

# What makes a good talk?

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SS23 – MVSem “Great Debates in Galaxy Evolution”

# The basics

- What's the goal of your talk?
  - Convey information/teach
  - Present your own research
  - Get a job
- Who is your audience?
  - What do they already know?
- What is the key message?
  - People will remember **0 or 1** thing
  - Have a clear “take home message”

# Tell a Story

- Big Picture context
- Specify a question
- What work has been done
- What is the conclusion
  
- **Never ask:** How can I say/explain all this in X minutes?
- **Ask:** What are the most important things I can convey in X minutes?

# Learn by Example

- Think about talks you have seen – what worked and what didn't?
- Go to HJAC and think about those talks – what do those speakers do well (or poorly?)

# Practicalities - References

- Lead author+year (Kreckel et al. 2020)
- Research talks - clearly separate your own work from others

# Practicalities - Text

- 6 bullet points, 6 words each
- Don't show tables
- Writing down everything you intend to say distracts the audience, they read the slide instead of listening to you.

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- Use 'Presenter Notes' to keep slides clean

# Practicalities - Text

- 6 bullet points, 6 words each
- Don't show tables
- Ouch!

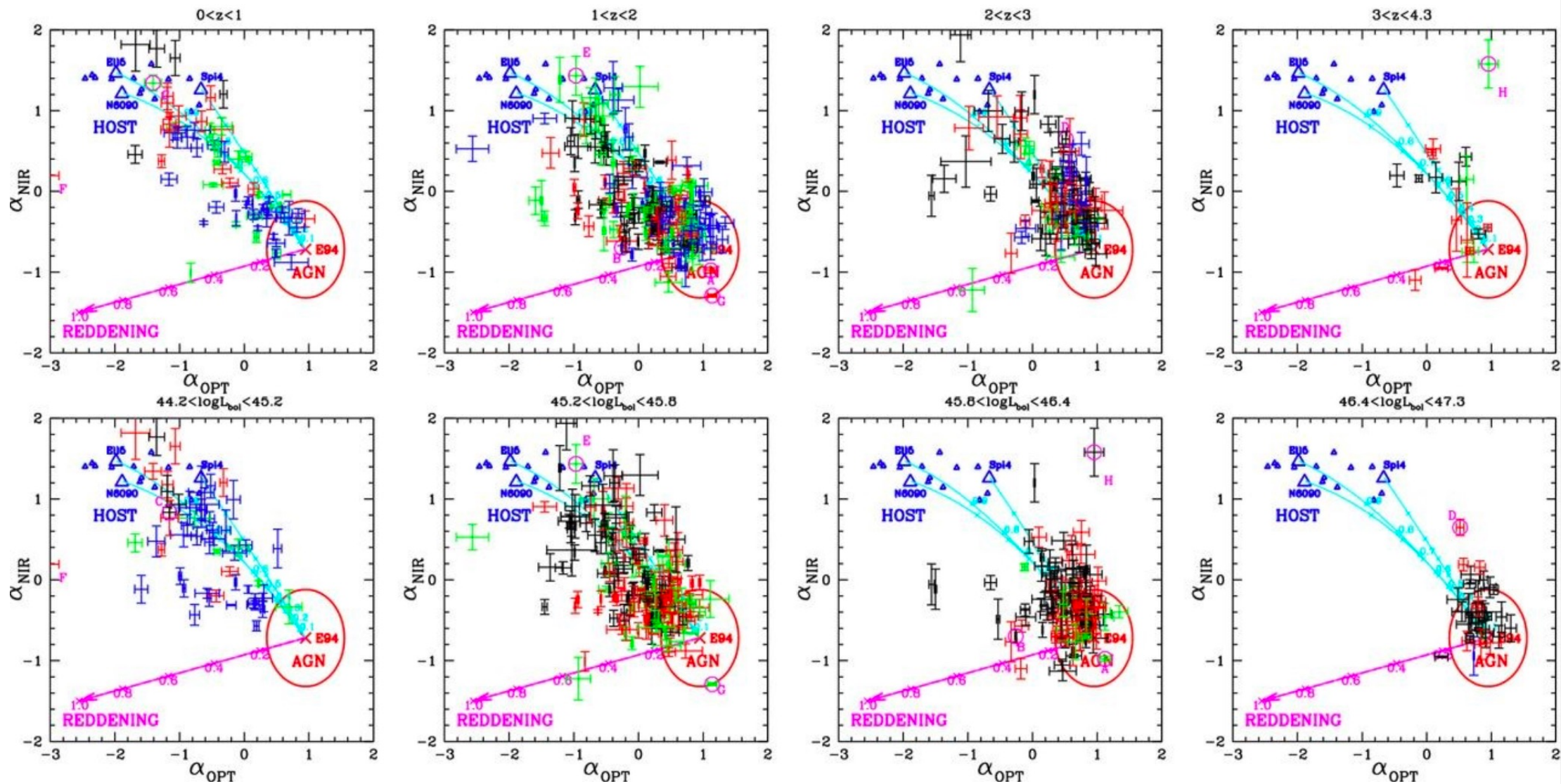


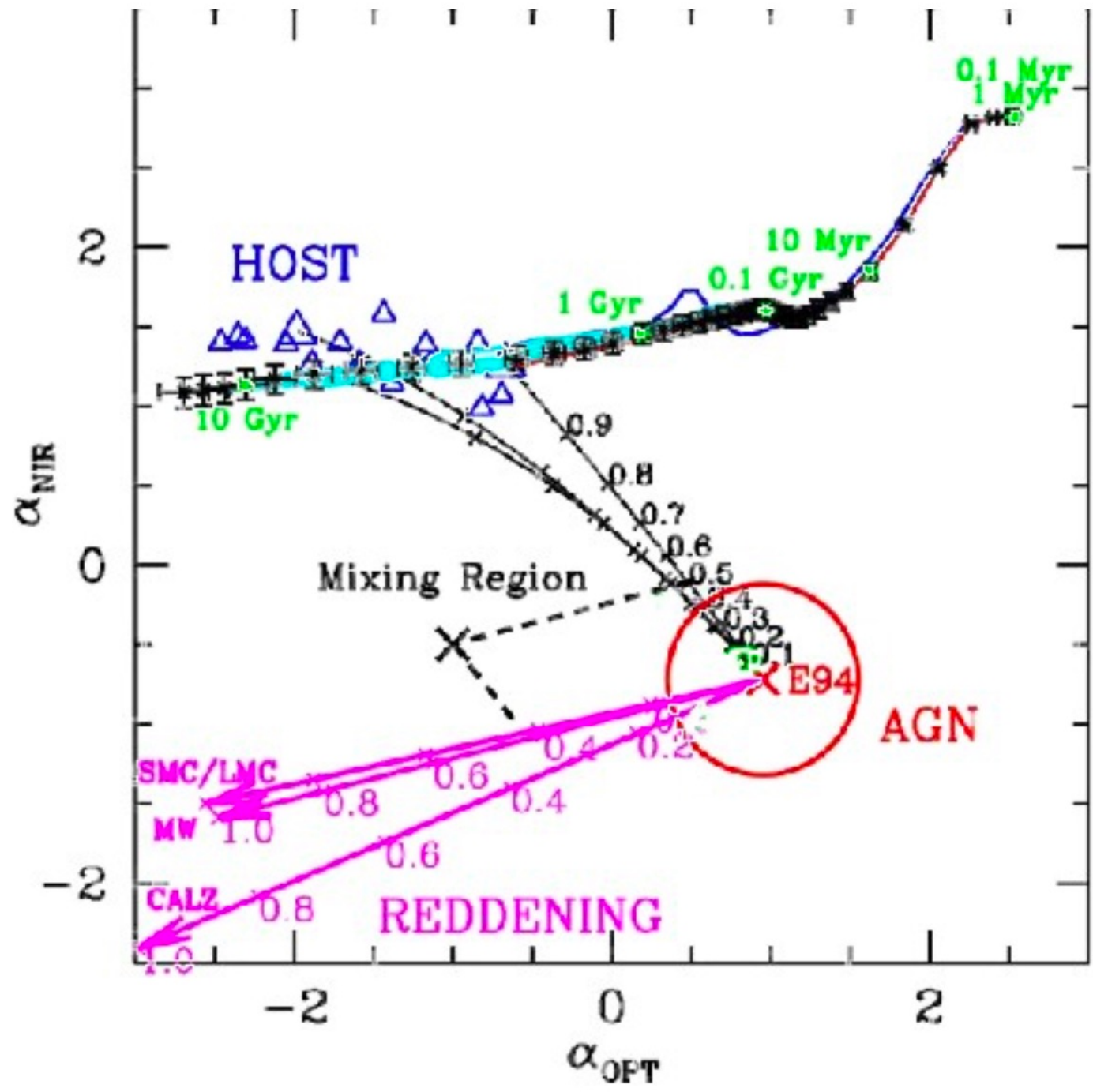
# Practicalities - Text

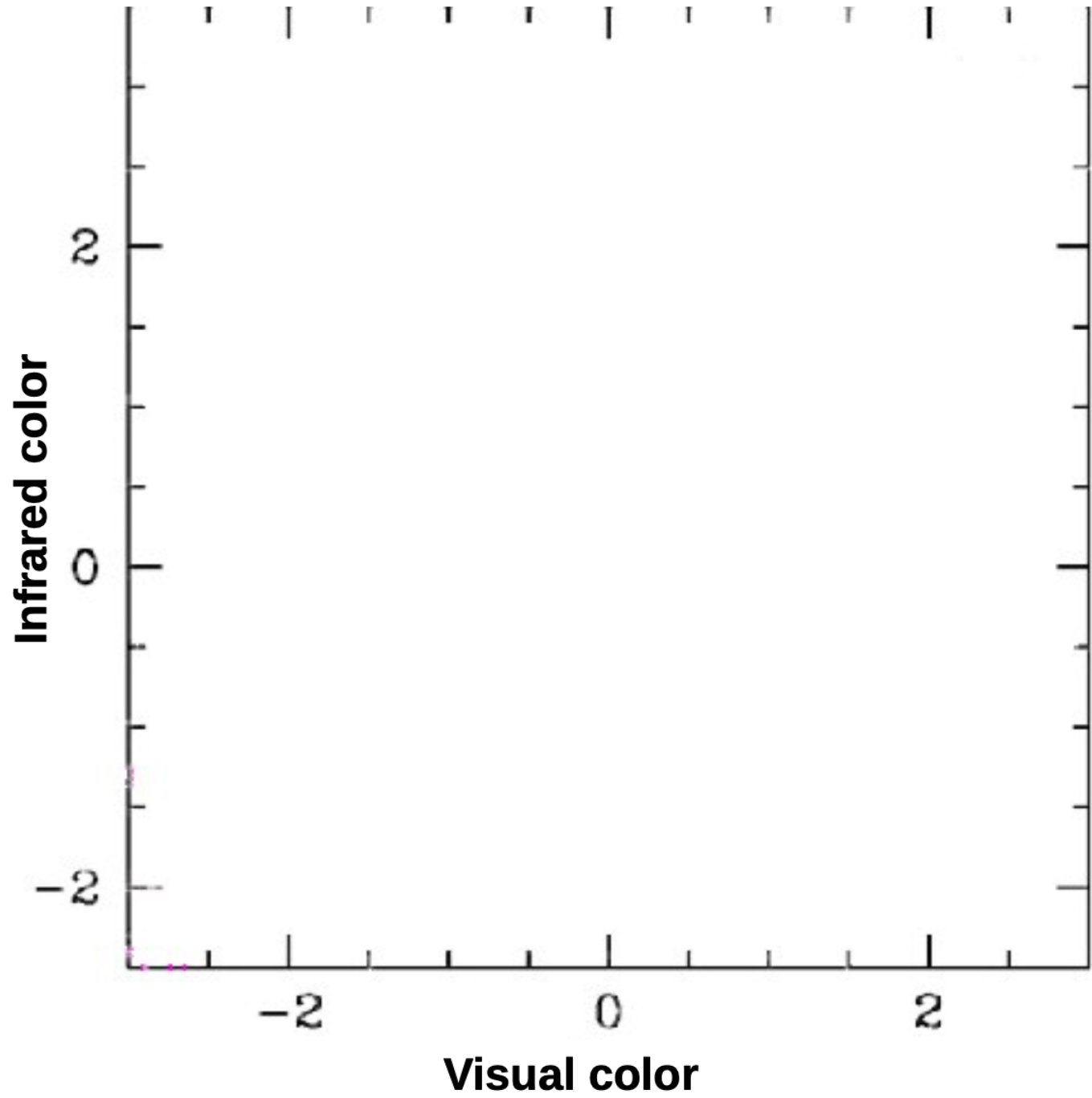
- 6 bullet points, 6 words each
- Don't show tables
  
