Leadership Institute RE-IMAGINE iMAP: Roadmap
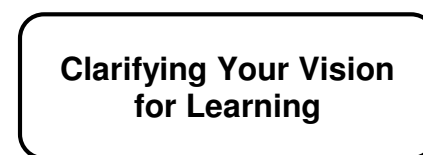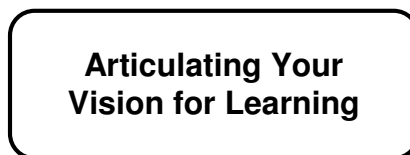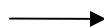
Getting Started	→	Articulating Your Vision for Learning	Clarifying Your Vision for Learning

Outcome:
The team will become familiar with the overview of the upcoming year, the structure of each session, how the team is assembled and how you will work with your mentor.

Materials:
- An overview of LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP Process, p. 7
- Session Planning Worksheets, p. 8
- Assembling the Team, p. 10
- Working with Your Mentor, p. 14

Outcome:
Having explored five key questions regarding Jewish learning, the team will evaluate the current direction of learning in the congregation.
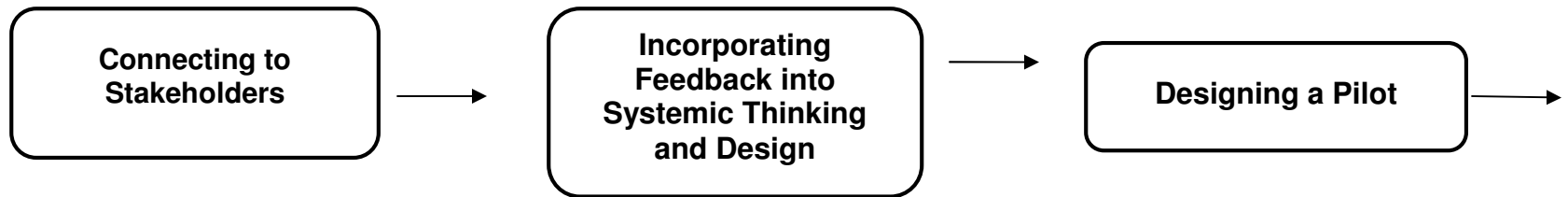
Materials and Activities:
- Text Study: *Hatikvah* as a Vision, p. 17
- Significant Questions Mini-Lessons, p. 20
- Writing/Examining Your Vision, p. 34

Outcome:
Having analyzed your congregation's vision for learning, the team will formulate 1–2 priority goals and list powerful learning experiences aligned to the goal(s).

Materials and Activities:
- Text Study: In the Tradition of the Rabbis, p. 39
- Activity: Writing a Page of "Talmud", p. 42
- Activity: Priority Goals and KDBB, p. 44
- Understanding Priority Goals, p. 46

Connecting to Stakeholders	**Incorporating Feedback into Systemic Thinking and Design**	**Designing a Pilot**

Outcome:
The team will decide which constituencies and stakeholders, as well as which formats, will yield the most valuable feedback about your vision for learning.

Outcome:
The team begins to define a new model for learning by synthesizing feedback from the congregation with your understanding of the building blocks of an educational system and an appreciation of your resources.

Outcome:
The team will decide on a pilot that will align with your vision, offer a "taste" of your model and engage learners and stakeholders in new ways.

Materials and Activities:
- What Do You Need to Learn?, p. 52
- Suggested Formats for Engaging the Congregation in Conversation, p. 54
- Text Study: Learning from Others, p. 58

Materials and Activities:
- What's a Model? What's a Pilot?, p. 61
- Five Building Blocks of a Learning System, p. 65
- Leveraging Your Existing Resources, p. 68
- Text Study: Designing with Wisdom, p. 70
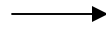
Materials and Activities:
- Activity and Handout: Aligning Design to Vision, p. 74
- Thinking Ahead about Implementation, p. 76
- Choosing a Pilot, p. 78
- Activity: Six Hats, p. 79
- Text Study: Going to a Place of Torah, p. 81

| **Organizing for Implementation of the Pilot** | → | **Implementing the Pilot** |

Outcome:

The team will develop a comprehensive action plan that takes into consideration the five building blocks of a learning system.

