

SINGULAR NEWSLETTER



INTRODUCTION

We have come to the end of another eventful and productive three months. In South Africa, winter has come and gone and unfortunately for the team in the United Kingdom winter is only beginning. No need to despair though as the festive season

is just around the corner. As we begin the last push of 2022, Singular would like to thank each and every one for their hard work and determination in the past three months and we look forward to ending the year with a bang. ■

NEW STARTERS

Singular would like to give a warm welcome to all employees who recently joined us and would like to wish them luck on their journey. ■

Cape Town

- Johannes Beukes
- Joseph Wangu
- Garad Watkins
- Theodore Maja

Johannesburg

- Benjamin van Staden
- Llewellyn Beaver
- Swathi Neela
- Georgina Ballantyne
- Raymond Mulligan

Outsourcing

- Hermien Bosch

Finance

- Sara Whitfield

Learners

- Ashton Chetty
- Brendan Pillay
- Craig Francis
- Samantha Sollamoothoo

Financial Services

- Amanda Lai
- Barbra Chauke
- Bareng Dire
- Buhle Madodana
- Charles Mvula
- Dawood Moses
- Florence Mashamaite
- Gaopalelwe Motsamai
- Imraan Sathar
- Kenneth Ndou
- Kubalo Mpofo
- Larry Kok
- Lehlohonolo Moloi
- Linda Moamoge
- Maseitshero Modise
- Muhammed Ward
- Nadine Davids

Financial Services

- Narriman Hendricks
- Nataniel Ryan
- Neo Sithole
- Nokuthula Zungu
- Nonkululeko Mdeni
- Nosipho Nkabinde
- Nsovo Nkhwashu
- Phakamile Moloi
- Phindile Sikhosana
- Phumudzo Nemaguvhuni
- Precious Mapoga
- Princess Motha
- Qhayiya Jijana
- Riaanon Rorke
- Richman Mchunu
- Rixongile Maluleke

Financial Services

- Sarah Makhubele
- Shanice Morris
- Sifundo Mabaso
- Simone Kelmovitz
- Siyabonga Madlopha
- Solly Tlhatlogi
- Sylvia Maluleke
- Thabang Raphela
- Thandeka Nxumalo
- Thato Motaung
- Tony Micka
- Tshenolo Mongale
- Tshephiso Baleki
- Zandile Mhlophe
- Zizipho Ndulelisa

Welcome



WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE

Staff share issue July 2022

This is the 13th year that our Singular staff share scheme has been running. In the July issue this year, we were oversubscribed by a whopping 60%! This means that the staff wanted to buy 60% more shares than were available to buy.

We are so encouraged by the incredible demand that the staff continues to have for purchasing shares in Singular and what that represents in terms of sentiment towards the business and belief in its future.

The loan funding introduced as part of scheme 2 has proved to be very helpful in assisting staff with these purchases and the loans have been paid down rapidly, assisted by the good dividends generated on these shares paid on a bi-annual basis.

As a point of interest, we currently have 85 staff members who are shareholders in the company!

Singular dividend July 2022

One of the privileges of my job is on the days that Singular pays dividends to its shareholders. 98% of our shareholder base is staff, which have formed the backbone of the company over our 20 years. During these periods, I see such gratitude from the employees who are able to reap the rewards of their investment; a combination of investing their hard-earned money and contributing to the growth of Singular through their daily roles.

On 8 July, Singular paid the second dividend relating to our 2022 financial year. The next dividend is expected to be in early 2023. During my 17 years with Singular, it still humbles me how Singular has never missed a payment, whether it be a salary payment, dividend payment, supplier payment or otherwise. It sounds menial but the sustainability of Singular over the years and the company's ability to honour its commitments is something I am incredibly proud to have been a part of.

Phuthuma Nathi dividend

Singular smoothly facilitated yet another year's dividends payments from Phuthuma Nathi to its shareholders of R1.5 billion. Facilitating funds of this magnitude is an enormous responsibility; a process that we have been looking after since Phuthuma Nathi listed on our OTC platform called Equity Express in 2013.

Phuthuma Nathi is one of the most successful B-BBEE schemes in South Africa and Singular has been a proud partner of the MultiChoice scheme since it listed. Singular's OTC platform was the first of its kind in South Africa and was a game changer for the industry.

Equity Express (not to be confused with EESE), as it was then known, was incredibly specialised. The brilliant technology that underpinned Equity Express ensured a trading platform that was recognised for its wonderfully



slick trading, matching and settlement! Based on the success of Equity Express and the partnership with MultiChoice, Singular was able to attract many other large listings on to its platform over the years until the OTC market became more heavily regulated.

At this juncture, it is worth noting that the relationship with MultiChoice represents a partnership that spans over 20 years. It is long standing partnerships like this that stand as a pillar of our business, resulting in shared success over many years and the opportunity to grow. The sustainability and diversity of clients that Singular maintains is a cornerstone of what makes this such a successful business today.

