



**THE**  
**SECRET WEAPON**  
**FOR A SUCCESSFUL SRE CAREER**

————— **...and it's not what you think!** —————



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**THIS IS A  
PRESENTATION ON  
SOFT SKILLS**

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# SOFT SKILLS VS HARD SKILLS

## SOFT SKILLS ARE...

- ❑ Often linked to personality traits
- ❑ Harder to measure and practice
- ❑ Usually things you want all employees to have, regardless of their role

## HARD SKILLS ARE...

- ❑ Job/Role specific
- ❑ Things you list on your resume
- ❑ Easier to measure and practice



# THESE PRESENTATIONS USUALLY SUCK...

## NOT IN CONTEXT

Typically delivered by HR or an external party in a context that differs from your team/role/industry

## TOO GENERIC

Taught in the context of “leadership” or you’re told things like “just have more empathy”

## AWKWARD

Often involve cringing at poor acting or even worse - role playing

## TONE DEAF

Sometimes presented just to tick a box, or by people who don’t *really* care

# I PROMISE THIS WILL BE DIFFERENT

## CONVINCE & MOTIVATE

THEY ARE A  
COMPETITIVE  
ADVANTAGE

NOT JUST FOR PEOPLE  
MANAGERS OR  
EXTRAVERTS

**YOU** CAN DEVELOP  
THESE SKILLS

## SPECIFIC & RELEVANT

FROM ONE TECHNICAL  
PROFESSIONAL TO  
ANOTHER

HIGHLIGHT THE  
RELEVANCE TO SRE

## PRACTICAL ADVICE

EXPLAIN THE  
FUNDAMENTALS

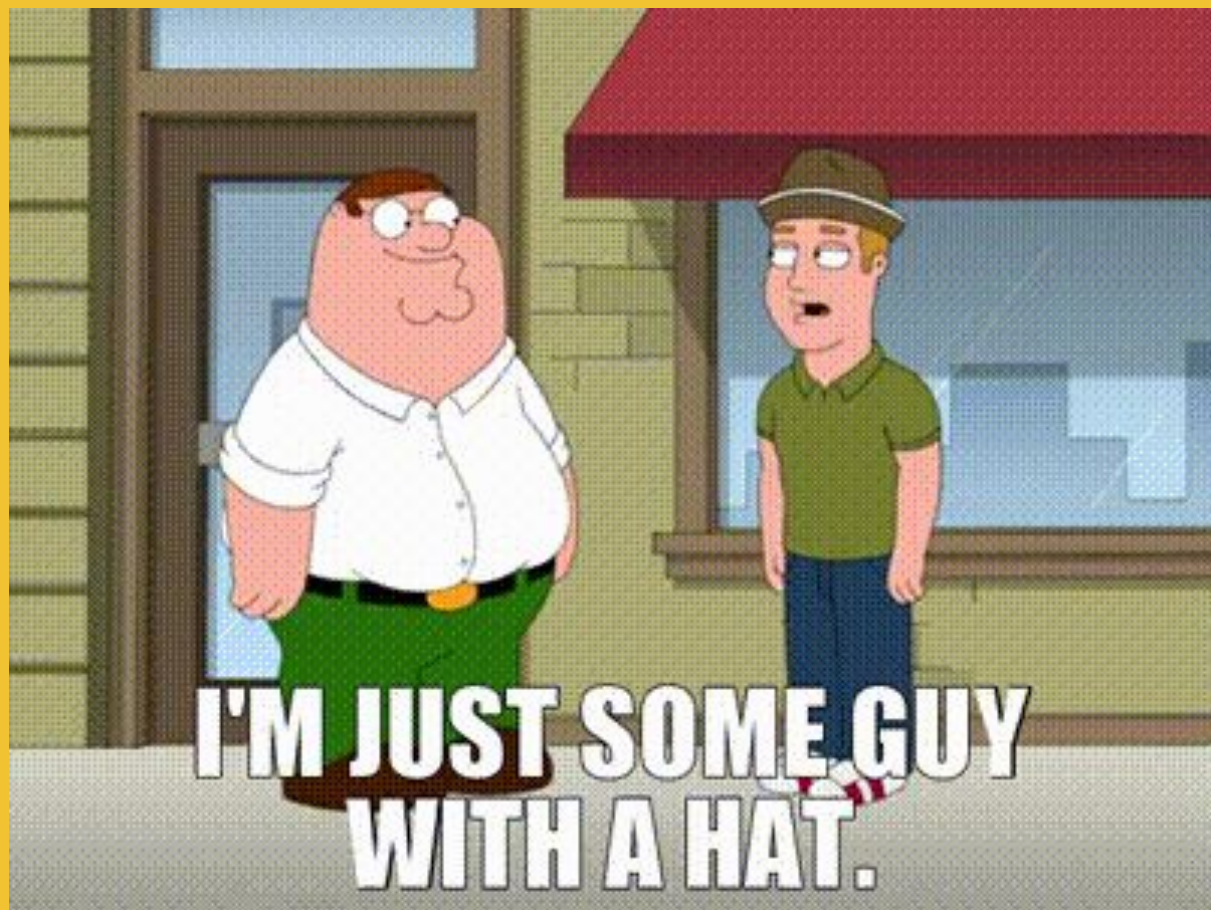
USABLE DRILLS FOR  
DEVELOPING YOURSELF

## ENTERTAINING & ENGAGING

KEEP YOU AWAKE AND  
ENGAGED UNTIL THE  
END

A PRESENTATION YOU  
WILL REFER BACK TO

REAL STORIES ABOUT  
REAL PEOPLE



# MY CONTEXT

2006 - 2012

2012 - 2017

2017 - 2019

2019 - NOW

IT ASSISTANT,  
HELPDESK TECH

ON-SITE TECH,  
LINUX SYSADMIN

TECHNICAL  
MANAGER

SITE RELIABILITY  
ENGINEER



**THE DEEP END**  
*the deep end*





A photograph of a monkey in a forest, looking upwards and to the right with a thoughtful expression, resting its chin on its hand. The background is a blurred green forest. Overlaid on the image is the text 'SELF REFLECTION' in large, bold, yellow capital letters, and below it, the words 'Self Reflection' in a white, outlined, cursive font.

# SELF REFLECTION

*Self Reflection*

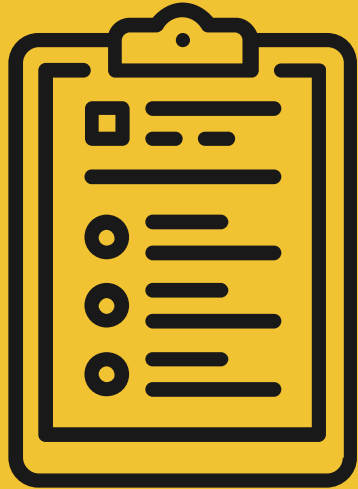
A silhouette of a person in a yoga pose, specifically a variation of the Tree Pose (Vrikshasana), with one leg raised and arms extended horizontally. The background is a warm, golden sunset or sunrise over a body of water, with palm trees visible in the distance. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

# SELF AWARENESS

SELF AWARENESS

That's it. That's the  
secret weapon

# THE EMOTION RETRO



Today I felt \_\_\_\_\_

Because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# THE MATURITY MODEL

Self-Awareness (in hindsight)



Self-Awareness (with foresight)



Awareness of others (with foresight)



Awareness of others (in hindsight)

# INTROSPECTION

## WHAT

What happened and  
what were the emotions?  
What did the emotions  
feel like?

## WHY

Why did it happen?  
