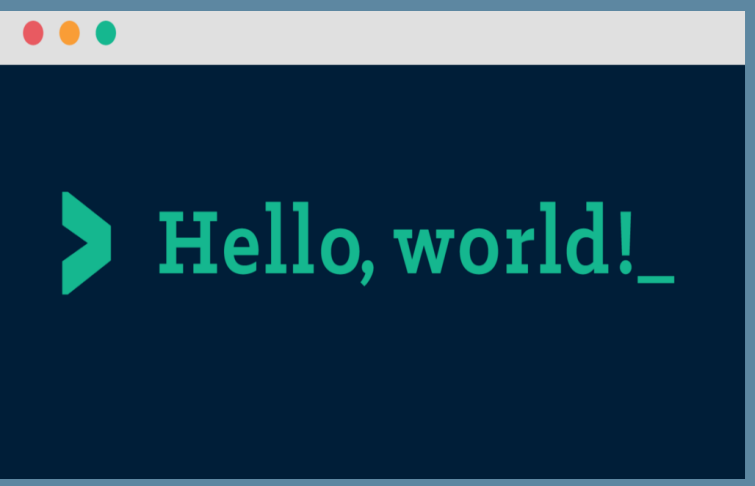
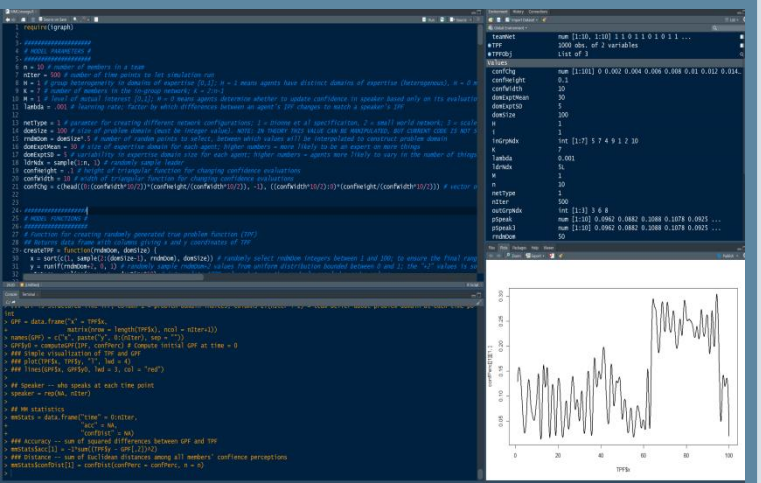




Hello World!

Tools, Techniques, and Getting Started with Computational Modeling

36th Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial & Organizational Psychology

James A. Grand

University of Maryland

- FORMAL & ALGORITHMIC DESCRIPTION OF HOW A PHENOMENON UNFOLDS OVER TIME
  - "WHAT HAPPENS" TO PRODUCE "WHAT WE OBSERVE"

Formal

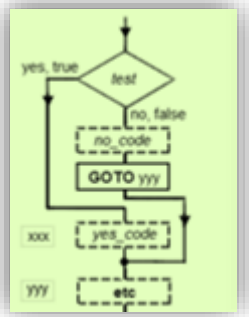
- Declarative logic and mathematical equations used to convey how, when, and why variables change

$$IF\ [goal_1 > goal_2]:$$
$$THEN\ [choice_t = goal_1]$$
$$ELSE\ [choice_t = goal_2]$$

$$goal_n = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-\lambda * (X_t - X_{t-1})}}$$

Algorithmic

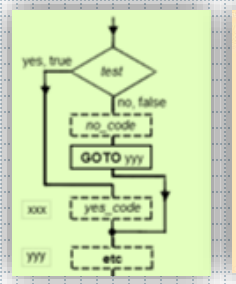
- Proposed sequence in which actions/events occur over time or in response to other actions/events



Step	Description
1	Initialize time clock to $t = 0$
2	Create k organizations each containing n employees, with $k/2$ organizations containing ST
3	Create a voluntary turnover schedule for each organization
4	Increment time clock to $t = t + 1$
5	Determine change in employee performance potential as a result of learning
6	Compute cumulative employee and organizational performance potential
7	Invoke voluntary turnover and immediate replacement scheduled for time t
8	If $t < t_{stop}$, return to Step 4
9	Stop simulation

WHAT IS A COMPUTATIONAL MODEL?

