Q & A

WITH DARYL JOHNSTON
Software Engineering Manager ■ Calgary, Alberta

EXCELLENCE
In service and performance

HONESTY & INTEGRITY
Through accountability and responsible stewardship

TEAMWORK
Harnessing our collective strengths

LIVE WELL
Ensuring safe and healthy work practices

CREATING VALUE
For our customers, community and investors

President & CEO, Scott MacFarlane presenting the Guiding Principles Award to Daryl Johnston.

2016 GUIDING PRINCIPLES AWARD RECIPIENT

Congratulations on winning the Guiding Principles Award. How did it feel when you found out you had won?

Surprise. I certainly did not expect to receive this award. There are many individuals who I consider deserving of this award.

How do you implement Cathedral's Guiding Principles in your work environment?

I don't view the Guiding Principles as an individual effort, but as goals which my team can work toward. For example, I encourage the use of specialized tools which can assist developers in finding issues earlier in the software development process. However, those tools can be quite complex, so it is useful when individual team members recognize the benefit to their software projects and ultimately to all the end users throughout the company.

It's rewarding to know colleagues nominated you for this award. What events in 2016 or leading up to it, do you believe helped you be recognized?

It might be the details I try to preserve for the tasks I undertake. This approach allows me to retrieve detailed information about projects that I completed several years ago.

Which Guiding Principle does your team represent?

I try to mesh both the Excellence and Creating Value principles by attempting to obtain the most useful tools for my team at the lowest price point I can find.

Since the roll out in September 2014, in your opinion, how have the Guiding Principles affected the way Cathedral operates?

I believe these principles have equipped us to better cope with the numerous challenges which have resulted from the downturn.

In your opinion, what is the best way to lead and motivate your team?

Generally, I consider leading by example to be the best motivation. However, I also think that simple greetings such as saying "Good morning" are important. I value my team members first as individuals — even beyond the technical skills they are able to contribute.

What do you think your most significant accomplishment is with Cathedral?

Possibly the successful transition of business support software development from the IT Group to the Technology Group in 2014. Many personnel changes occurred as a result, but I believe the outcome has been beneficial to Cathedral.

What is it about your management style that you take pride in?

Software development tends to be a very creative process, rather like painting on a canvas. Generally, I permit developers to pursue their own style of "painting", but I also encourage them to collaborate and learn new coding styles from each other.

What do you think separates Cathedral from our competition?

I believe our innovative products distinguish us from our competition. However, those products are themselves the result of the experience and technical skills of the Cathedral employees.

What makes your work location successful?

One advantage I have at the headquarters location in Calgary is the ability to schedule meetings with members of many different departments and have them attend those meetings in-person. I usually have at least seven meetings each week for the 15 or so projects that are active at any given time, so it's convenient to be within walking distance of representatives from those other departments.

How do you see the future of Cathedral and the role you'll play (aside from getting through the downturn)?

Continual innovation should permit Cathedral to increasingly dominate the market. I hope to continue to contribute facets of that innovation based on the ongoing research in such technological advances that I perform simply out of personal interest.

Winning an award generally comes from support around you, is there anyone you'd like to thank?

I wish to thank everyone at Cathedral. We all make our own valuable contributions to the success of this company and I consider this award a reflection of their efforts as well as mine.

Do you have any advice for other persons looking to win this award?

Larger accomplishments build upon smaller accomplishments. Seeking the joy in those smaller accomplishments is really a reward of its own — even before achieving an award such as this.

Any last words, honorary mention, or comments?

Again, I am not accepting this award solely for myself, but as recognition of the entire software development team. Using the painting analogy again, I merely help select the subject and supply the canvas, their continuing efforts create the artwork. ■

FUN FACTS ABOUT
Daryl

* Daryl joined Cathedral's Calgary team in April 2010. Before becoming the Software Engineering Manager in 2014, his previous positions included Software Architect and Lead Software Engineer.

* An interesting fact that you probably don't know about Daryl is that he worked at a small television studio for several summers while attending university. CFCN, a large television station in Calgary, picked-up and broadcast some news footage he created there.

* Outside of work, Daryl enjoys camping, boating and hiking with his family during the summer. Also, videography, photography and exploring different technologies.

* Venice, Italy would be the holiday destination of his dreams.

* He lives by the motto:

  "Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful."
  ~ Joshua J. Marine

* Daryl is originally from a small farm in central Alberta.

* When he was a child, Daryl always wanted to be a nuclear physicist. In elementary school his favorite comic was a booklet on nuclear physics.

* If Daryl had a super power, it would be the power to stop time and get work done faster.