haven't been in one of our Immersion Events in quite some time… **UPDATE your SQL skills to SQL Server 2019 for HALF PRICE!** Register in September to RETAKE IEPTO1 or IEPTO2 as an online class running this October and pay only 50% of the normal course price. This is to be used by students who previously attended IEPTO1 or IEPTO2 on a version of SQL Server earlier than SQL Server 2019. Some of the benefits of *Updating your SQL skills to SQL Server 2019* with an online course this Fall:

- Update your knowledge to the latest version of SQL Server (SQL Server 2019)
- Review content that you may not have looked at in some time… (wink, wink, nudge, nudge)
- Access your course recordings for the next 12 months so you can review the content
- Receive a copy of your course content in PDF form (for searching and taking notes electronically)
- And, as usual, the ability to ask questions and interact – and really dive deep into SQL Server!

Celebrating 25 Years with 25% OFF!

And, if you or a colleague wants to attend a new course that you've not previously attended, you can still receive 25% off in celebration of our 25th anniversary! Read here for more complete details: **SQLskills Celebrates 25 Years with 25% Off Fall Courses**

Above all, thanks so much for your continued support of our content and our courses and we hope you're staying safe during these difficult times.

SQLskills Classes

Live, ONLINE classes – filling up FAST: our classes this year will all be live-streamed online in September and October, as it's not feasible to run in-person classes for the foreseeable future. We're running them as a series of half-day sessions so it's less onerous then the usual 9-hour days in our in-person classes. Attendees will also get a recording of the entire class – something we've never done before! See here for new student discounts.

- **IECAG**: Immersion Event on Clustering and Availability Groups
  - Half days on 10/6-8
- **IEPTO1**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
  - Half days on 10/5-9 and 10/12-16
- **IEPTO2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2
  - Half days on 10/19-23 and 10/26-30
- **IE0**: Immersion Event for the Junior/Accidental DBA
  - Already in progress
- **IEAzure**: Immersion Event on Azure SQL Database, Azure VMs, and Azure Managed Instance
  - Already in progress

You can get all the details and registration information through the class schedule page here.

Kandio job candidate assessments: we've teamed up with Kandio to produce technical assessments to help companies screen candidates for job recruitment. If you want to make sure someone really knows what they say they know, check out the assessments here.

Online 2019 class recordings: you can buy recordings of all our three-day online classes from 2019, for as little as US$299 each. See here for all the details.

SQLBits: Kimberly, Erin, and I will all be presenting at SQLBits next week! Their precons are:

- Erin: Performance Tuning with Query Store in SQL Server and Azure
- Kimberly: Statistics4Performance: Internals, Analysis, Problem Solving

SQLintersection: The Spring show has been canceled and everything has moved to the Fall show in Las Vegas in December. More details here nearer the time.

Book Review

From the 2015 archives, I give you Charles Petzold's *[The Annotated Turing: A Guided Tour Through Alan Turing's Historic Paper on Computability and the Turing Machine](.)*. Another addition to the gallimaufry of Paul's reading topics... Petzold's book is one of the hardest books I've ever read, because of the amount of sheer concentration and thought necessary to understand Turing's paper and the explanation of it. We watched the brilliant movie The Imitation Game back in February (2014) and I'd always wanted to read Turing's paper so this seemed the ideal opportunity. Don't think that my saying it was hard meant I didn't enjoy it; Petzold did a fantastic job of explaining Turing's paper and the book is excellent. It's not for the faint-hearted though – significant amounts of complicated theoretical math and logic are explained and need to be understood. If you want insight into the foundations of computer science, and you're a geek like me, this book is for you.

The Curious Case of…

This section of the newsletter explains recent problems we've helped with on client systems; they might be something you're experiencing too.

I was helping with a corruption case last week where queries would fail on a table but *DBCC CHECKDB* came back clean, initially… You can read through my explanation [here](.)…

Ponderings…

(From me this time. I've started working with my mentees this year and some of the conversations reminded me of an illustrative story that I wrote about five years ago – enjoy!)

Jonathan found this story online and suggested it for a newsletter topic:

> Carrots, Eggs, and Coffee Beans
>
> A young woman went to her mother and explained that life was very hard for her. She didn't know how she was going to survive and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling, and it seemed that each time one problem was solved, a new one arose.
>
> Her mother took her to the kitchen, filled three pots with water and placed each pot on a high fire. Soon, the pots came to a boil. In the first pot she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed a pouch of ground coffee beans.
>
> In about 20 minutes, the mother of the young woman turned off the burners. She fished out the carrots and the eggs and placed them in separate bowls. She then ladled out the coffee, which had resulted from the coffee beans in the third pot, and poured it into another bowl. Turning to her daughter, she instructed, "Tell me what you see."

