In the early 2000’s, Sons of Gwalia was the world’s largest tantalum producer, Australia’s 3rd largest gold producer with production of ~500,000oz per annum and a market capitalisation of ~$1Bn. In August 2004 Sons of Gwalia went into administration with debts greater than $700M.

This presentation outlines a case study and personal perspective as to how a combination of technical risks and financial risks resulting from various strategies that accumulated over a number of years subsequently collided, the result being the collapse of the SOG group. The technical risks include those associated with exploration, development and operational strategies with the financial risks predominately around gold hedging and corporate strategy. In addition to outlining the strategic decisions and associated risks unfolding over time, hind sight provides a number of salient lessons in how risks can combine over time unless the interactions and potential consequences are considered and managed.

John has 25 years in the resources industry across a broad range of technical fields including geology & geophysics; integration of geology, mining, processing and environmental parameters, project evaluation, resource development and management. This experience has been across greenfield and brownfield projects and open cut and underground operations. He is currently leading geometallurgy at JKTech and previously held the positions of Non-Executive Director of NuPower Resources; Exploration Manager for Vale; Pre-feasibility Study Manager for Vale/Inco; Manager Resources – Technical Services at Sons of Gwalia and geoscientist at MIM.