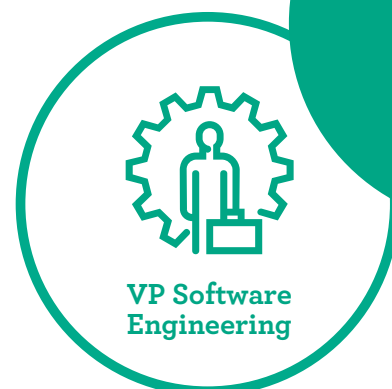


ELBA

A Day in the life of...



Al Lines
Vice President - Software
Engineering,
Moody's



VP Software
Engineering



Financial
Services

MY ALARM GOES OFF...

Ah – 7:14am. Now I work from home it's great to have a "lie-in" compared to those old days commuting when it went off at 6:00am! I'm still "in the office" on time, but now I get to feed the cat and go for a short (15 mile) bike ride. I used to cycle as part of my commute, but now it's instead of going to the gym, plus a chance to get some great photo backgrounds for my video calls. Back from the ride, I shower and find a shirt for the day. No need to be smart on the bottom half – no one can spot shorts when you're on a video call...!

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR...

I work as part of a technical team creating models and workflows for our business users. I'm responsible for ensuring our infrastructure to deliver these to our users, and verifying the models work as expected. First stop is to check any overnight processing has run, and fix / troubleshoot any failures. Then onto project work, with coffee #2.. Here I work heavily with the users, to under-

stand their requirements, get these written down so my team can build a solution. I then verify it, and then they are able to use it, saving them time and reducing any errors. So the key is to ensure our users (stakeholders) are happy. Cake often helps...

I GOT MY JOB...

I studied Computer Science at University, and working during the holidays in the IT sector, not just for money (!) but also to get an idea of what opportunities there were. One job was working in the post room for a software house (the company that writes software/apps). This meant I networked with those who worked there as I delivered post to their desk, I had a chance to find out what they did, just as part of normal conversation. On graduating, the same software house offered me a job as a developer, as the team already knew me and were happy to work with me!

AT SCHOOL I STUDIED...

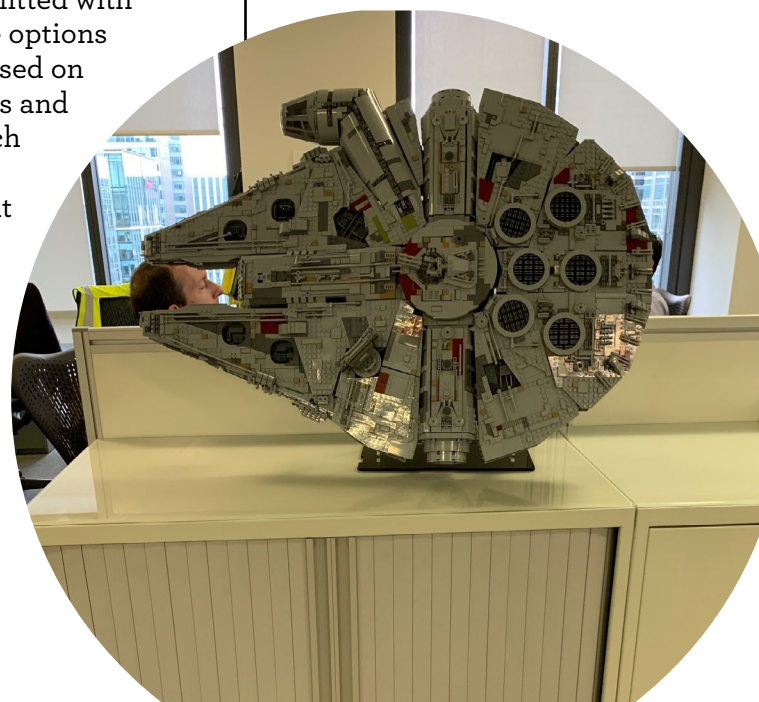
I was interested in computing from an early age. However, my school did not offer computing at GCSE. Instead, I did Design Tech (where I managed to sneak in some computing applied with robotics). Then whilst studying for my A-Levels I took Computing GCSE in my lower 6th in my own time. It fitted with my A levels, giving me options for the future, but focused on science: Maths, Physics and Geography. All of which lean to the analytical side which is important in computing (and lots of other things) and in problem-solving. I don't use much of the day-to-day computing I learnt, but I do use the techniques of "how something works" and breaking this down.

MY TYPICAL DAY...

I start my day with coffee (latte) and check overnight processing, it is time to quickly look through emails and anything urgent that needs to be done. Then I try to get my head down and get project work completed – verifying code, testing applications, managing infrastructure. Lunch tends to be early – not long after 12:00pm – not my preferred choice, but my afternoon tends to be more meeting-based, as a lot of my interactions are with colleagues the other side of the Atlantic. So I have a quick sandwich at my desk, maybe some Lego, and we are off again. It does mean my finish time can vary a fair amount. Key is successfully completing projects and being flexible on this to achieve good outcomes.

THE KEY SKILLS I USE IN MY JOB...

I use analytical and questioning skills, my interest in "how does that work" also helps. I want to know how to build something – physical or software – and this requires some design skills. Design skills I am able to leverage in my downtime (lunch), via Lego building, as the technical challenge on this can show there is more than one way to do a build. This is just like how our systems



work, there are many routes through it to success.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB IS...

Learning new things each day and being able to make sense of technology as an enabler to help others. Giving advice on how to use our tools (training of folks) and saving them time is a great joy. All encompassed by being responsible for my own time and how I manage this to successfully delivery projects – autonomy. Plus the chance to build Lego in the office... there is more space for this than at home and it's a great talking point.

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB IS...

Dealing with repeated IT failures is hard where you have fixed something for another team to then break it... I have learnt to be resilient and go around the loop again. Not actually meeting face-to-face is a challenge, and I deal with this a fair bit as most projects I work on we're in globally located teams. Seeing people makes a massive difference to building relationships, so you can then work remotely. Luckily though, I've been privileged to meet most of my team now, having been to New York twice, and been able to build deep working relationships.

MY ROLE MODEL GROWING UP WAS...

Some of the inspirational leaders in IT:

- Alan Sugar (no Sir back then!) with range of technologies, e.g. personal PC etc.
- Clive Sinclair for the birth of the home PC (Spectrum and others) pushing what was possible.
- Herman Haussler founder of ARM (whose tech powers most of our mobile devices) for showing how you can change assumptions and take on the large companies (e.g. Intel).

AFTER WORK...

I use my PC at home for a lot of hobbies, most of which revolve around music, either singing, mixing, video editing etc. To end the workday I try and have a walk – get some fresh air – really to reset. Dinner is normally with the family, something freshly cooked – I am usually not home till at least 7:00pm if not later. Then I am off for a sing/mix session till about 10:00pm, after which I need to wind down, normally just listening to music on the hi-fi, aiming to head to bed around 11:00pm for some reading time before it all starts again.



MY PLAN B...

Running a pub and brewing my own beer! As a student I ran one of the main Uni bars, so got a taste for dealing with customers, and I also got into brewing my own beer... This later passion has continued as have done some contract brewing for small brewers. It was a great thrill to have created something, and then come back 3 weeks later and your beer is on the bar, being enjoyed by folks. However, I have found I can combine my love of tech and computing with still brewing as a hobby (now just for friends). Those who come to our annual BBQ know to bring wine as they expect to drink (my) beer!