**Reverse the coding of a variable in SPSS**

In this video I’m going to show you how to reverse code an ordinal variable. The variable I’m going to use is called satisfaction. If we have a look at the variable view we can see a bit more information about this variable. We asked employees how much they agree with the statement ‘I am satisfied with my current position’, and currently the coding is one represents strongly disagree, through to five representing strongly agree, where three means undecided. Now we want to switch it around so one represents strongly agree through to five representing strongly disagree, and we’re going to keep three to represent undecided. Now you might want to reserve code a variable when its positively worded and you need to switch it to negatively worded for it to be consistent with other questions or vice versa so its negatively worded and you need to switch it for it to be positively worded. Let’s have a look at our data view again. You might have noticed there’s a zero here. This is a code that I’ve used for missing data. There’s also a blink value. Now the blink value is system missing. So SPSS considers anything blank to be missing by default, and its referred to as system missing. This would be defined as user missing because I’ve defined the missing values, and if we have a look at the variable view here in the missing column for satisfaction, I’ve put zero in as my missing value code. So if you define missing values you need to do so in the missing column.

Alright, so let’s have a look at how we can reverse code this variable. From the transform menu we’re going to choose recode into different variables. There are two options here. ‘Same variables’ will overwrite your current data and ‘different variables’ will create a new variable with your new coding, and we definitely don’t want to overwrite our current data, we just want to create a new one. We need to find our variable we want to reverse code from the left here and I’m going to use satisfaction and we need to give it a name and we can also give it a label. I’m just going to give it a name for now. I’m going to call it ‘satisfaction recoding’. Now remember with variable names, you can’t have any spaces or special characters. You can also go ahead and put a label in and then click ‘change’. When you click ‘change’, your new name should appear in the box. Go ahead and click on ‘old and new values’. Now in the old values frame here, this is where we tell SPSS what our current coding is and in our new value frame, this is where we tell SPSS where our new values or our new codes should be. So the old value, we want to switch, we want to reverse the code so one should become five, two will become four, three will stay the same, four will become two and five will become one. It might help to write these down so you can remember what they are. So we’re going to put five, click ‘add’, two becomes four. Now we could put three and three but I’m going to show you a different way of doing that so we’re going to skip along to four. Four becomes two and five becomes one. Okay, now three is staying that same and also my missing value codes are going to stay the same. So we have an option here on the old value side to say all other values and to say we want to copy what is already there so the threes will stay the same and the code for zero will also stay the same, we can add that. I can also add a code for my missing data, so there’s one here that is system missing, I can tell SPSS I want that to be a zero as well and add that in. Go ahead and click ‘continue’ and then ‘okay’. We can see that we have our new satisfaction recoded. We need to define it in the variable view, so I’m going to change my decimal places to zero. I’m going to go ahead and copy my current coding because it is the same variable, it’s just reversed. And go ahead and put in some value labels. Now remember we reserved it, now before one was strongly disagree and now it represents strongly agree. So two is agree, three stays the same, four is disagree and five is strongly disagree. Click ‘okay’, and if we go to our data view, we can see here, if I move it over, that the coding is exactly the same as our previous variable but our numbers are different. So the words are the same but we’ve reversed the coding.

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