

Preface

I developed an interest in the philosophy of science some years after the completion of my undergraduate studies in biochemistry. The origins of this book lie in my recognition that some understanding of the philosophy of science would be helpful with teaching high school biology students how to carry out laboratory and field studies in ways which truly reflected the research process. Subsequently, this newly acquired knowledge helped propel me back into the world of research, a doctoral degree, and ultimately into a career as a development scientist in the public sector.

During the course of my professional life I tried to convey these ideas to others, and referred them to what I considered to be useful introductions to the philosophy of science. While there were plenty of manuals describing how to carry out a research project, there seemed to be no simple, accessible guide showing how the philosophy of science can inform research practice.

This book is intended to fill this gap, by encouraging undergraduate and graduate students to achieve an understanding of the philosophy of science that provides practical insights into the attitudes and methods necessary for a successful approach to research. I hope it will also be useful to their professors and advisors, and that it will engender an enduring interest in the philosophy of science.

Practical Applications of the Philosophy of Science

Thinking about Research

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