- Good for online talks, not great for projectors

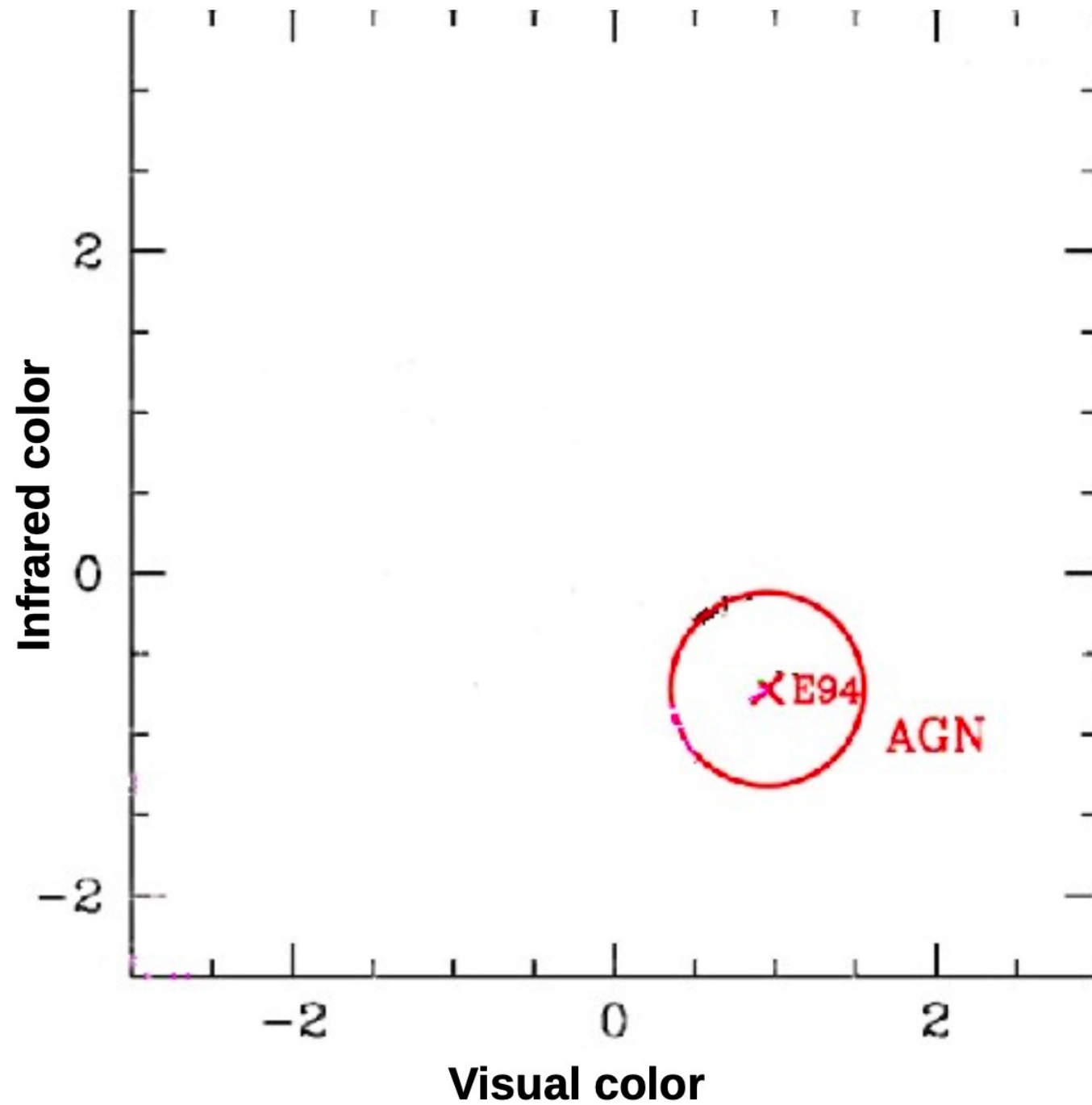
# Practicalities - Figures

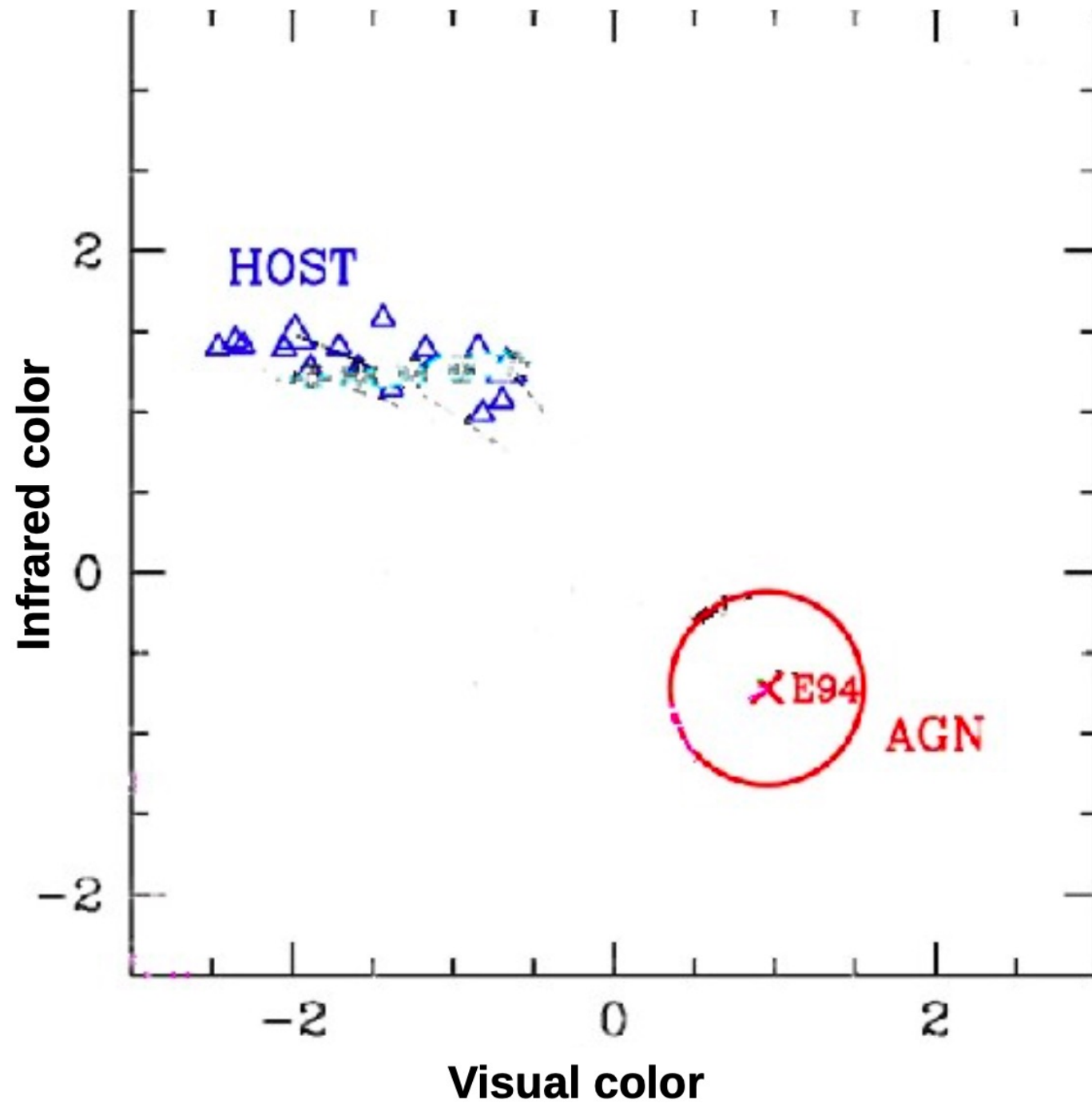
- Use figures extensively to tell your story
- But annotate them
  - Ensure legible axes
  - Add labels
  - Remove clutter
- Use cartoons
- Explain everything on a slide
  - Especially axes!
- ... or take it out

