

Some Extremes in Client Types, Their Characteristics and the Expected Roles of the Statistical Consultant

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Observed Client Type	Characteristic	Expected Consultant Type
1. Dempsey Dumpster	Wants to dump the whole problem into the consultant's lap.	Slave
2. Rubber Stamper	Just wants p -value < 0.05 certified. Preferably $p < 0.01$.	Witch Doctor
3. Type III Personality	Comes with wrong question. Does not want to consider correct answer.	Type III Statistician
4. Airport Professor	Wants analysis yesterday for tomorrow's meeting in New Zealand; leaving tonight.	Infinite Statistician
5. Dr. Northcote	Will take all available - and unavailable - time.	Dr. Parkinson
6. Kitchen Statistician	Wants statistician's approval of paper's statistical analysis, severely criticized by referee.	Full Professor
7. Dr. T. V. Savant	Has vague feeling of needing statistics for valuable dataset. Wants statistician to define the question as well as the answer and write it up. Will consider making statistician 5th author on this important paper.	Psychiatrist
8. Innocent Abroad	Does not understand t -test but wants factor analysis on 20 cases with 50 variables.	Magician
9. Tom Thumb	Everything's gone wrong in the experiment but the data are still "valuable and valid".	Incurable Optimist
10. Hydra	Every answer generates 9 more (quick) questions.	Hercules
11. Wallflower	Successively more complicated (simple) explanations to save the consultant's time.	Job
12. Dr. Avis	Wants some advanced analysis that competitor used in paper on same topic. Is sure competitor didn't understand it either.	Dr. Hertz
13. Tinkerer	Just wants to make a minor change and rerun analysis that took 5 weeks.	Sisyphus
14. Encyclopedia Salesman	Just wants 5 minutes for answer to simple question. Can be handled over phone.	Gullible George
15. Scientist	Considers statistician as coworker and collaborator in the scientific enterprise.	Statistician