Subject: Technical Memo E3 Common Mistakes

1) Important values obtained from the experiment were not reported in the summary.
2) Values were reported in summary/text without units or with incorrect units.
3) Too many details were given in the Summary, for example, recall that the Summary should not contain references to the rest of the text of the memo. This includes Figures, equations, and references.
4) Simple spelling and grammar problems This is not just a math or data analysis assignment.. it is a writing assignment too! Be sure to proofread for both technical accuracy and writing quality!
5) Units should always be reported with a number. If it is a coefficient, state that.
6) Many axes labels were too small. Use the figure editor in MATLAB to edit figure label size, or increase your default text size in preferences.
7) Similar plots containing one line each can be combined into one single plot with several lines. This is the preferred and only way to persuade readers that there are differences between data from your two trials. It also makes the number of figures you have to reference less confusing for the reader.
8) Large blank spaces and line spacing; a number of papers had large blank spaces and single spaced portions of text (presumably to wiggle into the 4-page limit, or because it was troublesome to find the right placement for your figures. Keep to single-spaced, and do not include large blank portions in your final report.
9) When referencing a theoretical or fit curve, in your figure or in the text, reference the equation that is the theoretical model or fit equation. This provides an objective, clear description of what you are doing (that’s a good habit to get into now).
10) Likewise, when referring to a theoretical system, scratch the word theoretical, and instead do the work of describing the theory. (i.e. if it is a kinematic model, call it a kinematic model of the system).