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Writing for Engineering

Elements of a Lab Report

In most lab reports there are usually eight basic elements that are included. Which are title, abstract, introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion, conclusion and references. Below is an outline of what usually goes in these sections.

- 1) Title: Here we provide a title that gives enough information so that the reader knows exactly what's going to be in the lab report. We don't use complex words, we use simple words and a title that goes straight to the point.
- 2) Abstract: Here we give an overview of the report and we talk about our discoveries, theories, methods etc. We do so in short sentences to give the reader information about the lab report.
- 3) Introduction: Here we present the audience with a hypothesis, we also do a description of the methods that we used. We basically provide the audience any background information that they need to know before reading the report.
- 4) Materials and Methods: In this section we provide the exact methods that we used to do the experiment, we do so in a way that the reader can follow the methods and do the experiment without any misunderstandings. Also we provide the materials that we used using pictures or diagrams and brief descriptions. We do a procedure in which we provide a description of what was done in a sort of chronological order and provide essential information about the experiment.
- 5) Results: In the results section we will talk about what was obtained during the experiment which then we will later use to discuss it in the discussion section. We need to explain the data obtained, and highlight any important pattern that was obtained while doing the experiment.
- 6) Discussion: In the discussion we comment on the hypothesis that we made in the introduction, we support our hypothesis with our findings or if the results do not support what we found then we still need to write it and offer any possible explanations or even references.
- 7) Conclusion: In here we will sum up the main points in the report and try to convince the audience how important the experiment was.
- 8) References: We list all of the references that we used in the lab report and do not cite any reference that we have consulted but have not cited in the report.