From entering into a professional life through data management to being in charge of statistical programming activities on several clinical trials, it takes a lot of trainings, adaptability and learning from mentors. Some important moments and steps should not be skipped to enter this world of coders.

Once the transition is done, it is not always easy to act in this new role and stick to it under certain circumstances. On the other hand it is also possible to use your new skills to help your old role: a programming procedure can save hours of data management review! Some tips will be given to combine the experience obtained in both roles and get the most from them.

**Background**

- Trainee/junior data manager 1 year
- Internship abroad in clinical trials field, in a large company
- Biology and computing background 5 years
- Support programmer 2 years
- Lots of programming on many different data types

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**Trainings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaps</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Tips</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAS</td>
<td>Read existing programs before building your own coding style</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biostatistics</td>
<td>Exchanging with programmers and biostatisticians</td>
<td>Questions on stats from other programmers is not unusual. There is no stupid question.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistical programmer role</td>
<td>Learning from mentor Personal experience</td>
<td>Attend higher level meetings and try to be involved in various activities.</td>
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**Combining experiences**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>DM trainee</th>
<th>Support programmer</th>
<th>Trial programmer</th>
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**Participant to edit checks review:** helps DM and prevents programmers from raising issues when he receives/manipulates data.

**Answer to clinical team requests differently.** Statistical outputs are not data review tools, but sending basic data listings does not take a lot of time and saves some for DM/clinical team.

During the development of derived datasets, some data checks can be incorporated to the code and avoid late findings that impact statistical analyses.

Accept that data may not be fully consistent with our programming specifications and find solutions.

**Conclusion**

This move is not standard, generally you «are born» statistical programmer or data manager. There is no standard transition package. But nothing between the 2 roles is unbridgeable. A good sense of adaptability is primordial to overcome role differences. People will not mind your lack of biostatistics knowledge if you show other qualities.

After acquiring confidence in the statistical programming field, the combination of experiences is possible and it can save time to the whole clinical team when it comes to data cleaning specifications and data review tools. It also helps yourself understanding data you analyze and how it is structured.

It was a challenge for me at the beginning to enter the world of SAS programmers but the transition went even better than I had expected. This kind of life change, despite the efforts that it takes, is possible and profitable.

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