Dear Future SI Leaders,

Welcome to SI! Your first semester as a supplemental instructor is exciting and challenging all at once. Don't worry! Things aren't going to go perfectly. Each session is a learning experience, not just for the students but for you, too. Your techniques, activities, and style can - and will - change as the semester goes on. I have tried many different activities and formats over the last semester. Some worked, some didn't. Either way, the session still turned out fine, and there is always next week.

Plan, plan, plan! Have a detailed idea of what each session will accomplish. Make sure your plan is flexible enough to accommodate different situations. How many students do you expect to attend? What will you do if you have more or less than you thought? This was difficult for my first couple of weeks, but I began to see a pattern and get into a regular groove.

Think like your students. Remember what you found challenging when you took the course and anticipate where they will face problems. I found that this increased my preparedness and made my sessions more useful for all.

Finally, be friendly and approachable. I'm sure this is a given, but if you're introverted like me, it isn't always easy to relate to a group of people you've ever met before! Have fun with your icebreakers. Engaging in conversation - even simple things like, "Does anyone else have a crazy number of tests this week?" or "It is way too cold outside!" - before the session starts goes a long way to better the mood and relationship between you and the students.

Most of all, have fun! If you enjoy what you're doing, I bet everyone else will, too.

All the best,
Perry Baptista