

GETTING A STATISTICIAN JOB YOU WANT: NECESSARY SKILLS FOR STATISTICS GRADUATES

Jay Mandrekar
Mayo Clinic, USA
mandrekar.jay@mayo.edu

Many smart statistics graduates compete for the same job, but why does only one of them get selected? What separates him or her from the rest? Technical skill or soft skill or both? What does an employer look for in the candidate? Statisticians work as collaborators in various industries and academic institutions. In today's competitive world, focusing only on mastering new statistical techniques and software is not enough. A candidate needs to strengthen soft skills. These include networking, communication, collaborative attitude, showcasing teamwork, and leadership potential. These skills are not generally taught in graduate coursework and may take time to develop, but pay dividends when they come together. Graduate students should find a mentor who can guide them in achieving and mastering soft skills. Mentoring is a form of shared leadership which benefits both mentor and mentee, and is facilitated by many statistical associations. This paper will share insights from the author's experience as a lead statistician over 15 years, as well as from his responsibilities as the director of biostatistics core at a large academic healthcare institute with over 300 statisticians, data scientists, bioinformaticians, and programmers. Examples will include one on one interactions, as well as a group setting with high school and university students.