New investment in people and culture

It is so great to have Kirstin back, taking on her new role as head of culture. Singular is already benefiting from the significant



People of Singular
Stu & Jocelyn

passion and energy that she has put into further contributing to the processes and culture that celebrate and support our staff; from performance management improvements, staff wellbeing, on-boarding, training and the list goes on! Kirstin is an incredible example of someone who embodies the Singular values and authentically flies the Singular flag. I am delighted with the business' decision to position Kirstin in a full-time role to focus purely on our staff, an investment that we believe will only strengthen the purpose, happiness and contribution of our people in the years to come.

Additionally, thank you to all the staff that continue to put in such great efforts in keeping our people happy and engaged (soccer, Zebula getaways, gaming, social events, amazing home-made lunches, barista coffees, birthday celebrations etc.). All these initiatives require a significant amount of time and planning from members of our team and we really appreciate

each of these contributions and the impact it has on our culture.

A reinvigorated commitment to training and the growth of our people

I applaud the enormous effort that has gone into training over the last few months, "over and above" the day to day training that is carried out by staff in support of one another. To mention a few:

- The consistent and high-quality technical training programme implemented by JP Swart and the team
- Leadership training focused on the growth of career coaches and project leads through engagements with Legitimate Leadership
- The Soft Skills Masterclass sessions by our Cape Town managers (Stuart Pattison and Kyle Dutton)
- The innovation that has been brought to our learnership programme through the introduction of the Holberton Schools software engineering training platform
- Various coaching sessions to enable leadership roles in our business e.g. career coach training from Kirstin
- The Friday Knowledge articles from Kyle

We are very proud of Singular's exceedingly high level of training and commitment to the growth of our staff. I hope each of us recognise and appreciate all the time and effort that is invested in them by others at Singular and subsequently grow into people that contribute back into others (the next Singular generation) as well.

Quotes to live by

I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious. - [Albert Einstein](#)

There is only one way to avoid criticism: do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing. - [Aristotle](#)

Being a little weird is just a natural side-effect of being awesome. - [Unknown](#) ■

Helga



NEW CLIENTS

We are always thrilled to welcome new clients to our business. Let us keep building that long list of new clients because we can never have too many.

Join us in celebrating the following divisions on their successful acquisition of new clients and well done to the Outsourcing division for the *trifecta of wins*. ■

Johannesburg

- **African Rainbow Minerals**
Website enhancements
- **iSabelo** Dividend process enhancements
- **FNB Retail Billing** Vendor enhancements
- **Ni-Da Group** Fleet Management Solution

Cape Town

- **Clever Profits** Investment platform

Investor Relations

- **Transaction Capital**
Integrated report & sustainability report
- **Louis Dreyfus Company**
Sustainability report
- **FAR Property** Peer benchmarking analysis

Register Analytics

- **Vukile Property Fund**

ShareTrust

- **Cipla**



EMOTIONAL WELLNESS SUPPORT

CAMAF Emotional Wellness Programme

- 086 170 0600 Option 4
- emotionalwellness@camaf.co.za
- Monday to Friday, 08h00 – 16h00

LifeLine

- 011 728 1331 / 011 728 1347

Suicide Crisis Line

- 0800 567 567
- SMS 31393

SA Depression and Anxiety Support Group Line

- 011 262 6396



LONG SERVICE RECOGNITION

We take pride in fostering a dynamic work environment and are grateful for the long-standing Singular family members. ■



Cadyn Bridgman



Natascia Valengo



Mike Palmer



Palesa Mkhize

DID YOU KNOW?

Our Berners-Lee meeting room is named after Sir Tim Berners-Lee, a British computer scientist who has been credited as the inventor

of the World Wide Web. Berners-Lee was born on 8 June 1955 in London, England and is the eldest of four children.



Sir Tim Berners-Lee

SINGULAR NEEDS MORE PEOPLE LIKE YOU

We are looking for remarkable individuals who share our core values of fairness, integrity, care, collaboration, gratitude and excellence.

We want enthusiastic, self-starters who are prepared to play the long game.

If you know of any full stack developers looking to grow their career in software delivery, please contact Kirstin Purves.



Computers came naturally to him as both his parents worked on the Ferranti Mark 1, which was the first commercial computer. After graduating in 1976 from the University of Oxford, Berners-Lee designed computer software for two years at Plessey Telecommunications Ltd and had several positions in the computer industry, including a stint from June to December 1980 as a software engineering consultant at CERN, the European particle physics laboratory in Geneva. While at CERN, Berners-Lee developed a program for himself, called Enquire, that could store information in files that contained onnections ("links") both within and among separate files—a technique that became known as hypertext.