"I see carrots, eggs and coffee," the young woman replied.

Her mother brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. Upon feeling the carrots, the young woman noted that they were soft. Her mother then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed a hard-boiled egg.

Finally, her mother asked her to sip the coffee. The young woman smiled as she inhaled the coffee's inviting aroma and savored the taste of its rich flavor.

Then she asked, "But, what does it mean, Mom?"

Her mother explained to her that each of the objects had faced the same adversity: boiling water. However, each reacted very differently. The carrot went in strong, hard, and unrelenting but, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior but, after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened.

The ground coffee beans, on the other hand were unique. After being subjected to the boiling water, they had actually changed the water.

"So," the older woman asked her daughter, "which one are you? When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean?"

(Author unknown, appears in numerous blogs/websites online)

This actually ties in with some of the conversations I've been having with my mentees about dealing with bad situations at work.

We all go through tough times at work (and at home) – so which are you?

Do you start out strong, like the carrot, but gradually lose that strength over time as things wear you down? The work analogy would be constant stress, pressure, and frustration forcing you to give in and allow work to rule your life.

Do you start out ok, like the egg, but gradually become hardened and cold internally while still presenting the same façade to the world? The work analogy would be the daily grind making you jaded and uncaring, maybe even contemptuous, while still pretending to enjoy your work.

Or are you like the coffee beans, where you change your environment for the better? The work analogy would be making changes in the workplace to improve it to remove stress, frustration, pressure, and so on.

Call to Action

We all spend a large proportion of our lives working, so it makes sense that you don't let *work* change *you* if there are problems – it should be the other way around. Sometimes though, it's not

feasible or possible to change your existing work environment for the better, in which case moving to a different environment (i.e. changing jobs) is the thing to do. In my mind, this is still being strong as it takes a lot of confidence to change jobs, especially if you have to consider the stability of family support and income as well.

Be the coffee beans!

#TBT

(Turn Back Time…) Blog posts we've published since the previous newsletter plus some older resources we've referred to recently that you may find useful.

The theme for the TBT this time is backups:

- My Pluralsight course: *SQL Server: Understanding and Performing Backups*
- My TechNet Magazine article from 2009: *Understanding SQL Server Backups*
- My SQL Server Magazine article from 2011: *Advanced Backup and Restore Options*
- My TechNet Magazine article from 2009: *Recovering from Disasters Using Backups*
- *Backup blog posts* from our accidental DBA series
- Blog post: *New script: How much of the database has changed since the last full backup?*
- Blog post: *Importance of having the right backups*
- Blog post: *Importance of validating backups*
- My blog post category on *Backup/Restore*

I hope you find these useful and interesting!

Video Demo

In this Insider video, Tim continues the series of Azure-related videos by demonstrating how you can lock down an Azure SQL Database from changes. This is a common requirement for certain organizations to maintain the state of a database for various regulations. Tim starts by showing the copy database feature in the Azure portal compared to having to perform a point-in-time restore. Next he shows how to use the "Locks" feature to prevent changes to the resource within the Azure Portal and how that has no effect on preventing changes to the database via applications such as SQL Server Management Studio. He finishes up by showing how you can still easily set an Azure SQL Database into a read-only state that prevents any data changes, including preventing himself from making changes.

The video is about 6.5 minutes long and you can get it in WMV format here.

Enjoy!

Upcoming SQLskills Events

Our 2020 classes have moved to be entirely online in September and October and are all open for registration!

You have multiple learning opportunities as every event has a different focus as well as different benefits – from deep-technical training in our Immersion Events to a more broad set of topics at SQLBits / SQLintersection! And, of course, one benefit you'll always get from in-person events is networking; we hope to meet/see you at an event soon!

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
- So why do you want to come to our training? And the winners are…
- Community blog posts about our classes
- Immersion Event FAQ

LIVE, Online Immersion Events:

Fall 2020

- **IECAG**: Immersion Event on Clustering and Availability Groups
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- **IEPTO1**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
  - Half days on 10/5-9 and 10/12-16
- **IEPTO2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2
  - Half days on 10/19-23 and 10/26-30

Click 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

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