- FORMAL & ALGORITHMIC DESCRIPTION OF HOW A PHENOMENON UNFOLDS OVER TIME
  - TYPICALLY TRANSLATE MODEL INTO COMPUTER CODE THAT CAN ENACT MECHANISMS FOR US



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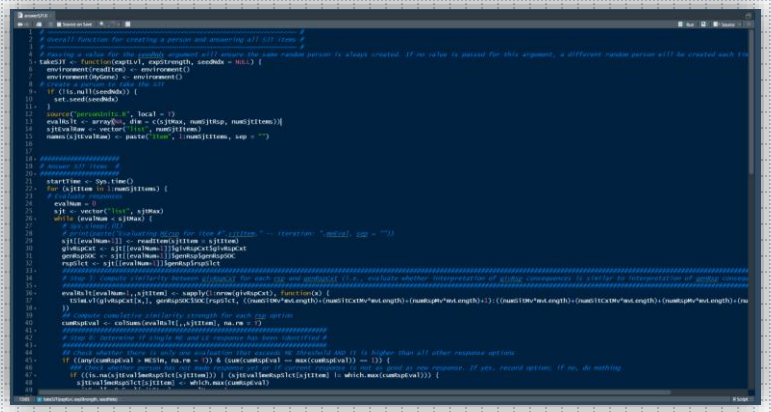
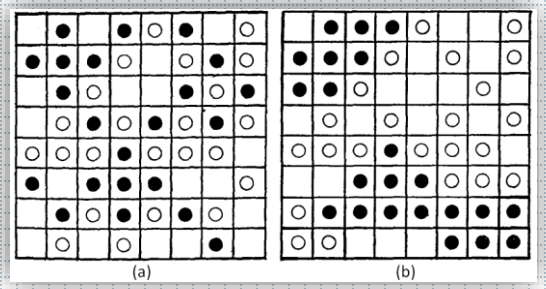


  - BUT NOTE THIS IS FOR CONVENIENCE/EFFICIENCY, NOT BECAUSE IT IS REQUIRED!



Thomas Schelling won a Nobel Prize running computational models on a checkerboard! (sort of…)

WHAT IS A COMPUTATIONAL MODEL?

Step 1

Train yourself to think in terms of actors, not factors

Step 2

Learn basic programming concepts

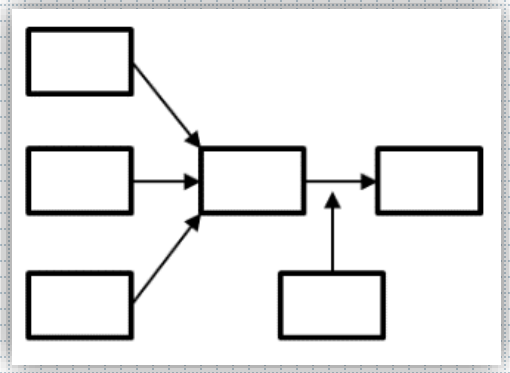
- People perceive most important skills for computational modeling are programming and/or quantitative
- But learning how to think computationally is **much more important**...and very different than how most of us were trained

Getting Started in Two Steps

Step 1

Train yourself to think in terms of actors, not factors

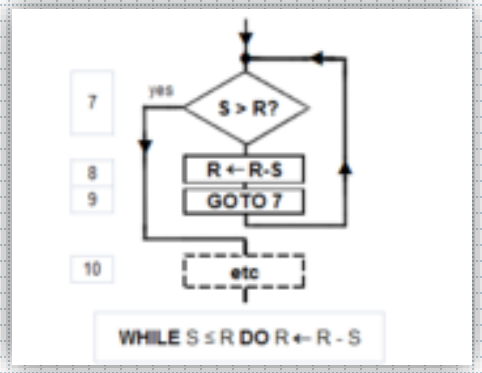
"Factor" Thinking



- Causality = consistent covariation
- Stable relationships among "static" variables
- Statistical

- What are the antecedent and outcome variables?
- How strong is the covariation?
- What variables account for variance in other variables?

"Actor" Thinking



- Causality = Generative mechanisms
- Functional relationships that link "dynamic" variables
- Computational

- What happens to individuals?
- How do individuals think, feel, and react?
- Which and how do actions/events unfold?

Actor vs. Factor Thinking

Macy, M.W., & Willer, R. (2002). From factors to actors: Computational sociology and agent-based modeling. *Annual Review of Sociology, 28*, 143-166.

