

# Teaching Experimental Design Using Labs That “Don’t Work”

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There is nothing that a lab instructor dreads more than a lab that “doesn’t work”. As instructors, we are continually tweaking our lab exercises to make them “work” for our students. Have you ever considered that a so-called “failed” lab might teach them more than whatever concept the original lab was designed to teach in the first place? What if instead of fixing them ourselves we allowed our students to troubleshoot them? In this workshop we will examine how you can take a lab that you may have otherwise discarded because it “doesn’t work” and transform it into a lab on experimental design for your students. We will use an ecology lab as an example but this concept can be applied to a variety of different specialty areas in biology. So dig out those old forgotten labs and see how you can transform them into a whole different learning experience.

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