Developing a Learning Plan in Preparation for Calendaring

Before scheduling your upcoming year's learning experiences you need to give serious thought, as a team, to what you really want to accomplish. You may find it helpful to schedule one or two extended team meetings in order to allow sufficient time for these important conversations.

Formulating a Learning Plan will go a long way in clarifying what kinds of learning will meet your goals. You have generated a wealth of data, reflections and insights over the past year. Mining these six sources of valuable information for significant ideas will enrich and guide your planning. Ask your consultant to help you through this process. The Learning Plan Model lays out these sources of information, which also are described below. The Learning Plan Template prompts you to articulate what from each source you want to be sure to include in your overall plan.

To develop a Learning Plan, refer back to or factor in the following:

Initial Appreciative Inquiry exercise and your congregation's stated vision (if available)

Before you conducted your first learning experience last year you considered your congregation's culture, history and vision.

- What new insights about your congregation have you gained over the past year?
- What is important for you to keep in mind about your congregation as you move forward?

Insights drawn from the Parent and Key Personnel Surveys

Your team already should have had a chance to review and analyze the data from these surveys.

- What do these surveys suggest you need to incorporate into your learning?

Social connector, participant and facilitator reflections

From your first conversation with the social connector families, through all of the reflections collected after each learning experience, you have a treasure

trove of reactions, likes and dislikes, hopes, dreams and valuable input that can help shape your learning experiences.

- What does this feedback suggest people find most meaningful? What does it seem they most enjoy?
- What do these reflections suggest you need to incorporate into your learning?

Matching experiences to learner outcomes

On the worksheet provided, imagine what your participant families will be doing differently at the end of this year.   From there, the worksheet will prompt you to think through the kinds of learning, experiences, reflection and support they will need in order to reach those ends. This information will help you plot out the sequence and scope of your learners' experiences this year.

Essential Question(s)

Also sometimes known as your Big Idea(s), these are questions that address dilemmas of living that extend far beyond the classroom.   They are never simple or obvious, and likely will never be fully answered; yet they often open up new ways of thinking and understanding the world. Some examples are "In what ways can Shabbat enrich our family life?" and "How does doing *tikkun olam* impact my Jewish identity?" Articulating Essential Question(s) now will help you focus your planning for the year. Your consultant is prepared to help you express the goals for each experience's goals in this way.

Individual observations and experiences

Each team member's input, based on his or her empirical knowledge, is important to factor into the formulation of your Learning Plan.

Once you have developed a Learning Plan for your model for the upcoming year, use the provided Calendar of Learning Experiences template to plot out the flow and arc of your learning. You will see that the template asks you to stay attuned to your Essential Questions and learning outcomes.   Schedule your learning experiences for the entire year, along with how you intend to prepare participants in advance and follow-up with them afterwards. You may find it helpful to group the experiences into thematic clusters when it comes time to articulate the Essential Questions and learning outcomes.

If a group of people is working on the calendar you may want to use a Facebook group or Google Docs to facilitate the coordination of your efforts.