Step 1

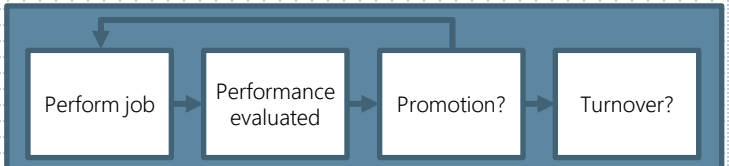
Train yourself to think in terms of actors, not factors

Why are women underrepresented in senior leadership positions?

"Factor" Thinking

- Inference: Females experience greater work-family conflict which reduces performance and likelihood of promotion
- Causal mechanism: Career delays? Lack of opportunities? Discrimination/bias?

"Actor" Thinking



- Inference: Male vs. female performance is evaluated differently leading to different promotion rates
- Causal mechanism: Bias in performance evaluations

Actor vs. Factor Thinking

Step 1

Train yourself to think in terms of actors, not factors

- Pseudocode → the "box and arrows" of computational thinking
  - Proposed sequence of steps for what occurs
  - Where does this come from?
    - Theory
    - Observation
    - Empirical results…sometimes
    - "Disciplined imagination" (Weick, 1989)

Pseudocode for Martell et al (1996) computational model of gender stratification

Step	Action
1	Create hierarchical organization with *k* levels
2	Populate each organizational level with n_k original employees
3	Assign each employee a gender such that $n_{male} = n_{female}$
4	Randomly assign each employee a performance evaluation score such that $performance_{female} \sim N(50,10)$ and $performance_{male} \sim N(50,10) + bias$
5	Randomly select *TO%* of employees to turnover from the organization
6	Determine if any open positions exist at level *k* and promote highest performing employees from level *k-1* into openings
7	Fill open positions in lowest organizational level with new hires using procedure in Steps 3 and 4
8	If number of original employees > 0, return to Step 5
9	End

I may spend days or weeks developing the logic, functions, and structure of the pseudocode before I even consider coding!

Initialization

What does the "world" look like?

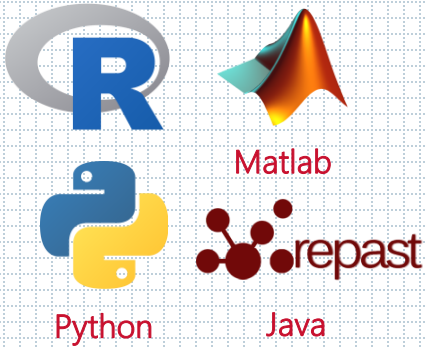
Model

What happens? When? How?

Actor vs. Factor Thinking

Martell, R.F., Lane, D.M., & Emrich, C. (1996). Male-female differences: A computer simulation. *American Psychologist, 51*, 157-158.

- MANY CHOICES WHEN IT COMES TO MODELING SOFTWARE:



- Do anything & everything
- Only syntax/coding
- Steeper learning curve (maybe?)

- Do particular things well
- Syntax & "point & click" hybrid
- Shallower learning curve (maybe?)

PROGRAMMING FUNDAMENTALS 101

Step 2

Learn basic programming concepts

- How do I choose? Which should I learn?

Are you comfortable with syntax-based software for statistics (R, Matlab, Python)?

No & not interested

Yes

Do you know the "type" of model you want to run? (agent-based, system dynamics, neural network, etc.)

No, not sure, or don't care

Yes & it's the only type I'm interested in

Broader/Generic

R

Matlab

Python

repast

Java

Ultimately, this choice is not that important…

Just pick one and start learning!