In 2004 he was awarded a

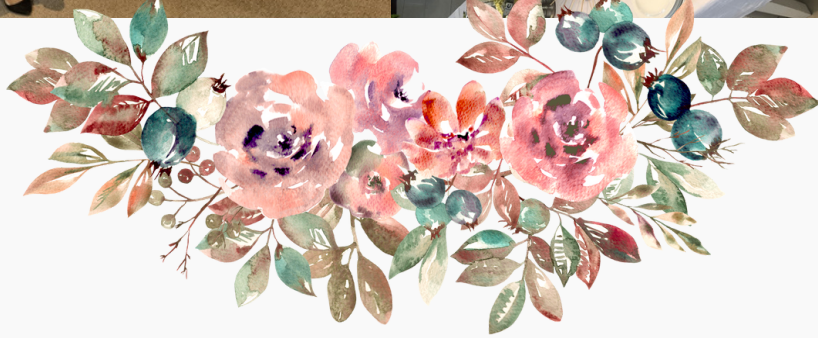
knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom for his pioneering work and was awarded the Inaugural Millennium Technology prize of €1 million by the Finnish Technology Award Foundation. Berners-Lee co-founded the World Wide Web Foundation and is the director of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), which oversees the continued development of the Web. He was named in Time magazine's list of the 100 Most Important People of the 20th century and has received a number of other accolades for his invention and was honoured as the "Inventor of the World Wide Web" during the 2012 Summer Olympics opening ceremony in which he appeared working with a vintage NeXT Computer.

Read more about him [here](#). ■

SPRING DAY CELEBRATIONS

The Singular staff in Joburg enjoyed a bright and sunny spring day on 02 September. Spring adds new life and beauty and is said to be nature's way of saying it is time to have fun! Here are some pictures of how staff members welcomed spring. ■





SINGULAR GOLF TOURNAMENT

Singular Golf Tournament

The Singular golf group is still alive and well. Players have the opportunity to explore a different course every month with exciting formats, giving players a different experience each month. The experience is kept casual and fun with a few awards handed out every now and then.

Once there are enough players, Singular will kick off the Sunshine Tour where the Singular golfer of the year will be crowned.



If you would like to join, please contact [Nikita Dartchiv](#) for more information. ■



DRESS CODE

Understand your context and audience, and apply logic

- Presentable and appropriate ✓
- Well-groomed ✓
- Neat and tidy ✓

You're good to go!

WORK-FROM-HOME

Hit your deadlines from home up to 3 days a week. Manager discretion may apply.



GET TO KNOW NIC WATSON

UK Senior Manager

How did your journey with Singular begin?

My journey with Singular began back in November 2011 while I was working for i-Intelligence which later merged with Singular. I met up with Nick shortly after completing my studies at Rhodes in 2009 but could not do any work as I had already planned to head over to the United Kingdom to travel and drive tractors, which I ended up doing for two years. While in the UK, I kept in touch with Nick and upon my return he connected me with Andre at i-Intelligence.

Shani interviewed me and ended up becoming my first manager. I spent my first two years at Liberty and later moved to Nedbank, working with Hersheal and Cadyn for three years which was awesome and it was around 2013 or 2014 that we officially became part of Singular. I officially moved to the UK in 2016 and have been here since then.

How has the journey been?

Initially, I was a bit worried because at the time Singular seemed like a huge corporate and there were only 18 of us at i-Intelligence. We had quite a strong culture and were all very

similar in terms of our values and how we went about doing things.

How is the UK at the moment? We imagine it must be a bit sombre with the Queen's passing.

We stay outside of London so we do not feel it as much. Though there are people who are quite affected by it. My wife has been very interested in the processions and build up to the funeral.

What has been a highlight in your journey with the company?

There have been quite a few work highlights. The one that most probably stands out is an exciting project I was involved in with a client called 'Salary Finance'. They are a small start-up that has done a lot of good and has helped people get out of debt. We started working with them in 2016 when there were only seven people employed by the company. Today, the company is worth a billion dollars and employs 400 employees. It was an amazing experience to be part of such a high growth start-up. Though I was not officially employed by them, they considered me a part of the team and allowed us to build their platform for them.



How often do you come back to South Africa?

I used to come back to South Africa at least five times a year before the pandemic started. A large number of our family is in South Africa and we try and come back for the holidays and when we do I try and add an extra week on and work from the office in Joburg.

Is there a difference in culture between Singular UK and Singular SA?

The team here is quite small which makes it difficult to have a sense of a Singular identity. We do not have a permanent office and make use of We Work rented office space or work at Salary Finance's offices but we certainly do try and emulate the South African values. The time we spend on calls with the South African team makes us feel very



much part of the overall culture.

Looking ahead, are there any plans to expand the UK branch?

Absolutely, that has been the goal from the beginning. We managed to grow from one client to four and will look to grow the team in line with client growth.

Another focus for us is putting in a lot of effort to grow our product Neolend, which was built by the Cape Town branch.

What do you do when you miss South Africa?

We try to have as many braais as we can and we have a South African shop that we go to for biltong and Ouma rusks, though I don't have it as much because it costs three times the price. We have a strong South African community here and most of my friends are from South Africa.

What do you normally get up to on weekends?