Outcome:

The team will identify stakeholders and learners who will be involved in the pilot as it continues to grow. The team will describe how the leadership team, the budget, and the teaching staff may change as the pilot grows.

Materials and Activities:

- Creating an Implementation Plan, p. 84
- Action Planning Grid, p. 89
- Text Study: Building the Mishkan (The Tabernacle), p. 90

Materials and Activities:

- Pilot Roll-Out and Beyond, p. 93
- Governance Groups Models, p. 95
- Text Study: Crossing the Red Sea, p. 98

LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP Suggested Reading List

Schools that Work: What We Can Learn from Good Jewish Supplementary Schools (2009), Executive Summary, Noteworthy Characteristics of the Schools

Author: Jack Wertheimer

http://www.avi-chai.org/Static/Binaries/Publications/Schools%20That%20Work%20-%20What%20We%20Can%20Learn_0.pdf

Linking the Silos: How to Accelerate the Momentum in Jewish Education Today (2005),

Author: Jack Wertheimer

http://www.avi-chai.org/Static/Binaries/Publications/Linking%20The%20Silos_0.pdf

"Expectations, Perceptions and Preconceptions: How Jewish Parents talk about "Supplementary" Religious Education," in **Family Matters: Jewish Education in an Age of Choice**, ed. Jack Wertheimer (2007)

Author: Jeffrey Kress

Redesigning Jewish Education for the 21st Century: A Lippman Kanfer Institute Working Paper (2009), p. 13-25.

Authors: Jonathan Woocher, Renee Rubin Ross, Meredith Woocher

"Chapter 1: Introduction The New Science of Learning" in **The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences** (2006), p. 1-5

Author: R. Keith Sawyer

www.eceonline.org - click on Resources in the left navigation bar, choose "Access Online Resource Center" (on the right), log in (or register) then, under "Congregational Education," click on "Teaching"

"The Malaise of Jewish Education" in **Tikkun** (1989)

Author: Isa Aron

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www.eceonline.org - click on Resources in the left navigation bar, choose "Access Online Resource Center" (on the right), log in (or register to enter) then click on "Educational Change" under "Congregational Education"

"Re-imagined Goals and Bold Plans to Reach Them"

Author: Cyd B. Weissman

www.eceonline.org - click on Resources in the left navigation bar, choose "Access Online Resource Center" (on the right), log in (or register to enter) then click on "Educational Change" under "Congregational Education"

A Congregation of Learners: Transforming the Synagogue into a Learning Community

Edited by Isa Aron, Sara Lee, and Seymour Rossel (1995)

Becoming a Congregation of Learners: Learning As a Key to Revitalizing Congregational Life

Author: Isa Aron (2000)

The Self-Renewing Congregation: Organizational Strategies for Revitalizing Congregational Life

Author: Isa Aron (2002)

Materials for Leadership Institute RE-IMAGINE iMAP are designed by the Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE), adapted and implemented in collaboration with The Leadership Institute and The Jewish Education Project, and sponsored by UJA-Federation of New York.

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LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP: Materials and Activities

Getting Started

"Getting Started," found on pages 6–14 outlines the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process. This section provides an overview of the upcoming year and serves as a guide for structuring each session with your team, assembling your team and working with your mentor. It is essential that you familiarize yourself with these materials as you begin the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process.

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│                             │
│      Getting Started        │
│                             │
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Outcome:
The team will become familiar with the overview of the upcoming year, the structure of each session, how the team is assembled and how you will work with your mentor.

Materials:
- An overview of LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP Process, p. 7
- Session Planning Worksheets, p. 8
- Assembling the Team, p. 10
- Working with Your Mentor, p. 14

An Overview of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP Process

Successful and enduring innovation in congregational Jewish education needs to be rooted in the collaboration of stakeholders who think through, plan and implement what they together know will be right for their community. Your congregation has taken the first step towards this goal through your educator's two-year involvement in the Leadership Institute (LI). Now it is time to expand the conversation and involve other key people in imagining and supporting educational innovations in your congregation.

LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP is a targeted and strategic process through which a team of lay leaders, clergy and teachers engages in thinking about Jewish education and clarifying the various roles they can play in supporting innovation in Jewish education. Over the course of approximately six team sessions, they will use materials, which are designed by the Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE), and presented in the form of Tools and Templates.

Following a general roadmap, your educator and chair, together with your Leadership Institute mentor, will decide which exercises, text studies, and discussions to include in each of your sessions based on your congregation's needs and strengths. In addition to the six sessions, team members will be asked to read some written materials in preparation for each session.

Throughout the process you will have the support of a mentor and an online repository of related articles and resources. In addition, members from all the teams will come together for shared learning that will help expand the ever-growing coalition of innovating congregations. Those upcoming dates are part of the Leadership Institute calendar.

Materials for Leadership Institute RE-IMAGINE iMAP are designed by the Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE), adapted and implemented in collaboration with The Leadership Institute and The Jewish Education Project, and sponsored by UJA-Federation of New York.

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Session Planning Worksheets

A Sample Flow of Sessions

What follows on page 9 is an organizer you can use to help plan your team sessions. Similar organizers appear in the guidebook at the beginning of the Tools and Templates for each session. (pages 16, 38, 52, 62, 75, 85 and 95) The chair and educator, working with your mentor, should use these organizers as a guide, making the adjustments that best suit your needs. As you are planning, your mentor can be very helpful in deciding which exercises and discussions ("tools and templates") will be most beneficial. Filling in these worksheets as you go will help you see how your plans hang together and flow.

Be sure to follow the six-part meeting structure and use the worksheets to record and organize the choices you have made (among tools and templates in the guidebook) and the discussions that are most important for you. Keep in mind, as well, that the order of the parts is somewhat flexible; you may decide you would like to do Text Study following your Core Discussions, or perhaps in between two important discussions. You may also find that certain exercises or Connection questions can flow seamlessly into the activities that follow.

Prior to each meeting send out a meeting reminder to the team, along with notes from the prior meeting and any background reading or other preparation necessary for the next meeting's deliberations.

Session #1: Articulating Your Vision for Learning

Desired Outcome(s): *After exploring five key questions regarding Jewish learning, the team will evaluate the current direction of learning in the congregation.*

Time	Meeting Part	Activity or Discussion and Specifics of Process to be followed	Person Responsible	Items Needed
	Welcome			
	Connection			
	Text Study			
	Core Discussion(s)			
	Reflection			
	Next Steps	Revise, or write, your current vision to be a powerful statement that reflects the hopes and dreams of your congregation.		
Other Preparation:				

Assembling the Team

The team of people who will go through this process together should include:

• The lead educator in the congregation

• A key lay leader, who will serve as the chair

• 2-3 additional lay leaders

• A veteran and well-respected teacher

• The Rabbi and other professional leaders

Roles and Responsibilities

The seven or so members of the Leadership Team will generate the momentum and the *ruach* (spirit) for the project. It is their job to plan and track your work, your meetings and your progress. Over the course of the next several months they can expect to:

• Participate in regular meetings, phone calls, and emails with each other and with your mentor;

• Participate in a series of at least six conversations with your congregations' team to do the core work of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP

• Complete regular home reading and preparation for team meetings;

• Participate in two gatherings with the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP team and teams from the Leadership Institute congregations;

• Stay attuned to "the pulse" of the team, keep in mind the best interest of your learners and families and effectively manage disagreements;

• Ensure the implementation of your pilot and the ongoing governance of your vision;

• Document your progress and be prepared to share openly with other members of the community the insights, experiences, models, and innovations that emerge from your congregation's participation in the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP;

• Think and act as part of a strategic team; and

• Serve as informal ambassadors to key constituencies throughout the congregation.

Chair and Educator
The **chair and the educator** will spearhead this project.

Educator
The educator is the professional responsible for and most familiar with how your current program runs and has been grappling with important issues of educational leadership through the Leadership Institute. Pairing the educator with a lay chair sends the message that, although your congregation has hired a professional to lead and manage your educational programs, the ultimate ownership of education belongs to the lay members of your congregation. One of the goals of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP is to foster an increasingly collaborative approach to leadership for education in the congregation.

