

Some notes on report writing

Outline

- Report content and structure
- General recommendations
- Chapter contents
- Last comments

Report content and structure

- Summary
- Contents
 1. Introduction
 2. Theory
 3. Your task
 4. Implementation and results
 5. Conclusion
- References
- Appendices

General recommendations

- The reader does not know:
 - The course idea/motivation
 - The theory
 - The task
- Always start all chapters/subchapters by explaining what it is about (intention) and how it is organized
- Ask friends to read through your report and give feedback
- Use available tools to check spelling and grammar!
- The report will be given a single percentage mark (same for both students) => divide chapter responsibility but talk together while writing!!

Summary and content

- A short summary (max half page) of :
 - The course/project
 - The project task
 - The results
 - Conclusions
- List of contents:
 - Only use one level of nesting..
 - (1.1.x is forbidden...)

1. Introduction

- Goals of the course/project
- Why is your task of general interest to society..?
- How the report is organized
 - In chapter x the theory is described
 - In chapter y the implementation is described
 -
 - And finally the conclusion is given in chapter z

2. Theory

- Inform the reader that this chapter is a presentation of the theory needed to understand the task.
- You may copy parts from lecture notes (but inform the reader that you have done this!). Also refer to books in former courses or other literature
 - Always refer to the source and
 - Use quotation marks when quoting (copying)
- Use figures if possible/natural...!!
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3. The task

- Give a short description of all tasks and why you did choose your. .
- Describe the task
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4. Implementation and results

- What is this chapter about
- Matlab implementation
- Any specific Matlab m-commands used?
- A flow-diagram is recommended
- Results (use figures/tables if possible)
- Discussion of results
- Matlab code (documented) in appendix

7. Conclusion

- An extended version of summary
 - theory, programming, implementation, and so on.
- Both positive and negative results should be mentioned
- Include main points from discussion of results
- Any positive/negative comments on the task intention and quality...
- What you learnt from the project

References

- Include list of relevant literature that you have referred to in the report.
- E.g., if your theory part quotes the course literature:
 - The quantizer adaptation ensures that “if the signal magnitude increases (i.e. increased short-time variance) the step size should be increased.” [1]
 - [1]: “Applied signal processing – A speech communication system”, Lecture notes, NTNU, 2012

Last comments

- Typical report length (excluding appendices) is 5-10 pages
 - Guideline, not a requirement
 - Put the emphasis on your work rather than on a lengthy and comprehensive theory part – focus on the relevant parts of theory
- Write in English or Norwegian
 - Pros for English:
 - Many companies use English for internal documentation
 - use spell and grammar checks where available
 - your English proficiency will not be evaluated, but you must be able to formulate what you have done, and why, in a comprehensible manner
 - the ability to use available tools to avoid unnecessary errors should be part of your skills as an engineer
 - Pros for Norwegian:
 - Your mother tongue – writing is normally easier, and the result more precise and fluent

GOOD LUCK!