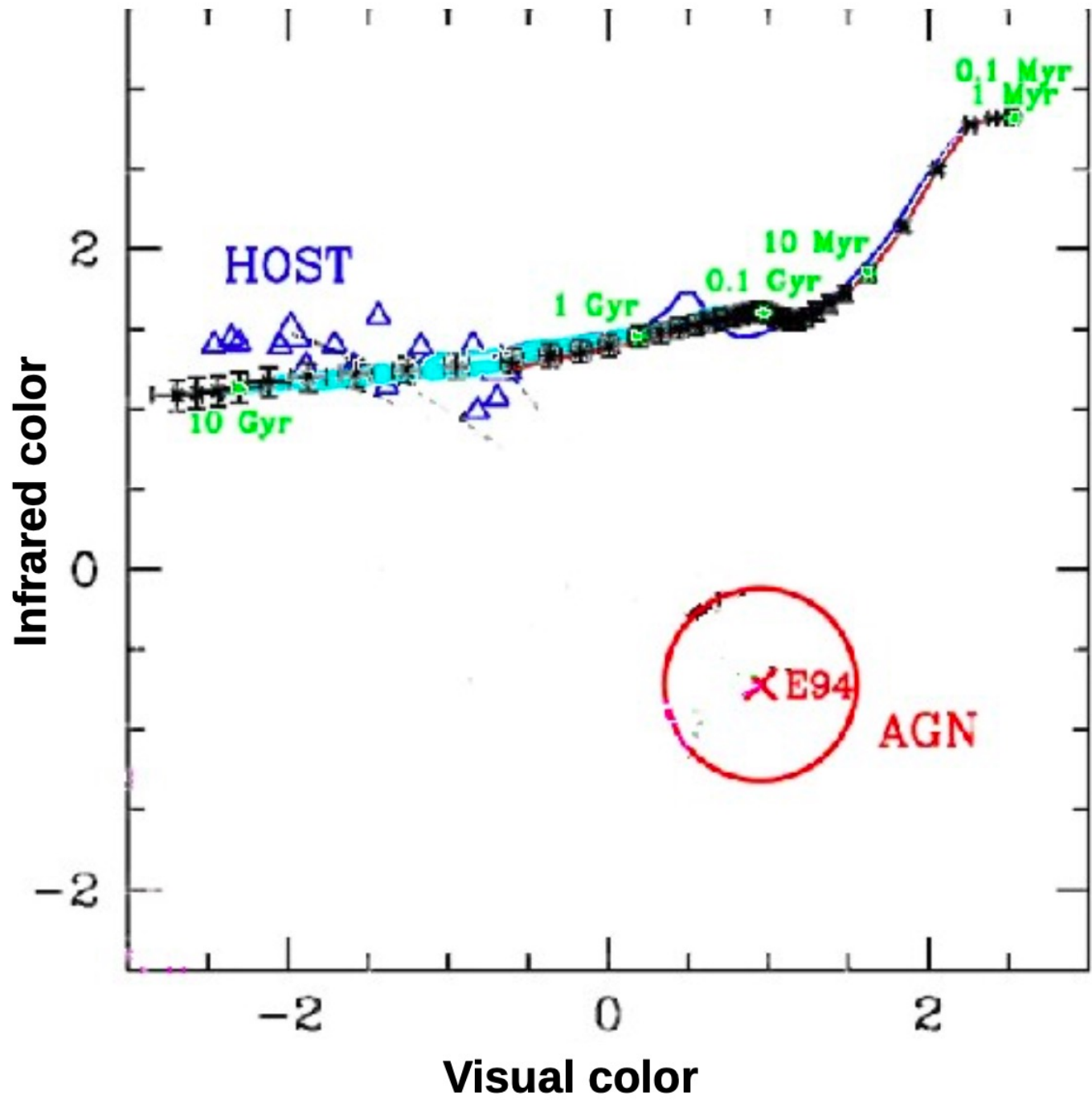




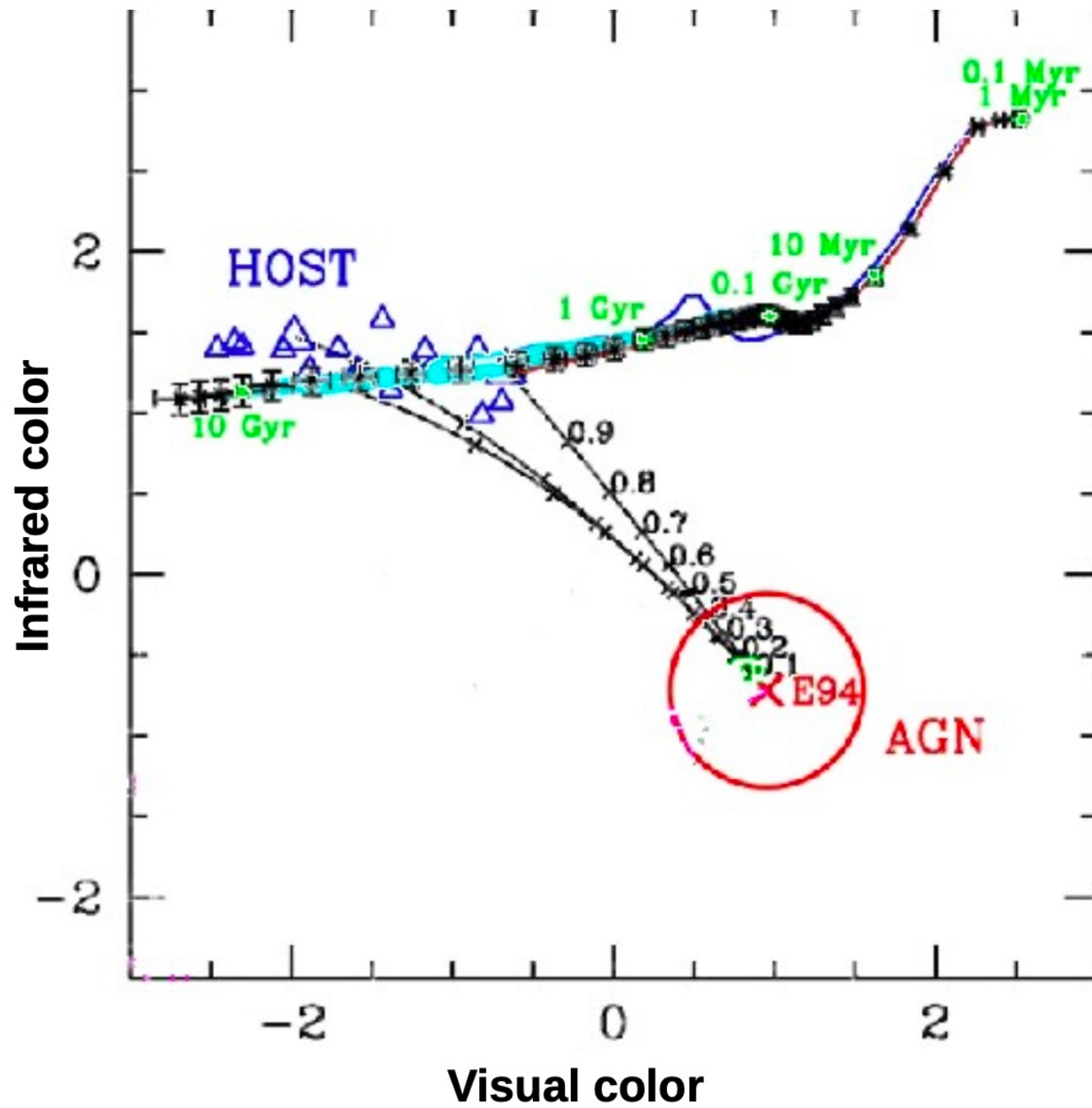


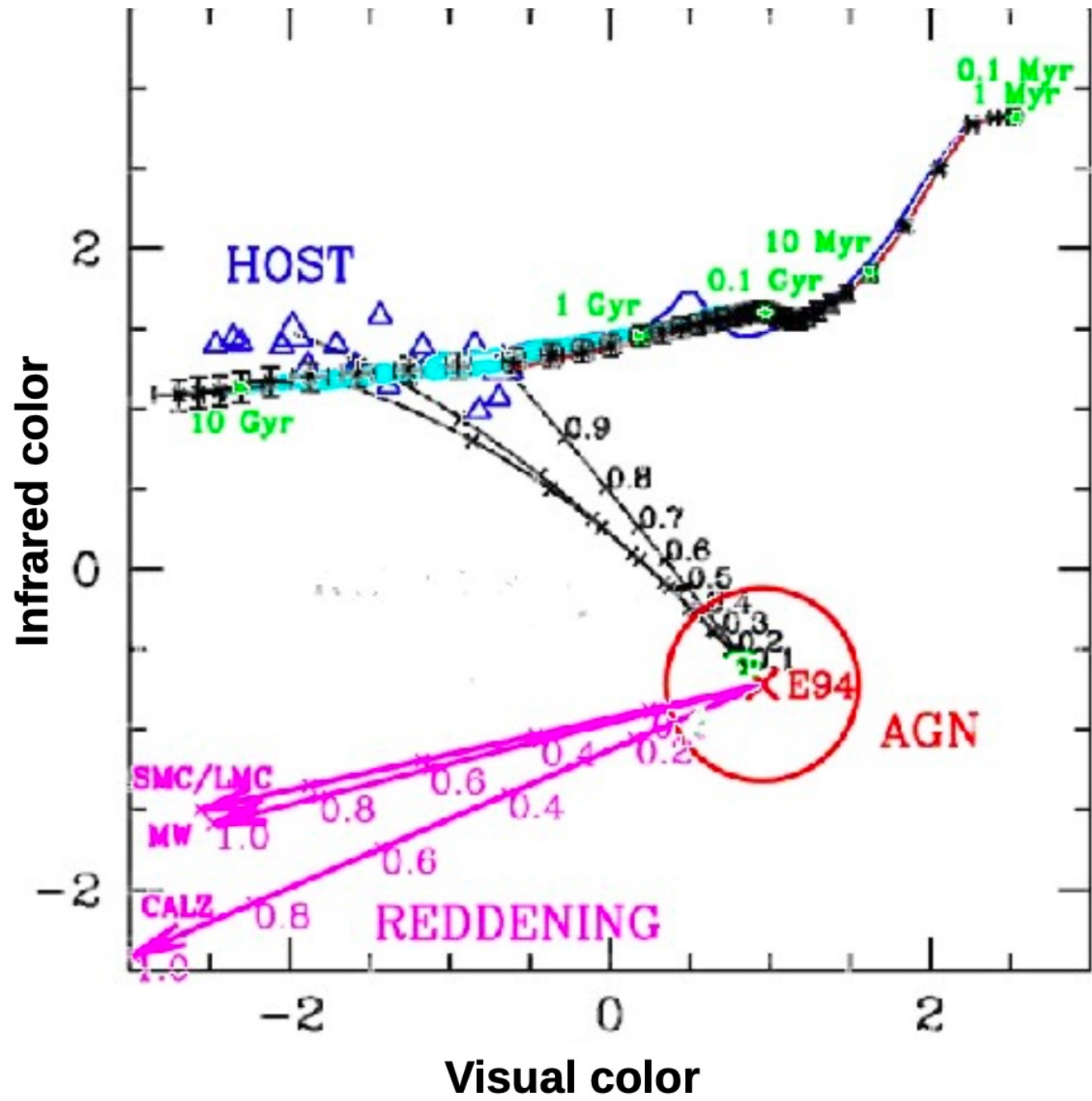


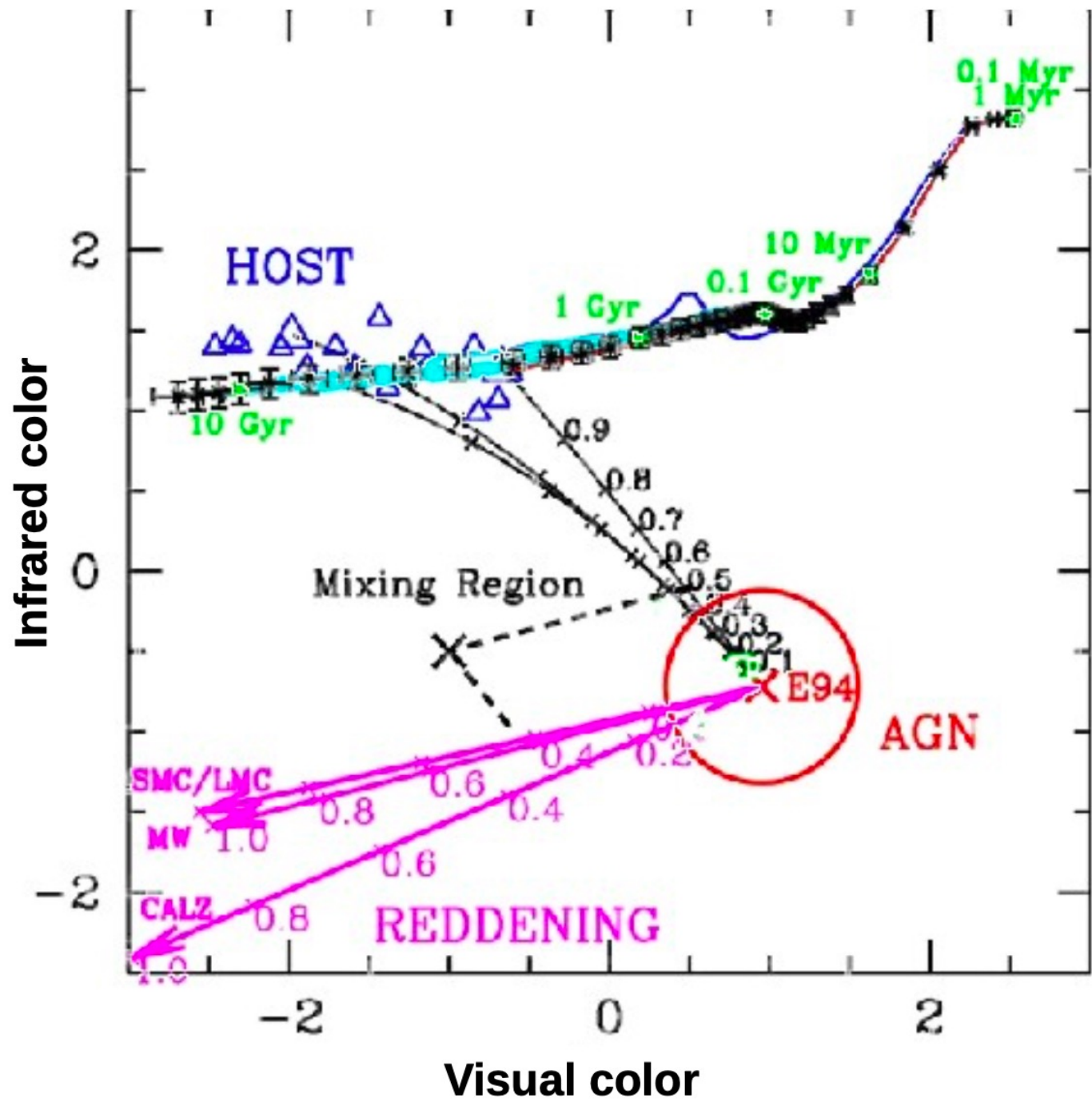












# Practicalities – Time limits

- Practice practice practice
- Each slide takes 1-3 minutes
- Test the technology
- Never, ever run over your time limit

# Practicalities – Technology

- In person vs zoom
  - Use the space in the room / setup your backdrop
  - Modulate your tone of voice (both!)
  - Body language / camera placement
  - Know how you will 'point' at slides (stick, laser pointer, cursor)
- Make sure things work in advance
  - plug in during coffee
  - come early
  - test the software

# Practicalities – Nerves

- Practice practice practice
- First and last slides are most important.
- **Spell out your first 5 and last 5 sentences verbatim**

# Take Home Message

- Less can be more
- Be prepared