Why did I experience those  
specific emotions?

## HOW

How do these emotions alter my  
behaviours?

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# FORESIGHT AND APPLYING IT TO OTHERS





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# CAREER APPLICATIONS

You can use this secret  
weapon for good!

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# CASE STUDY

# 01

UNDERPERFORMING DIRECT REPORT

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

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# CASE STUDY

# 02

DIFFICULT COLLEAGUES

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**Marc Loney** · 1st  
Head of Security at VGW

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# CASE STUDY

# 03

**“SPEAKING UP”**

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# NOT A SUPERPOWER

Being able to fly would be  
infinitely cooler



# — CLOSING POINTS —



**INTROSPECTION IS  
REALLY HARD**

*really hard*

But you can get good at it  
with consistent practice



**UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF  
IS THE KEY TO  
UNDERSTANDING OTHERS**

*Understanding others*

Learn to walk before you run



# SOFT-SKILLS ARE A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Regardless of whether you're a people manager  
or an individual contributor

A hand is shown in the upper right corner, moving a dark chess piece on a chessboard. The chessboard is in the foreground, with various pieces visible. The background is dark and out of focus, with some bokeh light spots. The overall tone is strategic and thoughtful.

# SELF AWARENESS IS THE SRE SECRET WEAPON

*secret weapon*

Being prepared for navigating the  
“unknown unknowns” is our bread & butter

GAME TIME



**THANK YOU!**

**Luke Mundy**

Senior Site Reliability Engineer

Virtual Gaming Worlds

[linkedin.com/in/luke-mundy/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/luke-mundy/)

# RESOURCES / ATTRIBUTION

Stock photography from [Unsplash](#):

- [black metal canon on brown concrete floor](#)
- [brown bear plush toy](#)
- [woman in black jacket standing on grass field](#)
- [water wave in close up photography](#)
- [gray monkey in bokeh photography](#)
- [photo of two women facing each other sitting in front of table near glass wall](#)
- [silhouette of people standing on mirror during golden hour](#)
- [pixelated game over screen](#)
- [boy wearing black batman cape](#)
- [woman in blue dress shirt and jeans standing beside brown wooden chair](#)
- [man in jacket with black backpack standing on snow covered mountain](#)
- [man standing on concrete dock facing sea](#)
- [two men bike racing during daytime](#)
- [person holding chess piece in chess piece](#)
- [silver corded microphone in shallow focus photography](#)

Presentation template “[Forsaken Places](#)”  
created by [SlidesGo](#), including icons by  
[Flaticon](#) and infographics by [Freepik](#)

Huge thanks to my colleague and friend  
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