How to build your career

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About Me

- Microsoft, Big Data Evangelist
- In IT for 35 years, worked on many BI and DW projects
- Worked as desktop/web/database developer, DBA, BI and DW architect and developer, MDM architect, PDW/APS developer
- Been perm employee, contractor, consultant, business owner
- Presenter at PASS Summit, SQLBits, Enterprise Data World conference, Big Data Conference Europe, SQL Saturdays
- Blog at JamesSerra.com
- Former SQL Server MVP
- Author of book “Reporting with Microsoft SQL Server 2012”
My career path

Developer (perm)

Developer (consultant)

Developer/DBA (own company)

DBA (perm)

Architect (consultant)

Microsoft technical pre-sales
Agenda

- Build your brand
- Goal setting
- Always Be Learning
- Blogging
- Presenting
- Articles/Books
- Twitter/LinkedIn
- Certifications
- Interviewing
- Networking
- SQL Server MVP
- Consulting/Contracting
- Working for Microsoft/partners
- Hot fields/skills
- Salary negotiations
- Recruiters
- Resume tips
- Final thoughts
Don’t be a nobody!
Build your brand - benefits

- Get found by recruiters
- Get found by companies
- If consultant, more credibility with clients
- Improve chance of getting hired
- Improve chance of getting conference abstracts accepted
- Be asked to write articles/books
- Better chance of becoming a Data Platform MVP
- Groupies – Just kidding!
Goal Setting

What do you want to be when you grow up?

• Set 1-year, 3-year, and 5-year plans
• Track your progress
• Reach out to others for help/mentoring
• Take jobs with new technologies
• Do you have 5-years experience or 1-year repeated 5 times?
• Loyalty is a career killer
Always Be Learning

- Play and learn at night
- Watch videos
- Read blogs
- Read books and articles
- Attend conferences
- Follow discussion groups
- Surround yourself with smart people
- Be productive with downtime at work
- Have a growth mindset
Blogging

- Personal “Bing”
- Shows your knowledge and skills to employers
- Syndicated – sqlservercentral.com
- Document solutions
- Improve writing skills
- Learn new technology by writing about it
- Way for recruiters/employers to find you
- Way to become “known” in the community
- Replaces client documentation
- Always have in back of mind and keep list of blog topics
- Wordpress.com
Presenting

- Brown bag session at work
- Toastmasters/Dale Carnegie
- Meetups/user groups
- Local PASS events
- Virtual PASS chapters
- SQLSaturday
- PASS Summit
- Improves your presenting skills
- Practice make perfect
- Be animated, have a sense of humor, show passion, ask questions, but someone will still fall asleep
- Post to slideshare.net
Articles/Books

• Whitepapers for sites
• Contact magazines
• Contact publishers – Packt, or self-publish
• Find or become a co-author
Twitter/LinkedIn

- Join and keep profile updated
- Link with everyone
- Use professional looking picture
- Way for recruiters/employers to find you
- Mention your blog postings and presentations
- Join groups
- Read status updates
LinkedIn Sales Navigator

Your Social Selling Index

1,637 of 42,087
Team SSI rank

Top 1%
Industry SSI rank

Top 4%
Network SSI rank

Current Social Selling Index

73 out of 100

Four components of your score

19.13 | Establish your professional brand
15.51 | Find the right people
13.56 | Engage with insights
25 | Build relationships

People in your team

51 out of 100

People in your team have an average SSI of 51.
You rank 1,637 of 42,087.
▲ Up 149 spots since last week

People in your industry

29 out of 100

Sales professionals in the Information Technology & Services industry have an average SSI of 29.
You rank in the top 1%
No change since last week

People in your network

48 out of 100

People in your network have an average SSI of 48.
You rank in the top 4%
No change since last week
Certifications

- Azure Database Administrator Associate
- Data Analyst Associate
- Try to become SME for certifications (grandmasters.net)
- Cert helps if employed by Microsoft partner
Interviewing

• Interview frequently
• Get to the point where you look forward to interviews
• Great way to make connections
• Get a feel for skills companies are looking for
• It’s a small world
Networking

- Setup meetings with people at conferences
- Talk to co-workers about their role
- Email people with questions
- Attend get-togethers
- Talk with recruiters
- Most jobs are filled by referrals/who you know
SQL Server MVP/Data Platform MVP

- Talk to MVP community program manager
- Starting blogging April 2011, MVP October 2013
- Nomination process
- Nomination form (via Microsoft employee):
  - Presentations
  - Blogging
  - Technical forums
  - PASS volunteering
- Benefits:
  - MSDN subscription
  - Private forum/Yammer group
  - Skype account
  - Email distribution list
  - Product group events
  - MVP global summit
Consulting/Contracting

- Great way to learn new technologies
- Great way to meet new people and network
- Great way to find out what you really like doing
- Great way to make more money!
Working for Microsoft/partners

• Microsoft has so many roles you have no idea about
• Tons of resources
• Constant learning
• Partners build 95% of the solutions
• Microsoft has a ton of resources to help partners
Hot fields/skills

- Big data, data warehousing
- AI
- IoT
- Data Scientists
- Migrating to cloud
- Cloud-anything
Salary negotiations

• You won’t get more money if you don’t ask
• Everything is negotiable
• Ok to exaggerate
• Mention if they agree to your salary you will accept the job
Recruiters

• There are very good one’s and very bad one’s
• Look out for resume hoarders
• Be blunt in asking for job description and salary range
Resume tips

• The whole point is to get you an interview
• A few pages is fine if you have the experience
• Point to LinkedIn for experience older than 10 years
• Always be thinking of items to add to your resume
Final thoughts

• Take risks!
• It’s work, but not hard work
• Embrace change, don’t fall into a comfort zone (Be comfortable being uncomfortable)
• Don’t have the time: Figure It the %$&* Out!
Resources:

- Enhance your career by blogging! http://bit.ly/1nohdgS
- How to use LinkedIn to enhance your career http://bit.ly/1nokwos
- Salaried employee vs contractor http://bit.ly/1nolelw
- DBA’s, want to earn the big bucks? Learn BI: http://bit.ly/wJ7u5u
- Microsoft certification changes: http://bit.ly/2flbUn1
Questions?

James Serra, Big Data Evangelist
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Follow me at: @JamesSerra
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