

Leadership Team Meeting Reflections

What were the primary goals for your Leadership Team meetings?

- To discuss our **individual perspectives** about each experience throughout The RE-IMAGINE Project allowing all Leadership Team members to hear 'the voices' within our diverse Congregation.
- **Decision-making** was necessary each month in preparation for the subsequent Task Force meeting, including what information would be sent in advance via email to Task Force members and effectively timing communications to the entire Congregation.
- To plan ways to **effectively communicate** Re-Imagine to the congregation and to critique our own progress.
- Our Leadership Team **reviewed and set time allotments** for each agenda item that would take place at the upcoming Task Force meeting, often choosing to make slight changes from ECE's suggested times in the Guidebook.
- I think there was a concern not to cater to specific personalities, rather to engage all members in a way that they felt included and to make sure we knew all Task Force members' input and comments were being listened to. We didn't want Task Force members to think that we had any "answers". We wanted them to understand that we all had to **explore together**.

What tools or supports did you find helpful during or preparing for Leadership Team meetings?

- The Guidebook.
- Our consultant.
- The Internet.
- A printed agenda for Leadership Team meetings.
- Email notices including RSVP requests.
- The RE-IMAGINE Project logo adapted for our congregation's Task Force helped identify communication specific to the project.
- Regular email communication is vital.



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Describe the benefits of meeting as a Leadership Team throughout the project.

- The development of **caring relationships**, friendships and respect grown through sharing opinions and goals at regularly occurring meetings with members who might not otherwise know each other at all or so well.
- We often got positive feedback from Task Force members on the quality of the meetings, which I feel is a direct link to our preparation. We bonded well, were supportive, were all flexible and willing to pick up tasks like writing notes, at the last minute. We all were **looking for the "pulse" of the Task Force**, and our monthly meetings helped us to define this.
- The meetings served as a **place to support**, encourage and energize one another.
- They helped to **focus our direction** for a smooth Task Force meeting and to insure that the Leadership Team is on the same page.
- Meaningful discussions about **Jewish issues** that occasionally occurred as tangents to the Leadership Team meeting agenda when time permitted were memorable and valuable.
- They created a real “team” mentality for those participating in the process and allowed the lay people to be comfortable **speaking openly and honestly** with the professional staff and vice versa. They really modeled the notion of collaborative (lay-professional) leadership.
- We **assigned facilitators** at Leadership Team meetings, and planned for back-up facilitators in situations where they might be needed, as well as key leaders for items on the upcoming Task Force agenda.
- It kept the project focused by **creating consensus** amongst the Leadership Team members. This was accomplished through spirited discussion and sharing of ideas of how to best present each Task Force meeting agenda.

What would you want incoming Leadership Team members to know as they begin their work with The RE-IMAGINE Project?

- Being a member of The RE-IMAGINE Project Leadership Team quickly becomes comfortable as you **gain experience** along the process and become more familiar with the RE-IMAGINE Guidebook each month.
- Having your first Task Force meeting where everyone feels the excitement of each other's **hopes surrounding the project** even when they do not know where it is heading serves to fuel the effort.
- They need to **communicate with their congregations**. This could be done in various ways, but it's a crucial piece of the project, particularly, as you move towards the last steps.
- The natural inclination is to let the chairperson take the lead and do most of the prep work. While the Leadership Team Meeting is typically a planning meeting, **all Leadership Team members** should be prepared to spend additional time on their own getting ready for the Task Force meeting.



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- From a rabbinic perspective, the lay leaders become your supporters, confidants and best allies in encouraging **transformative change**.
- The Leadership Team is truly the core of the process so take it as seriously as the Task Force meetings (if not more so) and really commit to being present at all the extra-curricular gatherings (chug limudim, yachdav, role alikes) as it benefits your sense of camaraderie among other leadership teams and allows you to learn together from The RE-IMAGINE Project staff so that you share a **common language**.
- **Design** your Task Force meeting agenda to fit your individual congregational and Task Force's personality, progress and needs.
- It is a process that all ties together over time. The activities that are done initially are **foundation builders** and lead to a good understanding of the needs of the religious school and congregants.
- It's essential that you **work as a team**, with all Leadership Team members being listened to, whether their ideas will be utilized or not. That communication, via email, on the phone, or in person, over areas of concerns is vital, especially, after or before Task Force meetings.
- Provide **positive feedback and support** to your Task Force—their participation and input is a vital part of the success of the Project.



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