

TECHNIQUES FOR SUCCESSFULLY BEGINNING AND ENDING A TUTOR SESSION

Penny A. Kelley
Northern Essex Community College
Haverhill, Massachusetts

As a new or veteran tutor, it is important to start off on the right foot with the tutee. Thus, techniques for beginning and ending a tutor session are extremely important. Some helpful hints for beginning a tutor session include:

- Arrive on time for each session.
- Be open, friendly, and genuinely interested in the tutee. Ask the tutee's name, about his/her background, and the reason the tutee is taking the course. Really listen to the tutee's answers.
- Complete any paperwork that might be required by the tutor program, particularly if this is the first session with a tutee, i.e., review tutor program rules and/or sign tutor contract.
- Decide upon a plan of action for the session with the student. Always ask what the tutee would like to work on in the allotted time.
- Always involve tutees by expecting and requiring them to actively participate. Have tutees do as much of the assigned tasks as possible. Do not do the work for them. Instead, guide them to discover the answers or solutions on their own. Ask probing questions instead of questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no."

Some helpful hints for ending a tutor session include:

- Do a brief "wrap up" of materials or information covered in the session. If time allows, clear up any questions regarding course content just covered in the session.

- Assign any work you want the tutee to complete before the next tutoring session.
- Schedule the next tutoring session with the tutee, or if this is a standing weekly appointment, remind the tutee of the next meeting.
- Complete any needed paperwork required by the tutor program, i.e., session evaluation, tutor log, or payroll.
- Speak to the tutor supervisor if you think you are having a problem that involves the tutee. If it is not possible to speak immediately with the supervisor, do so as soon as it is possible. Deal with issues as they occur. Do not let a small problem become a big one.