Narrower/Specific

Vensim VENTANA

anylogic

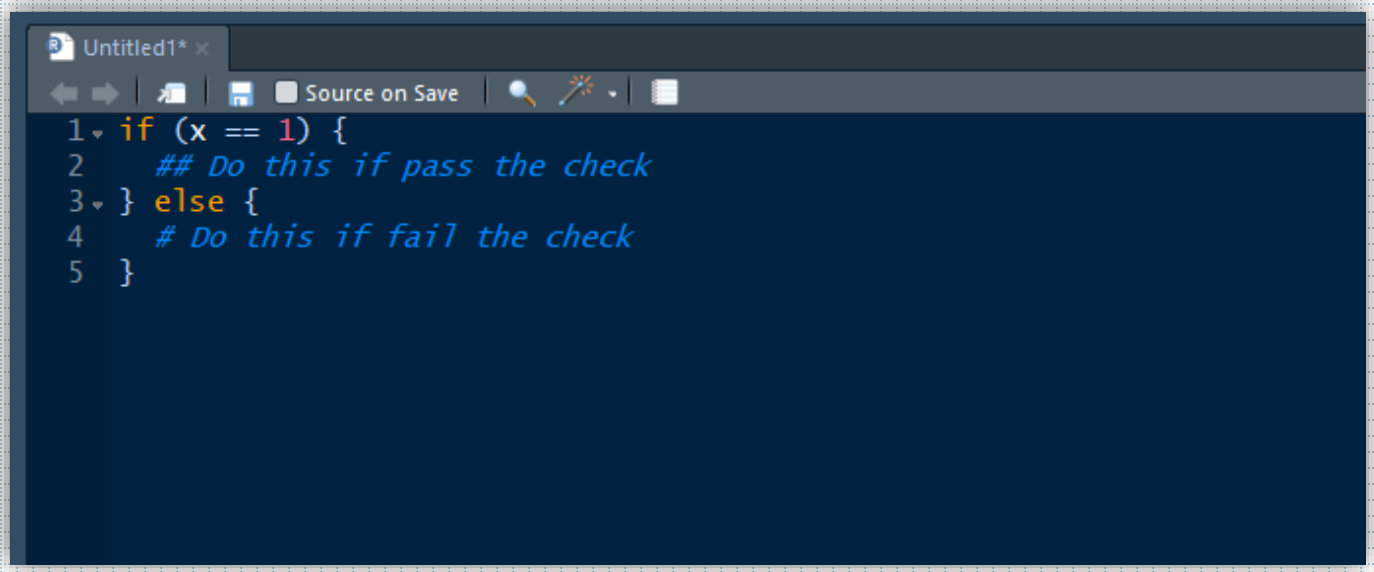
NetLogo

Programming Fundamentals 101

- THREE MUST-LEARN PROGRAMMING CONCEPTS

1 IF-ELSE

  - IF-ELSE STATEMENTS
    - *BRANCHING* → EXECUTE CODE BASED ON WHETHER SOMETHING IS TRUE OR FALSE
    - E.G., =, ≠, <, >, ≤, ≥

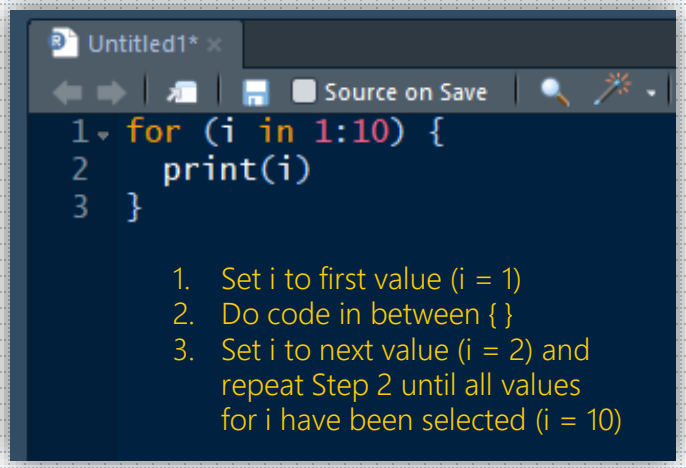


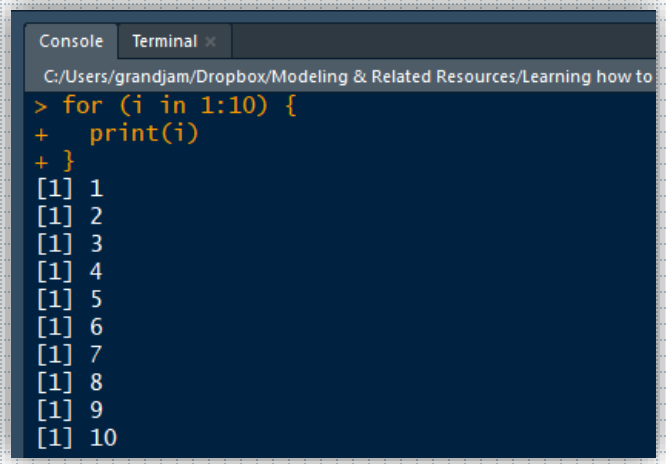
PROGRAMMING FUNDAMENTALS 101

- THREE MUST-LEARN PROGRAMMING CONCEPTS
  - LOOPS
    - *SEQUENCE* → EXECUTE STEPS IN CODE MULTIPLE TIMES IN A ROW
    - FOR LOOP: EXECUTE CODE A SPECIFIC NUMBER OF TIMES
      1. USE AN *ITERATOR* THAT TAKES ON A SET OF PRE-DETERMINED VALUES
      2. RUN THE CODE FOR EACH VALUE OF THE ITERATOR
         A. E.G, 1-10, NUMBER OF ROWS IN A MATRIX