I spend most of my time with my two-year-old son, Huxley. Besides that I do quite a lot of trail running. About a month ago, we moved out of London to a little countryside village which is perfect for Huxley and me to go for a run while pushing him in his pram. I also play cricket from time to time and we have a little kayak that we take on the river for fishing.

Are you bingeing on any series at the moment?

We do stay in and watch a bit of TV on the colder days. As we come out of summer, a majority of our days are spent outside running, fishing and braaing. We also watch a lot of cartoons to accommodate Huxley.

What is your favourite meal?

Pretty much all Thai food but particularly a dish called Pad-Kra-Prao. It is a popular Thai dish that consists of meat such as pork, chicken, beef, and seafood stir fried with Thai holy basil and garlic. I'm lucky enough to get it on a weekly basis because my wife lived in Thailand for two years around the time I was driving tractors in the UK. In that time, she learned how to cook a lot of Thai food.

Do you have a favourite music

genre that you listen to?

People that know me well, know that I am a massive Blink-182 fan. It's punk rock music. I actually used to be in a band back in the day because I idolised Blink and wanted to be like them. So, it's either Blink-182 or Taylor Swift.



What would you advise someone who has just joined Singular?

Getting out of your comfort zone and getting to know people other than the members of your team is very important because as you grow within the company, you might change teams or divisions and want to build a name for yourself and building solid relationships is the best way to do that. I find initiatives such as the Zebula trip are great because they really help in this regard. The technical stuff and learning take a bit of time but it's the relationships that matter. ■



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SINGULAR LONDON?

The last three months has seen a lot of change in the UK. We have bid farewell to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Boris Johnson and our very own Daan Jacobs who has moved on to the next stage of his career. After a good summer with temperatures reaching 40°C, winter is swiftly approaching,



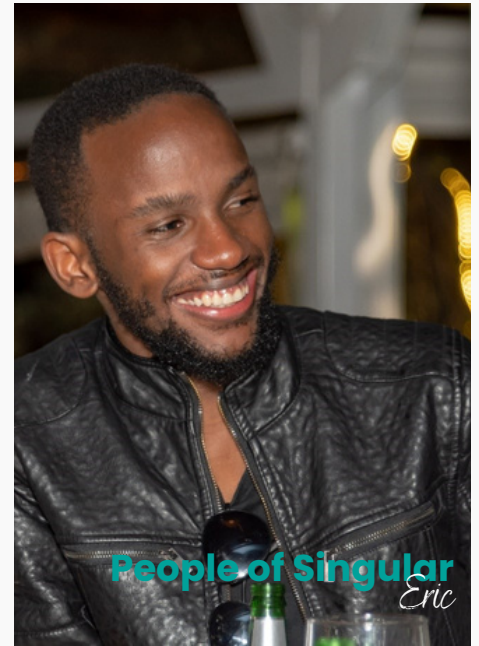
and our clocks are due to turn back on the 30th of October which means that you guys in SA will be two hours ahead of us again! Andrew, Jayden and Nic meet as a team every week at a WeWork in Paddington to have a little more Singular-focused time and a few beers together. ■



DOCUMENT NAMING PROTOCOL

ShareTrust has developed an easier way to rename large batches of files which saves time in having to rename files manually one by one.

Please get in touch with any member of the ShareTrust team to assist you should you need this. ■



CLANS

If you would like to actively participate in building capabilities in any of the following areas within Singular, please contact the relevant Clan Leader:

- Back-end development & databases - JP Swart
- Front-end development and UX/UI - Kelly Syrett
- DevOps - Cadyn Bridgman
- Governance & security - Chris de Klerk
- Service Management - Shani Zoutendyk
- Leadership - Kyle Dutton



HONING YOUR SOFT SKILLS

By Stu Pattison and Kyle Dutton



Active Listening

Active listening helps you build trust and understand others people's situations and feelings. In turn, this empowers you to offer support and empathy. Unlike critical listening, active listening seeks to understand rather than reply. The goal is for the other person to be heard, validated, and inspired to solve their problems.

Purpose and benefits

Building trust

You and your employees are happy when you meet each other's respective goals. For an employer, it is the organisational success and for the employees, it is the tasks and objectives they are assigned to complete.

Productivity

When higher management does not hear the employees' views and ideas, it fuels employees' resentment and lowers productivity

Conflict resolution

Misunderstandings, different viewpoints, or a lack of recognition often create conflicts in the workplace. There is nothing good communication cannot resolve

Healthy work relationships

People who listen to understand form better relationships and are more empathetic in their approach

Self-empowerment

When you practice active listening and understand what is beneficial for you in the workplace, you expand your perspective in that direction and empower yourself

