

Capstone Project

[SQL Murder Mystery: "Who Killed the CEO?"](#)

This project is designed to assess participants' ability to apply the full range of SQL concepts learned throughout the challenge, including joins, subqueries, filters, aggregations, and logical reasoning. It emphasises critical thinking, data-driven investigation, and structured problem-solving.

In this capstone project, participants will take on the role of a lead data analyst investigating the mysterious death of the CEO of TechNova Inc.. The objective is to utilise SQL to analyse multiple datasets — including keycard logs, phone records, alibis, and evidence — to determine who committed the crime, where and when it occurred, and how it happened.

Goal: Find the killer

We need to combine **keycard logs**, **alibis**, **calls**, and **evidence** to identify the murderer.

1. Who accessed the CEO Office around the murder?

```
SELECT kl.*, e.name  
FROM keycard_logs kl  
JOIN employees e ON kl.employee_id = e.employee_id  
WHERE kl.room = 'CEO Office';
```

| | log_id | employee_id | room | entry_time | exit_time | name |
|---|--------|-------------|------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| ▶ | 11 | 4 | CEO Office | 2025-10-15 20:50:00 | 2025-10-15 21:00:00 | David Kumar |

Result → Employee 4 (David Kumar)

Entry: **20:50**

Exit: **21:00**

He is the **only person** who entered the CEO Office that night.

2. Did the killer lie with a fake alibi?

Employee 4 claimed:

```
SELECT *  
FROM alibis  
WHERE employee_id = 4;
```

| | alibi_id | employee_id | claimed_location | claim_time |
|---|----------|-------------|------------------|---------------------|
| ▶ | 2 | 4 | Server Room | 2025-10-15 20:50:00 |
| * | NULL | NULL | NULL | NULL |

He claimed: **Server Room at 20:50**

But actual logs show:

```
SELECT *
FROM keycard_logs
WHERE employee_id = 4;
```

| log_id | employee_id | room | entry_time | exit_time |
|--------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 4 | 4 | Server Room | 2025-10-15 08:50:00 | 2025-10-15 09:10:00 |
| 11 | 4 | CEO Office | 2025-10-15 20:50:00 | 2025-10-15 21:00:00 |
| NULL | NULL | NULL | NULL | NULL |

He was actually in the **CEO Office** at 20:50,
not in the Server Room → **FAKE ALIBI**

3. Calls before the murder (possible motive / accomplice)

```
SELECT c.*, e.name
FROM calls c
JOIN employees e ON c.caller_id = e.employee_id
WHERE caller_id = 4;
```

| call_id | caller_id | receiver_id | call_time | duration_sec | name |
|---------|-----------|-------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | 4 | 1 | 2025-10-15 20:55:00 | 45 | David Kumar |
| 5 | 4 | 7 | 2025-10-15 20:40:00 | 90 | David Kumar |

David Kumar (ID 4) called:

- Employee 1 at **20:55** (right after entering the CEO Office)
- Employee 7 at **20:40** (CFO)

This might show coordination, but does **not** change murderer identification.

4. Evidence matches David Kumar

```
SELECT *
FROM evidence
WHERE room = 'CEO Office';
```

| evidence_id | room | description | found_time |
|-------------|------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | CEO Office | Fingerprint on desk | 2025-10-15 21:05:00 |
| 2 | CEO Office | Keypad swipe logs mismatch | 2025-10-15 21:10:00 |
| NULL | NULL | NULL | NULL |

Evidence includes:

- Fingerprint on desk*
- Keypad swipe mismatch*

This again matches **the only person who entered** — Employee 4.

Final Query

```
SELECT employees.name AS killer
FROM employees
WHERE employees.employee_id = (
    -- Employee who accessed the CEO Office during the murder
    SELECT keycard_logs.employee_id
    FROM keycard_logs
    WHERE keycard_logs.room = 'CEO Office'

    -- Employee with fake alibi
    AND keycard_logs.employee_id IN (
        SELECT alibis.employee_id
        FROM alibis
        JOIN keycard_logs AS actual_logs
        ON alibis.employee_id = actual_logs.employee_id
        WHERE alibis.claimed_location <> actual_logs.room
    )
    ORDER BY keycard_logs.entry_time
    LIMIT 1
);
```

| |
|-------------|
| killer |
| David Kumar |

Final Answer: The Killer is → David Kumar (Employee ID 4)

Why?

- Only person in CEO office near murder time

- **Fake alibi (claimed Server Room, but logs prove otherwise)**
- **Suspicious call minutes before/after murder**
- **Evidence tied to CEO Office**