1 IF-ELSE

2 LOOPS



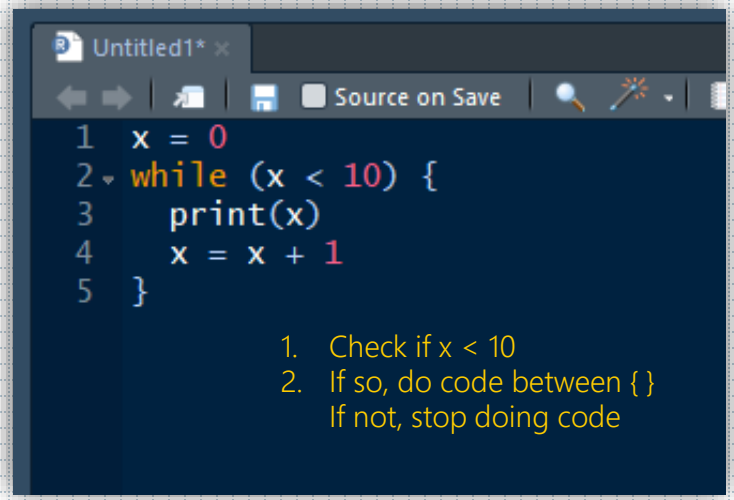


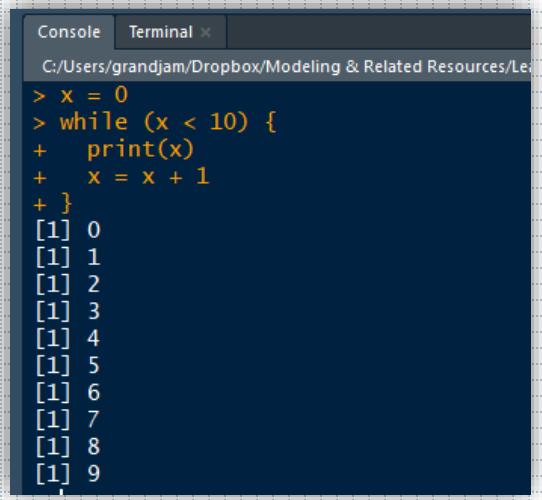
PROGRAMMING FUNDAMENTALS 101

- THREE MUST-LEARN PROGRAMMING CONCEPTS
  - LOOPS
    - » *SEQUENCE* → EXECUTE STEPS IN CODE MULTIPLE TIMES IN A ROW
    - » WHILE LOOP: EXECUTE CODE UNTIL A CONDITION IS SATISFIED
      1. KEEP RUNNING CODE WHILE SOMETHING IS TRUE