Chair
Together, the chair and educator should meet to prepare for each of the sessions. This involves reading through the available *Tools and Templates,* choosing which to use at each session in each phase of the process, preparing the agenda and addressing any issues they see arising. It is up to these two people to make sure session reminders get sent out, someone catches up those who might miss a meeting, and someone keeps thorough notes on each session. With this in mind, we suggest you look for a lay chair who – in addition to being involved with and dedicated to the congregation's Jewish educational offerings – has **experience in organizing and facilitating group meetings**.

Both the Educator and the Chair will need to:

• Be the public face and champion of the project to the community;

• Influence, as well as communicate to, key people on behalf of the work of the team;

• Be comfortable with process-driven change;

• Act as a determined cheerleader and motivator for the work of the team;

• Ensure decisions get made, either by creating a process so decisions can be made or making a decision when needed;

• Model collaborative leadership by having the stature and demeanor to work with others;

• Keep an eye on the bigger picture including the objectives of a specific phase or of the project itself; and

• Listen to and manage dissent without letting it take over the process.

Lay Leaders

Involving additional **lay leaders** reinforces the message that responsibility for the education of the congregation's children belongs to the congregants themselves. The laypeople involved should be people who have been previously, or are currently, involved with your congregation's program of Jewish learning, have demonstrated an interest in your program's future success, and who are well-connected within the social fabric of the congregation. These may include past or present religious school committee members, a vice president of education, chair of the adult or youth education committees, and/or active volunteers whose ideas you would like to include in this process. In addition, it will be helpful to choose people who you know are thoughtful and have demonstrated their ability to work well with others. These people will be your most effective ambassadors to the rest of the congregation.

Teacher

The teacher you choose to serve on the team will bring the voice of other teachers to your discussion and will help the others on the team better understand what is happening currently in your program(s) of Jewish learning. This should be someone who has proven to be dedicated and dependable as well as someone who is known and well respected by the rest of the faculty and who can be trusted to be discreet (when necessary) about sharing what transpires at the meetings.

Rabbi and Other Professional Leaders

The clergy and professional leaders of your congregation—especially the Senior Rabbi—are critical participants in this project. Their presence will contribute both substantive expertise and symbolic support. With them involved you will be able to explore new ways of collaboration between lay people and professionals in making decisions that are important to the life of your congregation.

If your congregation has more than one rabbi, one of them (typically the Senior Rabbi) should be a standing member of the team. Similarly, if your congregation has more than one professional educator, one of them (the Leadership Institute fellow) should be a regular part of the team and should keep the others fully informed. In some congregations it may also be appropriate to include the cantor, program director, executive director or other professionals, or they should be kept informed regularly about the project. Try not to have more than two professionals on the team.

Involving a **clergy member** on the team is important for both practical and symbolic reasons. The clergy know the congregation and its members in unique ways. In addition, the clergy member's presence sends the message that educational innovation is important. Given the other demands of a congregation, if the clergy member isn't able to participate directly in every phase or session of the process, it is most important that s/he participate in the first and the last sessions (and that s/he agrees to trust the work the group will have done in the interim).

Inviting the Team

Once decisions have been made about whom to invite to be on the team, a formal letter should be sent that asks them to be involved, briefly describes the task, delineates the time commitment and the session dates, and asks for a reply.

Below is a sample text for such a letter.   It should be sent out under the signature of the person or persons whom you think will mean the most to those being invited (e.g. the educator, the rabbi, the chair).

Dear_____,

As you may know, our educator is participating in the Leadership Institute: Shaping Congregational Leaders and Learners, a two-and-a-half year professional learning project sponsored by the School of Education at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and the Davidson School of the Jewish Theological Seminary and funded by the UJA-Federation of New York.   During the two-and–a-half years, s/he will participate in many full day symposia, two-week summer institutes, and an individual learning project to enhance leadership capacity, expand Judaic knowledge and develop pedagogic skills.

A component of the Leadership Institute is the "LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP." This process will utilize a small leadership team comprised of the rabbi, educator, one teacher, and two to three lay leaders. The team will meet in several sessions (at least six), from November thru March, during which we will focus on vision, goals, learner outcomes, and new educational models. The goal of this process is to create and pilot new alternative model for Jewish learning in our congregation.

