

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

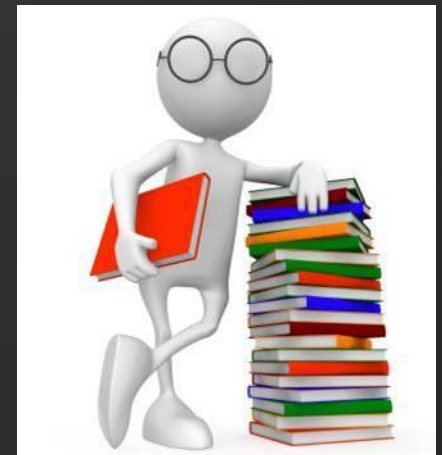
What do you want to be when you grow up?

- 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



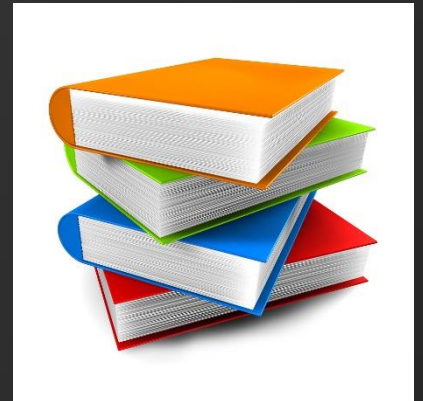
Presenting

- 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

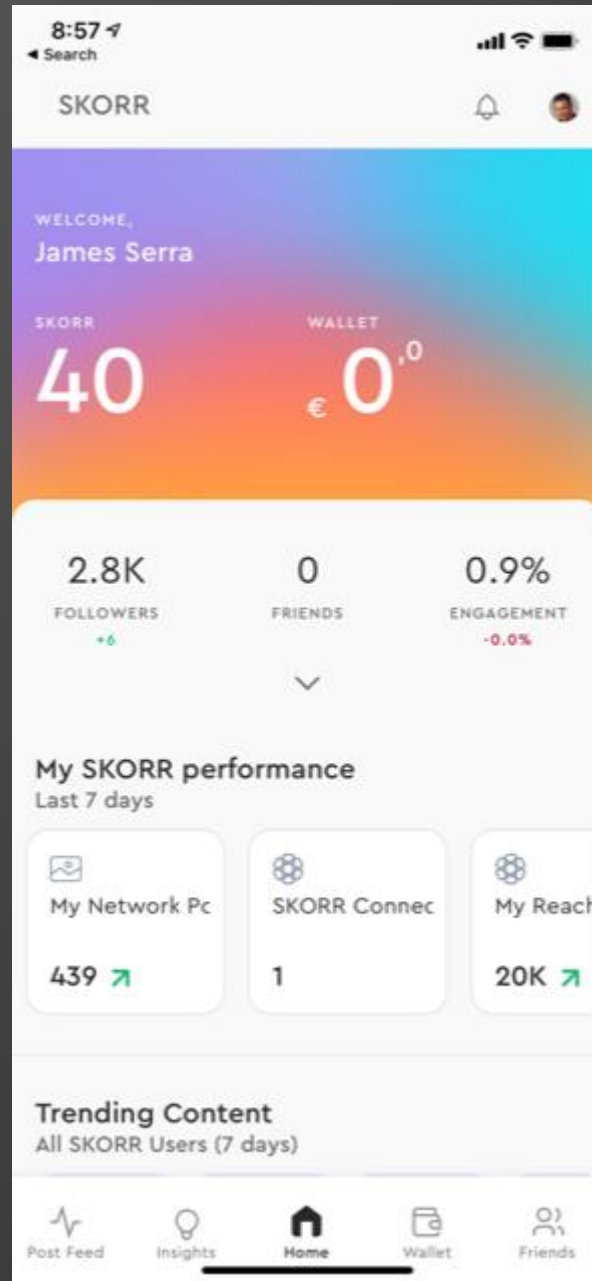


Twitter/LinkedIn

- 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



Skorr



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



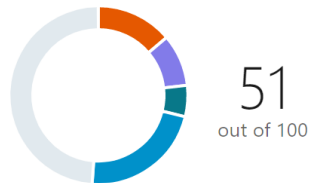
19.13 | Establish your professional brand [?](#)

15.51 | Find the right people [?](#)

13.56 | Engage with insights [?](#)

25 | Build relationships [?](#)

People in your team



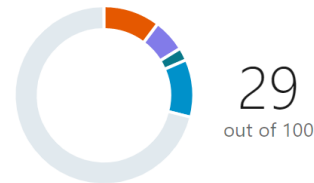
51
out of 100

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



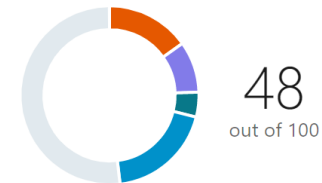
29
out of 100

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:

- How to become an expert in your field <http://bit.ly/zJ9Ztq>
- ABL: Always Be Learning: <http://bit.ly/zDsnkj>
- Enhance your career by blogging! <http://bit.ly/1nohdgS>
- How to use LinkedIn to enhance your career <http://bit.ly/1nokwos>
- Blueprint for consulting riches <http://bit.ly/X2vMrf>
- Presenting Tips <http://bit.ly/1nokMnp>
- Microsoft Certifications and MVP's – What are they? <http://bit.ly/z5sWls>
- PASS Business Analytics Conference: the ultimate networking <http://bit.ly/1nol4KV>
- Salaried employee vs contractor <http://bit.ly/1nolelw>
- Consultants: 1099 or W-2? <http://bit.ly/AhJv1k>
- Thinking about taking a contract position? Questions to ask: <http://bit.ly/ztOfpz>
- DBA's, want to earn the big bucks? Learn BI: <http://bit.ly/wJ7u5u>
- The best IT job boards: <http://bit.ly/yp9r3l>
- Microsoft certification changes: <http://bit.ly/2flbUn1>

Questions?



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Email me at: JamesSerra3@gmail.com

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Link to me at: www.linkedin.com/in/JamesSerra

Visit my blog at: JamesSerra.com (where this slide deck is posted under "Presentations")