Acceptance

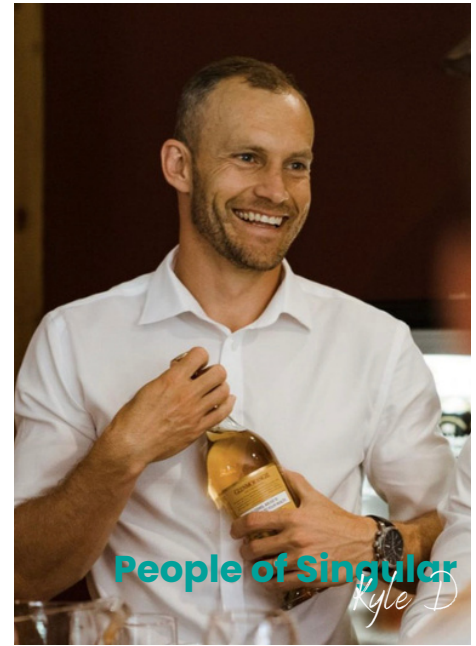
Every company has its own company culture and each member adds value to it. The root of this culture starts with acceptance. Acceptance of its values and vision by all its members.

NB: Active listening assists with sales and recruitment too!

How can we listen?

Here are six key listening skills:

- Pay attention
- Withhold judgement
- Reflect
- Clarify
- Summarise
- Share



Final thoughts

Listening is more than being quiet while the other person speaks until you can say what you have to say. It's the art of understanding their words.

Active listening is a skill and can be acquired and is a fundamental tool in building trust. Remember, understanding, encouraging the speaker to speak, focus, and keeping broad perspectives is the key. ■



IMPROVING COLLABORATION BETWEEN BUSINESS ANALYSTS AND DEVELOPERS

By Kirst Purves

Kirstin was invited by the South African Chapter of the IIBA (International Institute of Business Analysts) to present on a topic as part of their Thursday micro-class series. She chose to speak about Singular's "secret ingredient" when it comes to our solution delivery success: our exceptional collaboration between developers and business analysts, and the fact that most of our people have blended technical and analytical skill-sets.

TOOLS & TECHNIQUES
MICRO-CLASS

Improving Collaboration Between Business Analysts and Developer

01 Sept 2022
19.00 - 20.00

Register@ <https://bit.ly/3pVErTQ>

Kirstin Purves
Head of Culture

IIBA South Africa Chapter

Here are her presentation notes:

The challenge

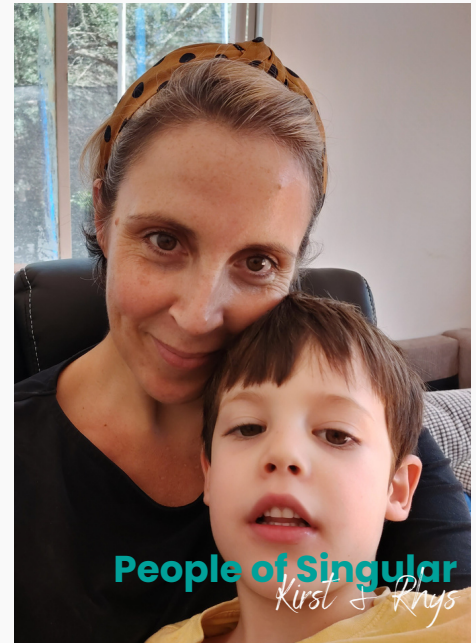
There exists a peculiar tension between business analysts and developers. Anyone who

has worked in software delivery will know what I mean – it's a tacit disregard for the value that the other brings to the table. Business analysts think they have all the answers and are frustrated at the lack of vision, accountability and urgency on the part of the developers. Developers are annoyed by the pie-in-the-sky solution being shoved down their throats. It's a pity because separately the roles bring no tangible value. A solution on paper is meaningless. Code that doesn't solve the problem, equally so. Yet there are some organisations where business analysts and developers never interact.

The solution

It's the symbiotic nature of the business analyst / developer relationship that gives each role its meaning and value, and ultimately has the potential to drive success in software delivery. It's a subtle shift in mindset that requires both parties to leave their egos at the door and come together to deliver value for the client and the end user.

I'm not saying that Singular is perfect, but I do believe there are some things we do differently that sets us apart – we do collaboration well.



In agile environments collaboration is easier to achieve because it's often built into the framework. If you're working in a smaller consulting type environment, like I do you will naturally find fewer silos. At Singular specifically we've never subscribed to the notion of distinct software delivery roles, where the business analyst just gets to play business analysis. The business analyst is often the PM, the scrum master, and yes, sometimes even the developer.

We arguably have greater levels of empathy across disciplines than most software delivery environments, and in many ways it's the thing that sets us apart from other service providers in this space. That's not to say that larger organisation with perhaps more siloed structures cannot achieve better collaboration. It just means that business analysts in those organisations have to



the business problem down to its bare essence, formulating the requirements, and it being met with a complete lack of enthusiasm, shared vision or a sense of accountability.

The business analyst needs to take the lead and the initiative to improve collaboration in order to deliver the right solution to the client. It's a labour of love for which you probably won't receive any accolades, but it's the right thing to do for the team and for the client.

What does this look like at Singular?