1 IF-ELSE

2 LOOPS



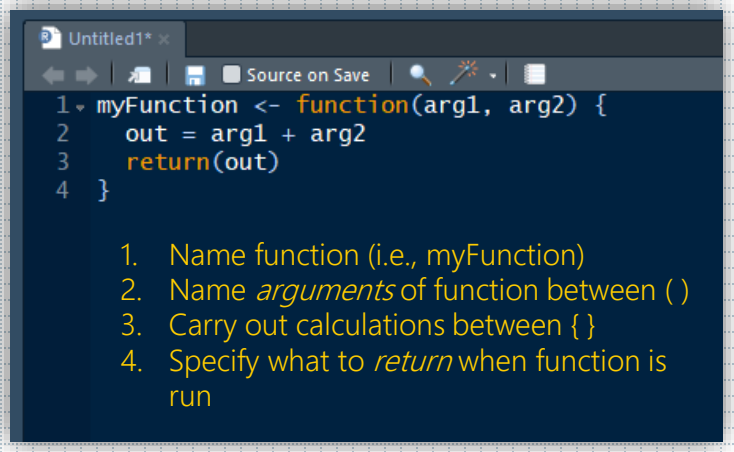


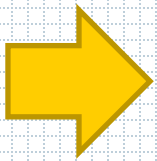
PROGRAMMING FUNDAMENTALS 101

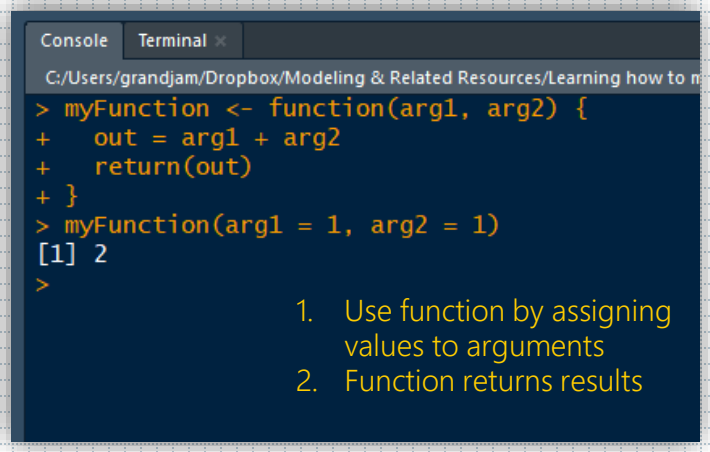
Learn basic programming concepts

- Three must-learn programming concepts
  - Functions
    - » *Efficiency* → perform calculations and return output
    - » Useful for running frequently used/required procedures
      1. Writing functions not strictly necessary…but are powerful!

1. If-Else
2. Loops
3. Functions







Programming Fundamentals 101

- My advice for the first-time modeler/programmer
  - Break the problem down
    - » What do you want accomplished?
    - » What steps are involved?
    - » What should the result of each step look like?
  - Fail fast by testing often
    - » Run new code frequently
    - » confirm that what should happen does happen
  - Comment EVERYTHING
    - » Code doesn't run slower
    - » You & others will know what is happening

Programming Fundamentals 101

- **Powerful approach** for thinking about organizational, social, and psychological phenomena
  - Tool for representing dynamics, process, and *what happens*
- Necessitates a **way of thinking** and **skillset** that our science is <u>not</u> well versed in → ***massive opportunity!***
- Next steps
  - Read more about models and modeling
  - Look at, run, and try to code some simple models

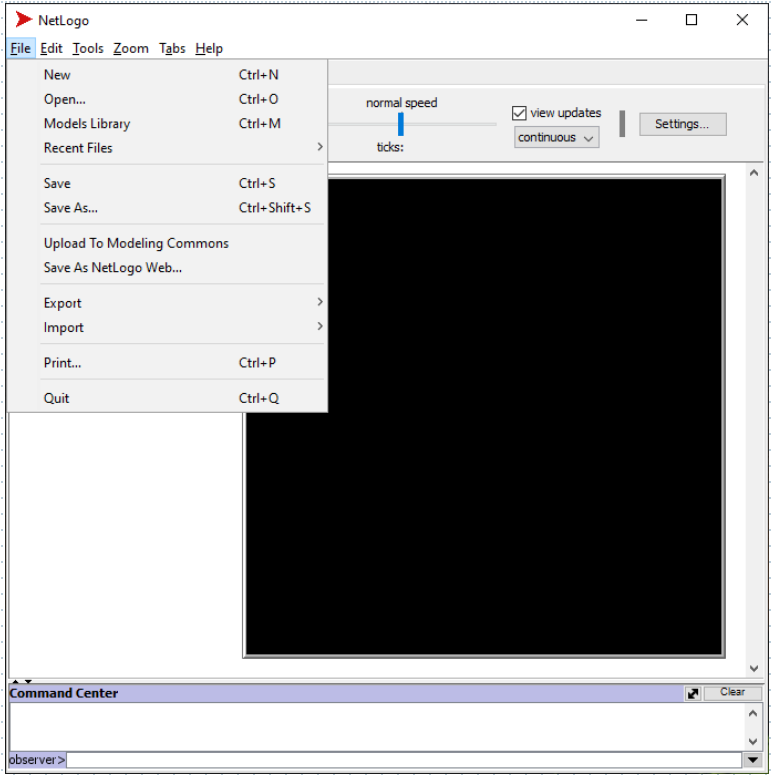
Step 1	Train yourself to think in terms of actors, not factors
Step 2	Learn basic programming concepts

