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Meetup Experience

I have been a part of the Puget Sound Python Programming (PuPPy) meetup group for 6-7 months. I usually only attend the Scientific Computing night. This event is an opportunity for data scientists of all levels to see how scientists use data science to solve research problems. I have given a talk at this meetup, about my nuclear physics research during my master’s degree.

The most recent time I went (for the purposes of this assignment), there were 2 talks: one on using machine learning to solve problems related to fraud, and one on the computations for solving a quantum chemistry modeling problem.

The machine learning in fraud talk was very interesting. The speaker discussed various machine learning models, and what domains each model works well on. The dimensionality reduction seemed very cool, as the model tried to compress and decompress all the data it was given.

The quantum chemistry talk was much harder on the science, and easier on the computational technicality. The background was difficult to understand, but the processing was mostly random statistics and gaussian fitting. It was well-written and understandable, even if I didn’t have the technical background to fully understand the science.

I knew several of the people there (my girlfriend co-organizes this meetup, one of her research group members it organizer, and one of our friends gave the quantum chemistry talk). I try to usually talk to a few new people when I go (but that doesn’t always happen). Many of the people are also new to data science and / or Seattle and are looking for interesting talks to go to. Some of the others are data science professionals in PuPPy and have a depth of experience that shows when they ask questions.