We invite you to join us for this process. [Insert specific expectations here] Our first team session will be on _____.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Be sure to follow up on the formal letter with a **personal phone call**. Once people have agreed to serve on the team, be sure to send them any reading material you decide needs to be read prior to your first session.

Materials for Leadership Institute RE-IMAGINE iMAP are designed by the Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE), adapted and implemented in collaboration with The Leadership Institute and The Jewish Education Project, and sponsored by UJA-Federation of New York.

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Working with Your Mentor as a Consultant

Ongoing and frequent communication with your mentor is an integral element of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process. It is the mentor's job to be a resource to you and help guide you through this project. Your mentor is there, "behind the scenes" to help you succeed (not run the process for you). Your mentor brings valuable experience with this type of project and also can access the full resources of the Leadership Institute, The Experiment in Congregational Education, and The Jewish Education Project, as needed.

The times when your mentor can be most helpful are typically when the team chair and educator are preparing for a session or debriefing afterwards. When planning a session, you may be undecided about how to structure the session or the benefits of choosing one exercise over another. Your mentor has experience using the six-part meeting structure and can help you weigh the pros and cons of the various possibilities based on your intended outcome.

Likewise, when the chair and educator debrief together after a session, your mentor can help sort out where you are headed and make suggestions about what to pay attention to as you move forward. Your mentor, as an outsider, also can suggest how team members can best understand and fulfill their roles.

Maintaining regular communication with your mentor is critical to the success of your LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process.

LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP: Materials and Activities

Phase 1: Articulating Your Vision for Learning
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In this initial phase of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process, your team will identify the qualities of a good vision. The team will study five mini-lessons—each lesson focusing on a significant question that is key when re-imagining Jewish learning—and respond to the five questions. You will then shift your attention to the congregation's vision, with an eye toward assessing if the responses to the five significant questions align to the congregation's vision (and vice versa).

> **Articulating Your
> Vision for Learning**

Outcome:
Having explored five key questions regarding Jewish learning, the team will evaluate the current direction of learning in the congregation.

Materials and Activities:
- Text Study: Hatikvah as a Vision, p. 17
- Significant Questions Mini-Lessons, p. 20
- Writing/Examining Your Vision, p. 34

Session #1: Articulating Your Vision for Learning

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After reading the materials for Phase #1, complete this chart to plan your first team session. Keep the Desired Outcomes in mind as you decide upon activities and discussions.

Desired Outcome(s): *Having explored five key questions regarding Jewish learning, the team will evaluate the current direction of learning in the congregation.*

Time	Session Part	Activity or Discussion and Specifics of Process to be followed	Person Responsible	Items Needed
	Welcome			
	Connection			
	Text Study			
	Core Discussion(s)			
	Reflection			
	Next Steps	Revise, or write, your current vision to be a powerful statement that reflects the hopes and dreams of your congregation.		
Other Preparation: Send each team member a copy of the mini-lessons to read prior to Session #1. Provide copies of the congregation's and/or school's Vision and/or Mission				

Text Study: Hatikvah as a Vision

Usage
This text study, found on pages 17–19, introduces the qualities of a good vision by having the participants analyze *Hatikvah* ("The Hope," Israel's national anthem).

Outcome
Participants identify and have a shared understanding of the qualities of a good vision.

Grouping of Participants
Small groups of three or four

Time Required
20 minutes

Facilitation

1. Break into small groups and ask each to read the *Hatikvah* text (p. 17) and share answers to the discussion questions (p. 17-18).

2. After about 10 minutes, reconvene the team and review the definition of vision and a vision's components. Ask the groups to share the words and phrases they think should be part of your vision for learning.

3. You may want to have people stand and sing *Hatikvah* and then ask how singing it affects their view of it as a compelling vision.

