

Skills I have learned

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Being a helper taught me a lot about how to be patient. Patience is something that a lot of people struggle with. Tutoring any kid younger than you is a task that many people might dislike. When I had my first session with my buddy in late September, I found it a little tedious. The process of having to teach someone younger than me something that I already knew how to do was a little frustrating. Having to overcome this was a considerable challenge. The more sessions we had, the easier it got. I had to remind myself that because he was several years younger, his social and academic levels were not as high as high schoolers. So I tried to say certain things different from what I used to say. These social and academic level differences were something that I had to get used to, and it took one or two sessions to get into the flow of things. Being patient with other people is a skill that is extremely useful in day-to-day society. If someone is stuck with a lousy co-worker or an annoying boss, they have to be patient with them in order to get tasks done.

Another thing I learned was how to improve my communication skills. Communication is something that I have always struggled with. Putting myself out there and having conversations with new people is extremely scary. During each session, I not only had to keep a conversation going, but I also had to lead everything. Having these sessions once a week helped me converse with other people, but it also taught me what to do and say when there is a long pause or silence in the conversation. I would either redirect the conversation or ask my buddy if he understood the question, which kept meaningful and productive discussions going throughout the whole hour session. Maintaining a meaningful and effective conversation is a beneficial skill in today's society.

The final skill that I learned through these sessions was leadership. Connecting back to the ideology of communication skills and patience, leadership is the skill that uses the past two principles and many more. Any Helper can tell you that leadership plays a huge role in how productive one's sessions are. If a Helper has minimal leadership skills, it is easy for the buddy to stop paying attention and get an odd topic. For this to not happen, I would give him a small break or let him try a problem independently, which ensured that my buddy was listening and paying attention to what I was saying. It also provided that he retained specific skills that I was teaching him. Without solid leadership skills, none of this would have been possible. My buddy would not have learned anything, and this whole experience was a waste of time. Leadership, patience, and communication were just a few of the many skills I learned throughout this experience.