Data Analytics Reflect Activity

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I have always worked in a capacity surrounding people and information. My academic career began with a love of sociology—examining how our social institutions, social norms and expectations shape our attitudes, beliefs and behavior. My career in the social science lead me to the field of survey research where I learned and implemented the “gold standard” of traditional data collection. Technology has now provided an infinite and ever-expanding field of data collection, capture, processing and analysis. I am here to learn these new tools to augment my experience in traditional data collection. We no longer need to be tied to large scale, expensive research with declining response rates.

I am most excited to “learn how to learn” computer science-based skills that I am unfamiliar with. Although I have learned some off the shelf data analysis tools and completed a couple statistics courses, I have not built a foundation of computer science skills. For some time, the idea of being able to learn a coding language seemed beyond me. For no logical reason, other than negative scripts and embodying some of the stereotype of coming from the “soft sciences.” Having worked with computer programmers, statisticians and methodologists on research studies I know that I will be able to learn these skills with the right foundation. I wanted to do a formal in-person course to help establish a foundation that I can continue to build on afterwards. I am especially interested in the Python programming language and developing a better understanding of its capabilities. I’m also ready to delve into learning data visualization tools to add some creativity and story-telling power to data analysis. As a researcher, I know the most impactful research is one that can tell a story tailored to its audience. I am looking forward to the challenges of jumping into all these new skills.