Text Study: Hatikvah as a Vision

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*After saying the blessing before study (see the Appendix), please
read this text and discuss the questions below.*

כָּל עוֹד בַּלֵּבָב פְּנִימָה,
נֶפֶשׁ יְהוּדִי הוֹמִיָּה
וּלְפַאֲתֵי מִזְרָח קָדִימָה
עַיִן לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפִיָּה
עוֹד לֹא אָבְדָה תִּקְוָתֵנוּ
הַתִּקְוָה בַּת שְׁנוֹת אַלְפַּיִם
לִהְיוֹת עַם חָפְשִׁי בְּאַרְצֵנוּ
אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלָיִם

So long as still within the inmost heart
A Jewish spirit sings,
So long as the eye looks eastward,
Gazing toward Zion,
Our hope is not lost—
That hope of two millennia,
To be a free people in our land,
The land of Zion and Jerusalem

***Hatikvah*, The National Anthem of The State of Israel
Written by Naftali Herz Imber, a Galician Jew,
and set to music in Palestine in the early 1880s**

Questions for Discussion:

1. What feelings and images do the words of *Hatikvah* evoke for you? Which words or phrases do you find the most powerful?

CONTINUED…

2. Burt Nanus, in **Visionary Leadership**, defines institutional vision as "a compelling, organizing image of a desired future state of an organization."

   - Using this definition, to what extent do you think *Hatikvah* serves as a vision for the Jewish people and/or the State of Israel? In what ways do you find it "compelling?"

   - As a group, define "organizing image." In what ways does *Hatikvah* present an organizing image?

   - To what extent do you think it describes a "desired future state" (or condition)?

3. A vision has several functions:

   - It motivates and sustains the leadership, guiding them in making decisions and setting priorities that align with the vision.

   - It reminds all the stakeholders why they do what they do and what they aspire to become.

   - To what extent do you think *Hatikvah* meets these criteria? What historical and contemporary evidence do you have to support your perspective?

4. Using descriptions of a vision, spend no more than five minutes brainstorming the words, phrases or images you think could evoke "a compelling organizing image of a desired future state" for your new learning model for students and families.

Significant Questions Mini-Lessons

Usage

In preparation for your first session, team members read all five of the mini-lessons and jot down responses (p. 23) to the "What do you think?" question posed at the close of each lesson. During Session #1, your team will share responses to these five significant questions.

Outcome

Participants will assess the role and importance of community, of Jewish texts, of the learner, and of Jewish living in relationship to powerful Jewish learning.

Grouping of Participants

Pairs and full team

Time Required

50–60 minutes

Facilitation

1. Break team into pairs. Have partners share their responses to the question at the end of Mini-Lesson #1 (about 2 minutes). As a team, respond to this question (about 8 minutes). If possible, summarize the team's main ideas in a few sentences. An appointed member records team responses.

2. Repeat this process for Mini-Lessons #2–#5

3. Explain that the team is about to look at the congregation's vision to assess if it aligns with the teams responses to the five significant questions. Have the recorder briefly review the main ideas expressed in the responses to the five questions.

Significant Questions Mini-Lessons

- -

Introduction

Experience shows that congregations around the country have asked themselves the five key questions in the graphic above when re-imagining Jewish learning. Your team may have addressed one or more of these. You already may have arrived at an understanding of how they will factor into your vision for future learning in your congregation. If so, that's great.

Nonetheless, have each member of the team read through each of the Mini-Lessons that follow. After reading them you may feel confirmed in the direction you are going, or you may want to reconsider some of your emerging directions. Ask them to jot down some thoughts or ideas as they read. Discuss these ideas at your next session. The goal here is to be sure you consider each of these questions deeply before making your final decisions moving forward.

For our purposes here, "Significant Questions:"

- Reflect overarching educational concerns;

- Point towards educational principles about both learners and learning;

- Are significant no matter the circumstances of a particular congregation (e.g. size, location);

- Do not have "right" answers;

- Raise issues that often overlap.

In these Mini-Lessons you will consider these five Significant Questions:

4. What should be the relationship between Jewish learning and Jewish living?

5. What is the role of community in a learning experience?

6. What should be the role of the learner in setting learning goals?

7. How important is it that Jewish learning be grounded in Jewish texts?

8. What factors inspire and support Jewish learning over a lifetime?

Significant Questions Mini-Lessons: What Do You Think?

