

Managing Time

Managing Time, "Helping" with Homework, and the 5 Traits of a Good Tutor: Answering My Own Questions

By a Math Tutor

The following were the questions that came to my mind when I thought about tutoring at the beginning of this quarter:

1. What is the best way to manage time when tutoring? I know one way is to setup an agenda for each session, but if you are in the middle of a problem and time is up, do you continue or do you defer it to the next session?
2. How would you help students with their home works and assignments without really doing the work that is their responsibility? Sometimes there is a fine line between helping and doing, how would you recognize that line?
3. What are the top 5 traits of a good tutor? And what is the best way to learn them?

As I am reflecting back on what I have learned so far, I will try to answer my own questions. In time as I gain more experience working with fellow students my perception and responses to these questions might change and hopefully improve for the better, but for now here they are:

1. When dealing with time, I would recommend dividing the time up so you have a chance to visit or review subjects that are of most interest to the tutee. Have a watch, and periodically check the time, as you work with a tutee and get a better feel for their learning speed and their strong and weak traits, managing time will become easier. Learn and practice how to change gears, if you feel that the session is changing direction or is getting side tracked, you might say: "We can come back to this topic at the end of the session if time allows or in the next session, but lets spend the time we have on the topics that were on our list" Or: "It seems that we need to cover this topic in debt, lets spend some time on this and we can re-schedule the other topics for the next session". Don't interrupt the student in the middle of an exercise, it's okay to run a few minutes over from time to time. The most important thing is that the tutee gets the most out of the session.
2. One way to deal with tutees which bring their homework and assignments to you for completion is to be very frank. Tell them that it is their responsibility to do the work, you will help them with the assignment after they have already tried to work the problem. Ask them to bring their work and go over it with them, rather than starting to work the problem from scratch in the session. As you work with a tutee and get to know them you can tell if they really need help with the work or they just want you to do it. Let them know that the main reason you are tutoring them is to help them become independent. By you doing most of the work, will only delay this goal.

3. A tutor can have so many wonderful traits, The top five in my mind are: * Patience: * Knowing the subject matter * Knowledge of tutoring techniques * Positive attitude * And experience

* Patience: You have to be patient because you need to listen to the student, you have to repeat concepts and materials, you have to give tutee enough time to work the problems and most of all you have to be patient because different people learn at different speeds.

* Knowing the subject matter is obvious, it would not be fare to try to teach someone something that you are not clear about, or you have doubts about. Don't pass incorrect information to the tutees. It's okay to tell the tutee, that you might have to research something before you go over it with them. It's better to delay the teaching. Prepare yourself or get help before passing the information down to the tutee. No one knows everything; we are all learning.

* Tutoring Techniques: In time, institutes and people that have worked in teaching have come up with certain techniques that seem to work and be more effective when tutoring. It's a good idea to learn about these techniques and incorporate them in your tutoring sessions. You can learn these techniques from the tutoring class, videos in the library, your senior tutor, and on the Internet, the resources are vast and easy to get a hold off.

* Positive attitude is a great trait to have. Your positive attitude will reflect on the tutees and help them become positive about learning and gaining confidence in them selves. By being positive you create a healthy and comfortable learning environment for your tutee and at the same time you will help your tutee to accomplish the subject matter.

* Experience: As you work with more tutees, you will learn different things that are particular to each student and at the same time you will get a chance to practice your tutoring skills and get better and become more effective in tutoring. Learning things in theory is good, but learning by practice is even better.

And to wrap up, I would like to say that, I really have enjoyed tutoring and have had a great experience going to the tutoring classes. Thanks and best of luck to everyone.