



Center for Clinical Trials

Department of Biostatistics
Department of Epidemiology
Department of International Health

Department of Medicine
Department of Ophthalmology
Oncology Center

Friday, 29 July 2005

Memorandum

To: Center for Clinical Trials Students, Staff, and Faculty

Fr: Curtis Meinert

Re: Tables 101: The Table Master's Oath

Having had the Table Maker's Oath mysteriously appear in the clutter of my desk, I have now unearthed a companion piece – The Table Master's Oath. While we have no such designation here, it seems obvious that the producer of the oath comes from a place where such positions exist. The obvious message from reading the two oaths is that table production for monitoring reports is a team effort. One where the maker and master have to interact to produce quality tables. The maker has to understand the requirements for the master document and the master has to understand how tables are created.

(Tue 9:10pm) 12 Jul 05

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Enclosure

The Table Master's Oath

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Kathy Yates
Tables Notebook
Chronologic file

[CLM3] E:\Tables\MastOath.wpd / bjc

The Table Master's Oath

WHEREAS,

Tables are among the most important products of Coordinating Centers,
Well constructed and formatted tables are invaluable for examining and interpreting data,
Treatment effects and performance monitoring reports are largely comprised of tables,
Such collections of tables are invariably collected for assembly into a stapled or otherwise bound document,
Production of such documents requires the attention of a person termed a Table Master,
The principal duties of the Table Master relate to coordination and oversight of table production to ensure a
finished document comprised of tables having uniformity of appearance and format.

Therefore, having responsibility for production of reports containing tables, I shall strive to ensure that:

- 1 Table production is driven from templates containing standard code and settings
- 2 Tables are electronically saved and backed up
- 3 Reports be generated for one-sided printing
- 4 Tables are portrait-oriented and contained within the margin settings specified for the master document
- 5 Tables have footers containing date of creation or revision, file name, and path
- 6 Data tables contain footnotes indicating the data sources used for compilation
- 7 The electronic file for tables contain a code for page numbering and that the settings be such to ensure an assembled document with pages sequentially numbered and with page numbers throughout appearing in the upper right hand corner of pages
- 8 Table titles be marked to enable electronic generation of a table of contents and section lists when the master document is generated
- 9 Arithmetical numbers in table columns are right-aligned and that decimal numbers are right aligned on the decimal
- 10 Font size is not less than 11 point for any material in tables except, perhaps, for footers
- 11 Numbers are not enclosed in parentheses in columns of data tables
- 12 There are no "hot wired" dates in table footers
- 13 Table numbers have unique target names
- 14 The header for continuation pages is the same as that appearing on the first page and that the header displays the table number and a shortened version of the table title
- 15 Tables are checked for accuracy, keying errors, and errant calculations
- 16 The master document is assembled early and often on its way to production to ensure proper generation and to provide a H&G approach to debugging when generation fails
- 17 The assembled document is periodically spell checked
- 18 Consideration is given to stripping unused styles from the finished master document and to saving individual files in "style lean" fashion
- 19 The electronic copy of tables is checked for bad table practices and communicated to the producer to eliminate those practices
- 20 Electronic versions of tables are checked for rouge code, especially that which is introduced by use of improper tab settings in the body of tables
- 21 Production of tables via use of the table feature in WP or other word processing packages is discouraged.