After reading each Mini-Lesson, jot down a few notes responding to the questions below.
Now that you've thought a little more about:

The relationship between Jewish learning and Jewish living, what role do you think it should play and what weight would you give this question in your vision for learning? (Mini-Lesson #1)
The role of community in a learning experience, what do you think it should be and what weight would you give the role of community in your vision for learning (Mini-Lesson #2)?
The role of the learner in setting learning goals, what do you think that role should be and what weight would you give this question in your vision of Jewish learners and learning in your congregation? (Mini-Lesson #3)
Whether and how Jewish learning should be grounded in Jewish texts, what do you think should be the role of text and what weight would you give this question in your congregation's vision for learning? (Mini-Lesson #4)

Mini-Lesson #1: What should be the relationship between Jewish learning and Jewish living?

We're going to approach this question by asking several sub-questions (after all, our tradition is full of questions). They focus on the concepts of *Torah Lishmah* (learning for its own sake) and *Torat Chayim* (learning for living).

Can't we have learning just for the sake of learning?

According to Judaism, yes. A traditional Jewish value is *Torah Lishmah*, learning for its own sake, learning that is not intended for any particular purpose or use. Making learning a priority, grappling with texts, engaging with the tradition and developing a familiarity with our history, values, traditions, and challenges may not have any immediate application to one's life but, nonetheless, Judaism considers it a worthwhile pursuit. The rabbis valued *Torah Lishmah* so highly that they believed the learner engaged in this pursuit would be revered, humble, wise, modest, patient and forgiving.

> *Rabbi Meir said, "Whoever studies the Torah for its own sake merits many things. Indeed the entire world is rendered worthy for this one's sake. This one is called friend, beloved, one who loves God, one who loves humankind, one who pleases God, and one who pleases humankind. [The Torah] clothes this person in humility and reverence and prepares the person to be righteous and pious, upright and trustworthy…From this person others gain counsel and wisdom, understanding and strength…It gives the individual sovereignty and dominion and the ability to judge…This person becomes modest and patient and forgiving of insults. [The Torah] makes this person great and raises this person above all things.*

What about Jewish learning that *can* be applied to Jewish living?

Just because our tradition values *Torah Lishmah* doesn't mean it doesn't also value *Torat Chayim*, learning for living. That is, learning that enriches Jewish living by inspiring practice and informing choices. Let's look at each of these separately.

In the Talmud when the rabbis argue about which is more important, study or action, Rabbi Akiba rules that study is more important but the elders offer a rejoinder. Yes, study is more important, but that's because it leads to action.

Do you find this to be true? Does study always lead to action? And if not, then what is the nature of the relationship between learning and doing? Or, perhaps more importantly, what should it be?

How can you do what you're supposed to do if you don't know, or care, how to do it?

There is a lot within Judaism that needs to be learned precisely so that it can be practiced: which blessings accompany which rituals, how and when to give *tzedakah*, the whys and hows of mourning, the liturgy and choreography of a worship service, and the list goes on. Anyone who wants to live an active Jewish life will be motivated to say blessings in Hebrew or will be

interested in learning about Maimonides' levels of *tzedakah*. Indeed, for people like this, learning will lead directly to action.

> *Rabbi Tarfon and the elders were already gathered in the upper floor of Nitza's house in Lod when this question was posed to them: Is study greater or is practice greater? Rabbi Tarfon answered: Practice is greater. Rabbi Akiva replied: Study is greater. The rest of the elders answered: Study is greater, since study leads to practice.*
>
> *Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 40*

But for the person who doesn't make Shabbat at home or attend Shabbat services, of what value is learning the blessing for lighting Shabbat candles? If people have never experienced the power of a community during a time of mourning, why would they care to learn about mourning rituals? And yet, we may feel that lighting Shabbat candles and comforting the mourner are things Jews should know how to do. Furthermore, educators know that learning that can be applied soon and often to the tasks of daily living is both valued and internalized.

