

Guidelines for writing a good report on a research paper.

Summary of the paper and key findings: In this section you should describe what the paper is about, the key problems it is trying to solve, its motivation (and maybe why it is an important problem) and the key contributions the paper spells out. Note that this is probably not the right place for your subjective views about the contributions.

Discussion on novelty of the paper as stated but also with respect to literature found: here you want to discuss what is the novelty of the key contributions (if any). This part will require you to read the paper's related work description critically as well as do some literature search. Note that if the paper is not extremely recent, the novelty needs to be put in the context of the time at which the paper is published. You will want to comment on the novelty at the time as well as contextualize with respect to the current literature. Here is your chance to comment on the contribution value with a more subjective angle.

Positives of this Paper: It is good to spend some words highlighting what is good of this work and paper (it could range from presentation aspects to content ones). Things to note, for instance, are if the paper is seminal, in the sense that works seem to have been citing this a lot, if it is very novel, if it has a thorough evaluation. Note that is often hard to be positive about a paper than finding flaws: remember to consider the difficulty of getting the work done and presented when you judge.

Negatives of this Paper: Here is where you can be critical and highlight the limitations of the work. Is the novelty limited? Is the evaluation constrained or artificial? Is the writing difficult? Note that highlighting more negatives than positives does not mean higher marks for your report ☺: it always depends on what you write and how you justify it.

Ideas for Future Work, Critical discussion of potential impact and context setting: This is the space where you describe what potential the paper has. It might be that you have already set the paper into context in the novelty section so you can link to that and discuss more about the impact achieved and the future potential. If the paper is recent you can speculate on the take up of the research community or industry. This is really the space for your more subjective speculations and views.

Cecilia Mascolo