

Reading Assignment, Feb 8

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What I learned:

1. The article defines does a good job of defining the specific roles that a consultant can take on a project: the “helper” servers as someone who answer the client’s statistical questions and acts as a technician and supplies information/ runs the analysis, the “leader” who takes responsibility in making sense of the data, the “data-blesser” is someone who provides feedback on the client’s results without doing the research themselves, the “collaborator” is someone who pulls from the expertise of both the client and the consultant, and the “teaching” role, which is self-explanatory. A consultant can take on multiple variations of these roles throughout a project.
2. The article mentions 5 good negotiating principles: the consultant should avoid attacking the client’s position, develop a climate for agreement by focusing on shared interests, be fair, reasonable, and honorable, search for precedent in suggestions, and negotiate based on principle when the disparity between the two parties favors the client.
3. The article stresses the importance of nonverbal cues in influencing the direction of the consultation. Namely, maintaining eye contact with the client signals to them that you “approve” of what they are saying.

Questions:

1. The article has a section called “Cleaning Up the Mess,” where the author basically only cites grievances against him. As a consultant, what should we do in a situation where we have to “clean up the mess”?
2. I don’t understand the meaning of “When there is disparity between the client and consultant in power or prestige and the difference favors the client, the consultant should try to negotiate on the basis of principle.” Specifically, what is “the basis of principle”?
3. The article states that 5 or 6 statistical procedures can handle most research problems, but it doesn’t mention what they are. What are they?