Collaboration

I've mentioned previously that at Singular we believe that collaboration drives our success. Collaboration within our teams and collaboration with our clients. It really is central to our ethos and is further underpinned by the values of fairness, integrity, care, gratitude and excellence. As a disclaimer, the examples I'm going to present are things that have worked for me in my environment. I understand that not every environment is the same, and that you may have certain constraints that prevent you from doing certain things in the ways I will mention. If that is the case, at least be mindful of the underlying values inherent in each example and see how they can manifest in your particular

situation.

First off, and this is a controversial one, we believe in being in one another's physical presence at least twice a week. It's a reminder of our humanity and our need for connection, so that when we aren't sharing the same physical space the quality of our interactions and engagements is maintained.

Secondly, when we're in the office our teams sit together – project managers, business analysts and developers all sit together. The tacit insight gained from overhearing conversations is gold and elevates a team's ability to collaborate effectively. It's in those overheard conversations, outbursts of mobile compatibility frustration, small celebrations of coding success and a multitude of other seemingly insignificant impromptu interactions and observations, where the real magic happens.

Fairness

Ensure that you balance the needs of the client and the developers. As business analysts we are sometimes so focused on pleasing the client, to the detriment of the developer. We make unreasonable demands because we want to please and we don't want to appear incompetent. Sometimes clients make illogical demands or don't always know what's best.

take a more active approach to breaking down barriers. Don't wait for someone else to do it for you. And this really brings me to the crux of what I'd like to convey in this session: business analysis is ultimately a leadership role.

Nobody in a delivery team is better placed to contribute towards achieving better collaboration. As a business analyst there are so many factors outside of your control – when you hand over the specification to the development team you have no control over how it will be received, interpreted and implemented. Yes, you are probably (and should be) involved in the QA, but by then the misunderstandings are well entrenched and it's difficult to course-correct. I think so much frustration stems from the blood, sweat and tears that have gone into understanding and distilling



Cramming in additional features days before a live deployment is not okay. Failure to recognise these moments, or even worse, recognising these moments and choosing not to protect the development team to avoid confrontation, can feel like a betrayal. Apply an element of critical thinking to what you do and then do the right thing. Clients are also human beings – have the uncomfortable conversation, offer a compromise or simply say ‘no’.

Having said that we still need to hold developers accountable. As business analysts we often throw our hands up and ask “Why can’t they just do what I ask them to do?” or “Why is this taking so long?” or “I could not have made the requirement any clearer!” or “Where is the urgency?” We cannot hold a developer accountable for a deliverable they had no say in articulating and you cannot expect them to meet a standard of excellence without setting the standard in the first place. So often developers only become involved at the implementation stage with little to no context of how we got here. In our client-centredness we tell our clients compelling stories about a potential solution, but we don’t extend the same to the developers who are responsible for building it. We treat them like a worker on a production line and then wonder why they don’t share our enthusiasm.

Give the developers the context and the purpose behind the solution so that it feels more tangible and they can take ownership. It cannot come from anyone else besides the business analyst.

You understand the problem the best. Most developers do what they do because they want to make the world a better place. They want to know who they are doing this for and why, and they shouldn’t be expected to operate in a vacuum. At regular intervals remind the team why we are here. What are we building? Who are we building it for? Why does it matter? Before a single line of code is written spend 2 days taking the developers through the business problem and introduce them to the end-users by name.

Integrity

Effective collaboration between business analysts and developers requires humility over ego. We know that exceptional business analysts look to simplify complexity – to distil a problem down to its bare essence. In agile environments particularly, there is then a tendency to immediately launch into what I call “solutioning mode”. Perhaps some of you might recognise this condition – you’re making tonnes of assumptions, you’re frantically mocking-up wireframes, and backing them up with process flows, then you’re patting yourself on the back for doing all the



developers’ thinking for them. They’re going to love you. Only they don’t. Because it’s never going to work given the architecture and the data structure. And now you’re miff and they’re miff.

This is why backlog refinements are so important. It’s that little known scrum ceremony that most people skip because...meh, meetings. If you are having these sessions, there is this misconception that product owners and business analysts need to have all the JIRA tickets fully defined and complete prior to that session so that you can regale the developers with your brilliance and they can hit the ground running when the new sprint kicks off. After having my spirit crushed on numerous occasions, I came to realise the only input required for a backlog refinement session is a well-crafted user story – an end goal



expressed from the user's perspective. No mention of features or acceptance criteria. And then I kept quiet while the developers discussed how best to meet that goal. I would listen and add my piece when necessary to ensure that the nuances of the problem were being considered and factored into the solution. Only then would I embellish the ticket with acceptance criteria, perhaps a mock-up to bring it to life a bit, flow diagrams and other detail, but still making it recognisable to the developer as something they had a hand in formulating.

In defining the solution, the developers have a greater sense of ownership and you can hold them accountable for delivery. It demonstrates a respect for what the developer brings to the table and it builds trust within the team.

