Jennifer Pokorny, PhD

Santa Fe, NM | jenpokorny@gmail.com | github.com/jpoko | linkedin.com/in/jenpokorny/ | jenpokorny.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Data Scientist with a PhD in Psychology and 15+ years translating complex, real-world problems into high-impact data solutions. Expert at building data infrastructure from scratch, deploying interactive tools, and designing automated reporting systems that drive strategic decision-making across health, workforce, and operations domains. Proven ability to lead end-to-end projects from requirements gathering through deployment; skilled at identifying unstated needs and consulting with senior leadership on analytical priorities. Advocates for open, reproducible data pipelines and thoughtfully leverages generative AI tools throughout the workflow to dramatically accelerate delivery without sacrificing rigor.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Languages & Tools: R (ggplot2, plotly, Shiny, tidyverse, Quarto/R Markdown), Python, SQL, Excel (Power Query), Power BI, Tableau, Salesforce, SPSS, Git, MATLAB

Statistical Methods: Regression, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), mixed-effects/multilevel models, longitudinal & observational data analysis, clustering/classification, random forest, network analysis, predictive modeling, factor analysis, causal inference frameworks

Core Competencies: Data pipeline development · interactive dashboards · process automation · ETL · reproducible research · stakeholder consultation · workforce analytics & modeling · KPI development · program evaluation

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lead Data Scientist (Contract)

Mar 2024 – Mar 2026

ABS Group · Santa Fe, NM

Data analytics team supporting FEMA's $5.45B Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office (30,000+ claims)

- Built interactive workforce simulation app in one week - modeling 5-stage claims process across 11 teams, proving need for 100 additional staff to meet 40-week deadline vs. initial 3-year estimate; directly supported executive staffing justification
- Engineered automated financial tracking system replacing 10-report manual compilation process; enabled executive monitoring of $5.45B across three payment tiers with min/max scenario planning, directly informing program sunsetting and resource allocation decisions
- Conducted predictive modeling of future workforce performance based on historical individual and team data, informing workforce rebalancing and capacity planning
- Designed and deployed daily operations report serving 300+ staff across 3 sites with role-specific views (executive, site, team, individual), iteratively evolving based on stakeholder feedback
- Developed automated acknowledgment system reducing claim backlog by 1,000 claims and increasing on-time acknowledgment rate from 24% to 51% in 3 weeks
- Established complete data infrastructure from scratch - database connectivity, data dictionary, automated daily pipeline, standardized R/Excel protocols - creating single source of truth; documented protocols and mentored team members ensuring continuity through staff turnover
- Consulted with senior leadership on analytical priorities; handled diverse requests ranging from 1-hour ad-hoc queries to multi-week dashboard development while maintaining weekly executive reporting

Data Science Consultant

Jan 2020 – Jun 2024

UC Davis, Contemplative Coping During COVID-19 Study · Remote

Longitudinal multidisciplinary outcomes study examining health and wellbeing of ~400 U.S. participants during COVID-19

- Designed and implemented data pipeline integrating 25M+ data points from 14 disparate sources (Qualtrics surveys, biological samples) for longitudinal study of 400 participants
- Established reproducible R/Rmarkdown/Quarto protocols adopted by 15 researchers, ensuring transparent and auditable data pipelines across the full study lifecycle
- Automated generation of individualized mental health outcome reports for 350+ participants using Quarto/R, delivering personalized insights at scale

- Directed clustering and multivariate distance matrix regression analyses of mixed-methods data to identify predictors of participant outcomes and intervention preferences
- Collaborated with stakeholders to iteratively develop interactive R Shiny outcomes dashboard, enabling researchers to explore study insights and communicate findings; contributed to 4 conference presentations

Chief Program Officer / Head of Education May 2010 – Jun 2024
Think Elephants International · Remote

- Designed and analyzed program evaluations using 1,500+ pre/post-intervention surveys across participant and control groups; led survey instrument design, data collection, and sampling methodology
- Directed multilevel modeling, factor analysis, and nonparametric statistics in R/R Markdown to assess learning outcomes, measure return on program investment, and identify instructional improvement opportunities
- Coordinated education programs across NY, CA, and Thailand serving 600+ students at 18 sites; managed teams of 3–9 instructors and 20+ partner organizations
- Supervised and mentored 18 junior researchers including 3 thesis students; disseminated findings through 5 conference presentations, 2 reports, and 1 publication

Freelance Data Consultant 2023 – 2024
Independent · Remote

- Adelphi University (2024): Automated exploratory data analysis, principal component analysis (PCA), and inferential statistics workflows in R
- UC San Diego StayWELL Project (2023): Developed interactive R Shiny data visualization tool to communicate wellbeing study findings to stakeholders; engaged in client-facing discussions to identify needs and provide strategic recommendations

Researcher Jun 2013 – Aug 2018
University of California Davis, Center for Mind and Brain · Davis, CA

- Contributed to $1.5M longitudinal research project assessing meditation intervention outcomes via cross-sectional study and randomized controlled trial (RCT) with wait-list control group; analyzed survey, behavioral, physiological, and biological data from 10+ experiments using R, Excel, and MATLAB
- Initiated and led development of novel network analytic method for quantifying qualitative data, resulting in peer-reviewed publication and conference presentation; contributed to 3 publications and 8 conference presentations
- Supervised and mentored 20+ junior team members in research methodology and statistical analysis, supporting 5 independent research projects

Earlier Research Experience
Research Scientist, UC Davis MIND Institute | Graduate Researcher, Emory University

Led clinical neuroimaging research (fMRI + behavioral/survey data) with pediatric populations; designed and implemented behavioral experiments; conducted advanced statistical analyses; contributed to 8 publications and 25+ presentations across conferences and invited talks.

EDUCATION

PhD & MA, Psychology (Neuroscience and Animal Behavior) · Emory University · MA 2007, PhD 2009
BA, Anthropology & Social Welfare (double major) · University of Wisconsin-Madison

SELECTED TRAINING

- Building with Power BI / Get Data in Power BI / Clean, Transform, Load Data in Power BI - Microsoft, May 2025
- Introduction to Power BI - DataCamp, Mar 2024
- Developing & Testing Your Shiny Application - Open Source in Pharma, Nov 2023
- Introduction & Intermediate Python - DataCamp, Apr 2023
- Intro to SQL / Intermediate SQL / Joining Data in SQL - DataCamp, Nov 2022
- Python / Intro to Machine Learning / Intermediate Machine Learning - Kaggle, Aug 2021