

Discussion Prompt - Clearing the Muddiest Point: Data Analytics Terms

Introduction:

In the journey of learning data analytics terms like descriptive, predictive, and prescriptive, it's natural to encounter "muddiest points" or areas of confusion. This discussion provides a platform for clarifying these points and deepening our understanding.

Prompt:

1. Identifying Muddiest Points:
 - A. Reflect on the data analytics terms: descriptive, predictive, and prescriptive. Identify any specific concepts or aspects that you find particularly confusing or unclear.
 - B. Share your muddiest points with the group, providing a brief description of the confusion.
2. Peer Clarification:
 - A. Engage with your peers' muddiest points by offering insights, explanations, or examples that might help clarify the confusion.
 - B. If you have a clear understanding of a concept, share your perspective on how you approached that particular concept and what helped you grasp it.
3. Discussion and Reflection:
 - A. Engage in a reflective discussion on how the clarifications and analogies have helped to clear up your muddiest points. Have your understandings evolved? Are there still aspects that need further exploration?

Conclusion:

By sharing our muddiest points and engaging in open dialogue, we can collectively tackle confusion and deepen our understanding of data analytics terms. Learning together and supporting one another's growth is a crucial aspect of online education.

Guidelines:

- Participate actively, offering both questions and insights.
- Respond to peers with respect and consider their viewpoints.
- Reflect on your own understanding and how it evolves through the discussion.

Let's work together to clarify those muddiest points and enhance our grasp of descriptive, predictive, and prescriptive analytics!

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Between descriptive, predictive, and prescriptive analytics, I've found the prescriptive third to be the most challenging aspect to fully grasp. Descriptive and predictive seem simple enough, self-defining almost. Prescriptive analytics seems to have an element of opinion that I didn't quite see from descriptive and predictive analytics. It also seems to me that there is a large amount of overlap in predictive and prescriptive analytics, and perhaps that's where I get slightly tripped up since the gap between those two and descriptive analytics seems very clearly defined. A rephrasing I did find somewhat helpful was in a Harvard Business School online article in which they stated that there should be a clear separation between human judgement and algorithmically produced recommendations in the process of making informed decisions. (Cote, 2021) This does reinforce my assumption that there is an element of opinion to prescriptive analytics.

References

Cote, C. (2021, November 2). *What Is Prescriptive Analytics? 6 Examples*. Retrieved from Harvard Business School Online: <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/prescriptive-analytics>