If the tech lead on your team is

not your "work bestie", you should ask yourself why not. Make a concerted effort to build a relationship with the tech lead. They will be your biggest ally and your presenting a united front will buy you loads of street cred. Where this relationship plays out the best is when drafting acceptance criteria.

Care

Show care and attention towards developers. They are after all working to turn your vision into reality. When the going gets tough and all-nighters need to be had, you're not required to hang around but at least buy the pizza. There is a certain helplessness that one feels as a business analyst the week of a go-live. You lack the technical skills to be of any practical use in those final days and hours. The best you can do is roll up your sleeves, get testing and keep the coffees coming. And that's just fine. When things go wrong or we've over-committed, there's a simmering urge to point fingers, but don't get sucked into that blame game mentality. Ask how you can help and do the necessary.

Respect them as individuals. And be particularly respectful of their time. It's their most precious asset. We often needlessly rope developers into meetings and don't allow them the space to actually get the work done. To be successful, developers must spend countless hours of screen-

time writing code, debugging issues and immersing themselves in logical problems, all of which requires uninterrupted focus.

Another practical time-saver, particularly when testing developer's work, is to document bugs in video format. It was a quick way to replicate the steps taken before an error occurs and there is no ambiguity. It can also be revisited if needs be. No meeting required. Promote a shared sense of ownership and success.

Gratitude

Developers deserve more thank-yous. We overlook the stack of auxiliary tasks that developers perform in order to bring a solution to fruition - the back-and-forth with the product owner, getting approval from an over-extended architect, hounding a third party for an API integration spec - those seemingly "insignificant" errands that hardly ever make it onto the JIRA board.

A simple email to say 'thank-you' or a surprise cappuccino (yes, paid for out of your own pocket) can go a long way towards feeling acknowledged and appreciated.

Make mention of features well delivered on the forums available to you. Something I used to do during sprint reviews was to credit the individual developers by name before demo'ing a new



feature. I would talk through some of the challenges that the developer encountered during implementation so that the client can also recognise the humanity in the delivery process, which in turn made it easier to balance client and developer needs which I mentioned previously. If a feature was particularly impressive and I knew it would add a great deal of value to the client, I would get the developer to do the demo themselves so as not to steal their thunder.

Excellence

Any organisation worth being a part of will have some sort of

mentorship or career coaching initiative. As a business analyst working closely with the developer you have an opportunity to feedback to their line manager regarding their performance and contribution.

Don't ever feel you have to compromise on quality and don't accept mediocrity, but if you're going to hold a developer accountable for delivering a solution you need to ensure that they buy into the solution, they understand what the standard of excellence is and they have committed to getting it done. ■

ONGOING TRENDS IN CAPE TOWN

It has been a quiet month for the Cape Town division as the late winter rains set in.

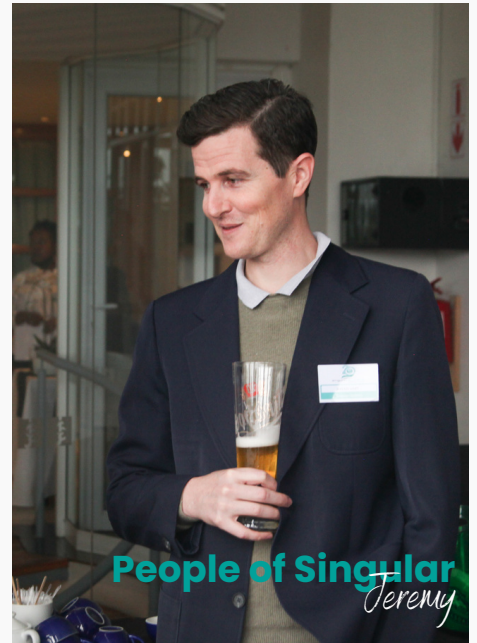
Despite this, Hugh Rodseth created a pub quiz team that participated in a few events in and around the southern suburbs. Although Hugh himself is a master pub quizard, the team did manage to pick up a last place in the most recent event. Onwards and Upwards!

Both the soccer and surfing groups took a brief hiatus over the past few months but with

summer around the corner, these will start again in earnest.



Finally, we began our office renovations on 1 September. The team have been very accommodating and progress has been swift, so we hope to have these completed by the end of the month. ■



OUR VALUES



Fairness



Integrity



Care



Collaboration



Gratitude



Excellence



UPCOMING NEWLYWEDS

We would like to congratulate the following Singular employees on their engagements and marriages.

- Nick Hodgson & Fleur
- Jeremy Hart & Anel
- Cindy Amoedo & Brett
- Hendrik de Wet & Suney
- Julian Springer & Monique Marshall ■

Singular wishes you and your families a lifetime of love, happiness and beautiful memories.



