Getting the Most Out of Your Tutoring Session

A tutoring session is a give and take operation. You have to work with your tutor to get the most out of your time spent together. This means taking the extra step to be prepared before, during, and after your session. If you’re planning to/currently seeing a tutor (Residential Tutor, CADA, private tutor) check out these suggestions to make the visit worth your while.

- Don’t confuse a tutor for someone who will do your homework. Always come to a tutoring session with your homework completed to the best of your ability. Don’t cheat yourself out of a learning opportunity by hoping your tutor will do your homework!

- Use what you learned. After your tutoring session, go over the homework/assignment problems that you initially got wrong or couldn’t figure out. When you think you’ve figured out the best way to approach those types of problems, apply what your tutor taught you to problems that you’ve never seen before.

- Bring your lecture notes with you. Be sure that they are legible! If that means re-writing your notes, take that extra step to do so. Presenting as much of your work to your tutor will help him or her fill in any gaps of information.

- Take notes during your tutoring session. This will help you retain any new information that your tutor provides you and will even help you solidify concepts that you already have notes on.

- Review your notes before and after you see your tutor. By continuously reviewing your notes, you keep those tricky topics at the forefront of your mind and you become more aware of what you need to work on. This makes it easier for you to pose questions to your tutor the next time you see them.

- Make sure you come prepared with questions. Most tutoring sessions aren’t long enough for a tutor to successfully pry out of you what you want and need to learn. If you come prepared, you wind up spending less time trying to figure out where to begin and more time working toward your academic goals.

- Be honest with yourself and with your tutor. Express the goals you wish to achieve. Talk to your tutor how you approach problems. Break down your thought process. Share with them what you understand and what you need help understanding. This will help them understand how you learn best. Don’t feel embarrassed to open up about what you’re struggling with—your tutors are there to help you!

- Take your tutor with you. Well... in a sense. Your tutor can’t physically be there every time you’re doing your homework or during your exams and lectures. But, remember how they approach the subject matter when you are with them. Doing so will make it easier to break down a situation and ask yourself how you would tackle a problem if you were with your tutor.

- Remember the tutoring session is about your success. Let your tutor know if their method of teaching isn’t working. There might be times when you will need to adjust the way you approach a concept or problem. You shouldn’t however, feel as though you need to completely change your learning style to accommodate your tutor. Tutors are trained, and willing, to work with you to help determine the best way for you to approach your studies. In the same respect, let your tutor know if their method of teaching is particularly helpful. Doing so will give them a better sense of how to continue with tutoring sessions.