Expenditionary
A Personal Experiment in Speculative Fiction
Game
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# Peer Review

**Abstract:** In recent years there has been much interest in performing and publishing novel research in order to be able to graduate, secure grant funding, tenure, and other forms of career advancement. In this game, Players (Researchers) will work to achieve the goals set for them by the Game Master (Principle Investigator or "PI"). Researchers will begin by stating their qualifications to the group. The Principle Investigator will then inform them of the type of lab they have been recruited to work in and resources are available. Researchers will then have to achieve a goal set out by the Principle Investigator by performing experiments, collaborating with other researchers, attending department seminars, avoiding safety training, and gathering resources from the stockroom. At the end of the session the Principle Investigator and the Researchers will have a Group Meeting to discuss whether the goals were achieved and what can be done better next time.

**Key Words:** RPG, Table Top Games, One Page RPG, Fun?



## Introduction

To begin, researchers will share their qualifications. If possible, researchers are encouraged to draw on their real life experiences to determine these qualifications, but can create plausible qualifications if they so choose.

Qualifications consist of three things. Career Stage, Experience, and Specialty.

- **Career Stage** - Undergraduate, Graduate, Post-Doc.
- **Experience** - a class that you have taken or been a teaching assistant for. Ex. *Organic Chemistry, Cell Biology, Instrumental Analysis, Astrophysics, etc.*
- **Specialty** - the sub-field that you work in. Ex. *Organometallics, Proteomics, Ecology, Semi-Conductors, Machine Learning, etc.*

## Methods

For a given task the PI specify a target number needed to succeed between 1 and 4. For General tasks all researchers will roll a **d4**. For a task that falls under their Experience researchers will roll a **d6**. For a task included under their specialty researchers will roll a **d8**. Undergraduates take a -1 penalty on all Experience rolls and -2 on all Specialty rolls. Post-Docs get +1 on all General rolls.

Collaboration is vital. When approaching a given task, it is best to defer to the researcher who possesses the highest qualifications in order to improve the probability of the desired outcome.

## Discussion

It should be clear then that this game works best when at the very least the Principle Investigator is familiar with the workings of scientific research. Some error is present in all experiments however, and so some level of approximation is acceptable.

Principle Investigator's may find it beneficial to draw on the real-life experiences when presenting objectives to the researchers. Researchers are encouraged to explain how they are intend to complete the tasks at hand while making use of whatever scientific or general knowledge is available to them. Plausible explanations and collaborative efforts should be encouraged, and rewarded when possible.

## Supporting Information

To start a game, consider beginning with one the the scenarios listed below.

- A grant proposal is nearly due and it needs preliminary data. The lab is low on both funding and materials. Can you convince another lab to lend you the materials you need?
- Reviewer Two wants the Mass Spectrometry experiments in your paper redone. Unfortunately, the instrument is booked for the rest of the week. Can you convince the Lab Manager to let you use it after hours?
- While attending a conference your group discovered that a rival lab is working a project that is very similar to yours. Can you finish your last few experiments and publish before they do?
- Can you convince the Department Head to fund your conference travel?