Tips for peer educators

Tips for leading discussions
1. When leading discussions, ask open-ended questions (as opposed to yes/no questions).
2. Start off with an ice-breaker/something funny that you can ask the students about.
3. At the beginning, have the students write down a question they want to have answered. Then when you ask for questions, they have something prepared.
4. Feel free to insert your own opinion, but remind them that it is just your opinion.

Tips for getting students to come to office hours
1. If this is a class without regular assignments, then it may not be worthwhile to have weekly office hours. Cluster them before exams and big papers.
2. Do advertisements for your office hours in class. Possibly mention a topic of discussion of the office hour that you think they are concerned about.
3. Make an effort to learn the students’ names.

Tips for alleviating your inferiority complex
1. You’re not supposed to be an expert - just a PEER educator, helping out in the learning process. You may need to make this clear to the students in your class. You won’t always have all the answers. If that’s the case, then work with the students to find them. If your faculty supervisor asked you to be a peer educator, then she or he has faith that you are up to this job.

Tips for alleviating frustration
1. You will have students who are not interested in the class. You may think “We’re making everything available. If a student wants to learn and do well, they can. Why don’t they?” Some just won’t. Try to remember the class you were least interested in. Maybe this was a class you didn’t care about and in which you didn’t want to be called on. It’s going to happen. You have limited control over students’ participation.

Tips for learning how to teach better
1. Observe your professors. You may only be able to do this in the class you’re peer educating for (since you’re using your brain on another kind of learning in the others). Watch not only what they teach, but how they do it.
2. Observe the students. This is easiest when you are working with one student or just a few. While you are working with them, get into their brains. How do they learn? Do they think visually? Do they learn through reading? listening? writing? How does their style of learning differ from yours. If you can learn about other people’s modes of learning, you can use that to reach them more effectively.

Tips for things to do in office hours
1. Share with the students your own learning strategies. How did you approach this course when you took it?