NEW PARENTS

Nikhil Kara & Yogita welcomed their precious baby girl into the world on Saturday, 22 October. Congratulations! ■



KUDOS

- Thank-you Greg Wessels for absolutely smashing it on the Repayment Arrangement demo with Ops - *Tamara (Salary Finance)*
- Big thanks to you, Jayden Pienaar for accommodating last minute requests during this week's deployment - *Marwah (Salary Finance)*
- Kudos to Dakota Chong, Dean Fouche and Francesca Basopo for the successful go live this Friday! - *Roan Roestoff (Team Lead)*
- Kudos to Quintin Bennetts for writing and passing his Microsoft Azure Developer Associate exam this morning! More DevOps skills around Singular and credits towards MS partnerships! - *Mike Palmer (Mentor)*
- Dina Nathoo and the monolith team - congratulations on successful, on time delivery of the debt sale build. Thank you Dina for your great updates and being so clear, in control, organised and a general pleasure to work with. - *Hope Latham (Salary Finance)*

HELP JULIAN DODGE THE PYRAMIDS IN CAIRO

For those who are not aware, Julian Springer (Cape Town) represents South Africa for Dodgeball (yes, it is a real sport) and they have qualified for the World cup in Cairo at the end of the year. As a result, they are doing a really awesome fundraising raffle with over 100 prizes. If you are feeling generous or like having a bit of a gamble, feel free to buy a ticket or 2!



If you want more information or want to get involved, please contact **Julian Springer**. ■



Grab life by the balls!



SOCIAL @ SINGULAR

Johannesburg Soccer

Soccer Tuesdays are still on and are now better than ever. Ladies and gents meet at the Waverly Sports Club every Tuesday for what can be described as fun, sweat and tears (for the losing team of course). We do not judge whether you are a pro or amateur, what matters is that you exercise while having plenty of action-packed fun. We encourage everyone to come and experience awesome comradery and sportsmanship with fellow colleagues and a well-deserved cold beverage after every game.

The sessions start at 17:00 every Tuesday afternoon. It's always best to arrive at least 10 minutes before kick-off. You can confirm your attendance on DT Express should you wish to come. We look forward to seeing new faces soon!



PS. We have another upcoming Johannesburg derby that is not to be missed!

Battlefield 4 Tournament

Singular Gaming has transitioned into a fully-fledged gaming clan called '**Singular Warfare**'.



Here are some reasons to play Battlefield 4 if you have not yet joined:

- Get to know other Singular employees on a more social level
- You participate from the comfort of your own home
- You become part of a game where teamwork is more important than your skill
- We have awesome merchandise
- Interact with other gaming communities outside of Singular

If you ever wondered what you need to play Battlefield 4, you need the following:

A PC with the following specifications -

Minimum

- OS: Windows 8 32-bit



- Processor: Processor (AMD): Athlon X2 2.8 GHz Processor (Intel): Core 2 Duo 2.4 GHz
- Memory: 4 GB RAM
- Graphics: Graphics card (AMD): AMD Radeon HD 3870 Graphics card (NVIDIA): Nvidia GeForce 8800 GT
- Network: Broadband Internet connection
- Storage: 30 GB available space

Recommended

- OS: Windows 8 64-bit
- Processor: Processor (AMD): Six-core CPU Processor (Intel): Quad-core CPU
- Memory: 8 GB RAM
- Graphics: Graphics card (AMD): AMD Radeon HD 7870 Graphics card (Nvidia): NVIDIA GeForce GTX 660
- Network: Broadband Internet connection
- Storage: 30 GB available space

Game is available on [Steam](#) and [Origin](#).

Like and subscribe to our YouTube channel: [Singular Warfare YouTube](#).

Join Singular Warfare on Discord: [Singular Warfare Discord](#).

For more information you can contact [Louis van der Westhuizen](#). ■



People of Singular
Hilton

KUDOS

- Big shoutout to Leendert van der Bijl for his continuous support with US prod issues! You have been such a great addition to the team since day 1! – *Marwah (Salary Finance)*
- Thank you to the team for the assistance in getting the dividend and vesting releases into production before those events. There was actually quite a bit of work done and I would like to commend Hilton Gallagher and Steven Fredman for efforts. – *Nedbank*
- Well done to a tremendous team effort Jaco van Zyl, Greg Wessels and Tamara collaborating and working many extra hours to support SF in recovering from the PI Duplicate Collections incidents, which impacted thousands of clients. – *Quinette Docherty (Salary Finance)*
- Kudos to the BES CRM team of Frikkie Rossouw, Louis van der Westhuizen, Quintin Bennets and Jacques Swart for a MASSIVE and ultimately successful Dynamics 365 (and other) release this weekend! – *Mike Palmer (Tech Lead)*

YEAR-END FUNCTION

Singular is fortunate enough to be able to host a year-end function in December, so get your floral dresses and fedoras on and

let's celebrate life! ■



YOUR OPINION MATTERS

We continue to look for ways to improve future content as we build the newsletter. What better way to make improvements than to hear from you, the reader?

Email your feedback to Sibusiso Madonsela or Musa Mkhari

So please feel free to hit us up with any fresh ideas of content, or features you would like to see on upcoming newsletters. ■



Until next time...