

Forging Relationships Campus Wide

Tutoring has been a wonderful opportunity for making connections both with current tutees and prospective ones. This doesn't come by chance, but with a great deal of work before, during and after each appointment. I find myself trying to sell the experience to both those I know immediately and those in classes with professors I have had in the past. Several students each time engage in conversation and it's from here the relationship begins.

It often starts with talking one-on-one with these students and walking through with them how to sign up for their first tutoring appointment. The real way to keep them engaged from the start and to build a relationship, even before the appointment, is keeping in contact with them by email. Just simply asking them how their week is going and how what they covered in class might shape their agenda for the upcoming appointment can elicit a great response. I've used this opportunity many times to show them how we tutors care, not just about them as a number, but as a real person. This correspondence begins a conversation that continues through to the next appointment, helping put them more at ease, and then to delve into the material in a much more focused way. Afterwards, sending follow-up emails offering further assistance and additional resources helps add to the relationship as well and to maintain the rapport. While this may not always work with every student, with those that may have been on the edge of whether or not to return, it has been a key to help bring them back and moving forward. Relationships with the students are a powerful thing and the greatest part is hearing back from them unexpectedly about excellent grades.

Many times in order for this series of events to even begin, developing a working relationship with professors is key. Professors can be champions of suggesting tutoring services to students that may need a little help, or to anyone that wants an extra edge. With getting them on our side I've been able to receive referrals for many students over the years. This may require being involved in campus activities in order to network with them, or excelling in class with those instructors I've had so that they do know firsthand the kind of student and possible tutee I am. There are many points such as these that people on the outside may never see, but they make all the difference in the world to the program. Tutoring isn't just a 30 minute or hour long session each meeting, it requires dedication to building connections in all areas campus wide. These relationships with faculty are just as important as those that form with each individual tutee, and it's these bonds and the positive outcomes that transpire that make it worth all the while.