A Lab Notebook Style Guide

Your lab notebook should contain a complete record of everything that you did in lab. While you are working in the lab you should write nothing anywhere other than in your lab notebook. In the lab you work in groups, which mean you will be sharing your data, analysis, and graphs with your lab partners. But what you write in your notebook must be in your own words. This will reflect your understanding of the work you have done.

Format:

- Today’s date
- Course, section and lab station number
- Title for today’s lab
- Your name
- Your partner’s names

Abstract or Purpose (One paragraph only):

Purpose of today’s lab

Introduction:

- Preliminary notes
- Questions you are investigating
- Equipments and supplies used
- Drawings of the experimental arrangements

Procedure:

Describe clearly and concisely what you did and results you obtained during the lab in the order you did it. This section should include the following:

- Procedure followed to obtain the data.
- Your data.
- Calculations (if any, with explanation).
- Results.
- Problems you encountered and their solutions.
- Quantitative estimates of the reliability (for example standard deviation) of your measured quantities and of quantities derived from them.
- Units for all quantities.
Your procedure should be written in such a way that a reader can evaluate the validity of your results. Your reader should be able to repeat what you did following only your report as guide.

Discussion:

You must analyze your results. Compare your expectations and the results you obtained. Find out the reasons if your results disagree with common perceptions. Discuss possible sources of error and how to eliminate those sources. Suggest for the improvements.

Summary or Conclusion:

Pull together here the main results of your experiment, citing experimental evidence (do not repeat) to support your conclusion. Answer any question/s raised in introduction.

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