**Making the Most of Your Tutorial Sessions**

Time with a tutor is always time well spent, but you can take additional steps before, during, and after meeting your tutor, to ensure that you get the most out of your session.

Remember that meeting with a tutor won’t guarantee success, and you are still the one responsible for the assignment. The tutor is a guide/coach for you, and you will need to actively engage with them during the session as well as act on their advice or suggestions after the session in order to fully benefit from your time with the tutor.

**Before meeting with your tutor:**

* Set a goal for your time together. One goal per session allows you to stay focused and use your time within the session wisely. What is the most important thing you’d like to cover in your session?
* Reflect on what is challenging about your project or the subject you are working in and make notes. Through this process, you may realize that what you thought was the issue – for example, many writers consider grammar to be their main challenge – isn’t. The issue may have more to do with process than content, or with your comfort level with the subject; tutors can help you address any type of concern with your writing but will be able to do so more efficiently if you come prepared.
* Which part(s) of your assignment or writing sample do you want clarification or feedback on? If you are looking for specific feedback on your writing, identify the parts of your assignment you want to discuss in advance of your session.
* Make some notes about the process you use when faced with the type of work you are seeing a tutor about. This will help both you and the tutor see what may be working well for you and where your process may need to change. What steps have you taken in your assignment so far? Have you completed something similar before?
* Write down any questions you have so that you don’t forget to ask them.

**During the meeting with your tutor:**

* Stay focused. Leave your stress outside of the session, and keep your goal central to your time with your tutor.
* Communicate your goal for the session, and any over-arching learning goals, with your tutor right away. If you don’t have a goal, take some time with the tutor right away to set one. Tutors are there to support you, and can do so more efficiently if you set your focus for the session.
* Communicate your needs clearly to your tutor. For example, if you need the tutor to speak slowly so that you can take comprehensive notes, let them know; if you need lots of examples, let them know that as well. Tutors are happy to accommodate and the session will go more smoothly for both of you if you let them know your needs up front.
* Listen to your tutor, even if their advice isn’t what you expected (or wanted) to hear. They have a different perspective from yours, and even if you are sceptical about their advice, you may be surprised by the results once you apply it. Remember that it is very difficult for anyone to be objective about their own writing strengths and weaknesses, so don’t be surprised or take things personally if your tutor outlines areas for improvement that you hadn’t previously considered.
* Take notes on the things you want to remember and set (and write down!) an action plan with your tutor before you leave. Most tutors will close a session with a review of the main points you discussed and help you craft an action plan automatically, but if this doesn’t happen, don’t be afraid to ask for one.

**After meeting with your tutor:**

* Make a schedule for your assignment work. You can use an assignment calculator like this one: <http://assignmentcalculator.library.ubc.ca/>.
* If you are meeting with a tutor for subject help, rather than help on a specific assignment, take some time to set future goals for tutorial sessions and approach your studies with those goals in mind.
* Act on your tutor’s advice and don’t be afraid to play around with it if it doesn’t quite work for you. We are all different, so you may try a few strategies before finding one that is the best fit for you. However, your tutor’s advice is worth giving an honest try first, before you start to consider other strategies.
* Use the other resources that are available to you. Your tutor may refer you to other sources of help or provide information that will be useful between sessions. Use these extra tools as extended support between sessions.
* Remember that the goal of tutoring is to support you until you feel fully confident to work effectively without a tutor; this means hard work practicing and applying what you learn in your sessions and being mindful of the fact that your tutoring sessions should – and will – come to an end. If you wish, your tutor can help you prepare for this transition.