Dichotomizing a Variable in SPSS

Filtering Out Missing Values

1. If your variable includes text values, make sure that the numeric values appear onscreen.
2. Identify range of desired values (using the Utility/Variables function).
3. Select Data/Select Cases
4. Select “if condition is satisfied” and click on the If button.
5. Select variable list and click on right arrow button to transfer to condition field.
6. Type in condition using the following format:
   “[minimum desired value] <= [variable name] <= [maximum desired value]”
   for example, if we wanted to eliminate missing observations from the “age” variable, we would input “1<=age<=97.”
7. Select Continue
8. Under Unselected Cases, select Deleted, and then OK to exit.
9. Repeat this procedure for all variables to be dichotomized before proceeding further.

Recoding Variables

1. Select Transform/Recode/Into Different Variables.
2. Select the variable to be dichotomized.
3. Click on right-arrow button and type in name of new variable, then press Change.
4. Click on Old and New Values.
5. Under Old Value, select value or range of values to be converted to 0.
6. Under New Value, enter 0.
7. Under Old Value, select value or range of values to be converted to 1.
10. Repeat this procedure for all variables to be dichotomized.
11. Press OK and the new variable will be added on the far right side of the datasheet.