**Lessons from Anthropology**

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Working with the data generated by HMRC’s tax platform presents unique challenges, many of which are methodological. What do you do when you are unable to access the data statistics come from? When the compilation process is not available? When there are no data sources for benchmarking?

This presentation presents insights gained from my secondment to the HMRC Digital Data Centre Operations Team. Using an approach borrowed from social anthropology, it examines differences between statisticians and the people who build our online services.

It offers practical advice on how to create better working relationships, communicate more effectively, set boundaries to allow work to move forward and avoid getting an ulcer while at the same time demystifying the working practices of engineers, technicians and developers.

Key Words: digital; online; data; analysis; communication

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