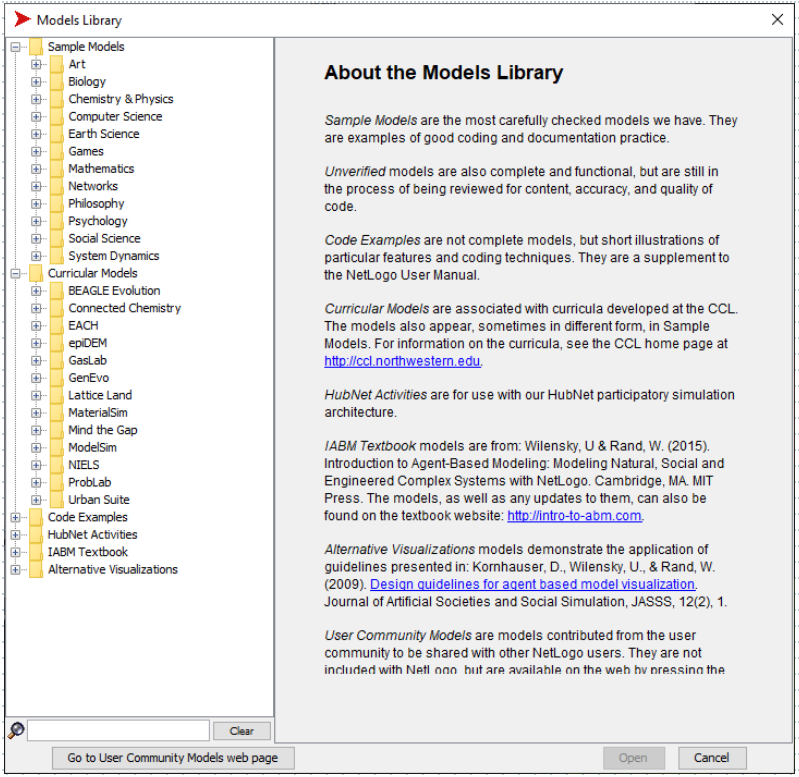
Conclusion & Where to Go From Here

- Further reading on computational modeling (for the org sciences)
  - Journal articles
    - Davis, J.P., Eisenhardt, K.M., & Bingham, C.B. (2007). Developing theory through simulation methods. *Academy of Management Review, 32*, 480-499.
    - Harrison, J.R., Lin, Z., Carroll, G.R., & Carley, K.M. (2007). Simulation modeling in organizational and management research. *Academy of Management Review, 32*, 1229-1245.
    - Kozlowski, S.W.J., Chao, G.T., Grand, J.A., Braun, M.T., & Kuljanin, G. (2013). Advancing multilevel research design: Capturing the dynamics of emergence. *Organizational Research Methods, 16*, 581-615.
    - Vancouver, J.B., & Weinhardt, J.M., (2012). Modeling the mind and the milieu: Computational modeling for micro-level organizational researchers. *Organizational Research Methods, 15*, 602-623.
    - Weinhardt, J.M., & Vancouver, J.B. (2012). Computational models and organizational psychology: Opportunities abound. *Organizational Psychology Review, 2*, 267-292.
  - Books
    - Sterman, J.D. (2000). *Business dynamics*. Irwin/McGraw Hill.
    - Wilensky, U., & Rand, W. (2015). *An introduction to agent-based modeling: Modeling natural, social, and engineered complex systems with NetLogo*. MIT Press.

Conclusion & Where to Go From Here

- Learning to code models
  - NetLogo (https://ccl.northwestern.edu/netlogo/download.shtml)
  - File → Models Library





Conclusion & Where to Go From Here

- Learning to code models
  - Start by replicating simple models
    - Don't worry if you're not "interested" in the topic per se…the point is to practice fundamentals!

Martell, R.F., Lane, D.M., & Emrich, C. (1996). Male-female differences: A computer simulation. *American Psychologist, 51*, 157-158.

Why are women underrepresented in senior leadership positions?

Scullen, S.E., Bergey, P.K., Aiman-Smith, L. (2005). Forced distribution rating systems and the improvement of workforce potential: A baseline simulation. *Personnel Psychology, 58*, 1-32.

How does the quality of a selection system impact an organization's performance potential?

  - Full R code for both models can be downloaded from my GitHub

https://github.com/grandjam/SIOP2021Models

Conclusion & Where to Go From Here

https://github.com/grandjam/SIOP2021Models

THANK YOU!

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