Dear new SI leader,

Congratulations on choosing to take part in this program! It is rewarding and a good experience. I have completed two semesters of being a SI leader and I am looking forward to starting a third semester soon. Through this process I have learned a lot about how to approach SI and how I am best able to help students succeed. Following are a couple “take-aways” that have been important in my SI career and growth.

1. **Not knowing the answer is okay.** As a peer, we are not expected to know all of the answers for the questions that the students may have. Often times these questions are generated by students who are really thinking about the material and it is better to be honest and tell them you will do your best to find out the answer than to try and guess at what the answer is.

2. **Be able to laugh at yourself.** This is important to remember, especially when you are in front of the students. If you are able to laugh at yourself and correct yourself if you stumble, it allows the students to laugh and really lightens the mood.

3. **Preparation always pays off.** Being prepared for a session may seem to take a lot of time when you begin, but when you have a plan and problems prepared the session becomes very efficient. While it is very important to be flexible, students appreciate having something to do. Knowing what you want to go over in a session also makes you more comfortable in front of the group.

4. **The other SI leaders are a great support group and great place to pull ideas from.** Just like any other job, not every day will be the best day of your SI leader career. The structure of the SI program with teams of leaders working together for continued training allows you to share your successes and problems. Make sure to make use of this opportunity!

5. **Giving the students confidence is one of the most beneficial things you can do as an SI leader.** Giving confidence can be achieved by posing simple questions at the beginning of a session or by allowing students to teach and reinforce concepts with each other. Communication between the students is key! The more the students talk to each other the more they will understand and be confident.

Being an SI leader is a great job and a great way to meet fellow students and create relationships with your professor. Good luck and remember to have fun!

Sincerely,

Heather Reiner

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