Thus, we are faced with a challenging reality. We can't force people to make Shabbat at home or to attend services. And yet, perhaps, there may be experiences or contexts for learning we can create so that what is irrelevant today for a given learner might become relevant to that same learner after a month, or a year. It is also important to be sure that learners' goals are realistic, given learners' ages and stages of life. What is highly relevant to a teenager may have different (or even no) relevance to the parent of a young child in a Jewish preschool, and vice versa. If learners don't bring a passion for learning to the table, how can they still become engaged?

Can you learn something well without doing it?

In many instances, learning and doing are virtually inseparable. For example, to learn how to swim, a person really needs to be in the pool. We can't learn how to swim by just reading about it in a book. Much of Judaism is like this because Judaism is, in many ways, a religion of action, a religion that expects us to do many things. It is difficult to learn how to conduct a Passover *seder* if you have never been to one. It is hard to understand the value of praying in community if you have only prayed by yourself. When it comes to Jewish practice, knowledge and understanding are consistently grounded in experience. The experience reinforces the learning, and vice versa, and, hopefully, both inspire continued engagement. Furthermore, appreciation of learning is deepened when linked to related experience.

What else does one need to know and do in order to live a Jewish life?

As we've already discussed, one of the benefits of Jewish learning is that it can make Jewish practice possible. But Judaism can also inform how you live your life and the myriad of choices you make in a day, few of which you might think of as "Jewish" decisions. Understanding the values of our tradition, what Judaism has to tell us about who we are and our obligations to ourselves and to others, can offer us guidance and assurance that our decisions are consistent and well grounded.

Some examples: In your office you're responsible for payroll. You will be taking off a few days and, this month, that time away coincides with payday. With all the other things you need to

finish up before you leave, you consider putting off doing payroll until you get back. Is that OK? Well, Leviticus teaches us that an employer should never withhold wages, even overnight (!). Compensation for work should be given as soon as possible. Doing so reflects the respect anyone, including an employee, deserves.

You're working on the annual family budget. As you estimate your expenses for the upcoming year you think you might be finished after you've gone through household expenses, insurance, food, transportation, clothing and entertainment. Anything missing? What about charitable donations, or in Jewish parlance, *tzedakah*? Understanding that giving *tzedakah* is a Jewish obligation, and not about making a financial donation on a whim, causes you to plan for it and seriously contemplate how it fits into your life and your other priorities.

One more example: You're so angry with a so-called friend you could just scream, preferably at her. How dare she share your medical information, which you told her in confidence, with a mutual acquaintance! Who does she think she is? Well, before you give her a piece of your mind, what if you stopped to think how you would feel in her shoes. If someone yells at you about something you've done, does it help? And why might she have shared the information? What might she have been feeling? "Love your neighbor as yourself," it says in Leviticus. If this teaching were to inform how you confront her, what might that look like?

Even for those who aren't seeking guidance, exposure to Jewish teachings that have immediate application to the circumstances of modern life can serve to enrich living, beyond ritual observance. In today's challenging times, the wisdom of our tradition can offer us guideposts for living our everyday lives.

What do you think?
Now that you've thought a little more about the relationship between Jewish learning and Jewish living, what role do you think it should play and what weight would you give this question in your vision for learning? Jot down a few notes to bring to the next team conversation.

Mini-Lesson #2: What is the role of community in a learning experience?

Let's explore what it means to learn within the context of a community by asking two follow-up questions:

What role do other people play in one's learning?

Jewish culture itself is communal. A *minyan*, quorum of 10 people, is necessary for many prayers, including the Mourner's *Kaddish*. This makes sense. A person should never have to mourn alone. Judaism requires a community for the mourner's prayer to be recited so that the mourner may be comforted. A *minyan* is also necessary for a wedding. This too makes sense. Joy is increased when it is shared, so Judaism requires the community to be present in order to multiply a couple's happiness.

> *…just as in the case of iron, when one implement sharpens another, so too do two Torah scholars sharpen each other when they discuss questions of Halachah together…just as fire cannot be made to burn with one piece of wood alone, so too the words of Torah cannot be retained by someone who studies alone…*
>
> *Babylonian Taud, Ta'anit 7a*

Judaism also encourages the community to share in the task of learning. The traditional Jewish method of study is in *chevrutah*, meaning, with a partner. Why? Because discussion and debate are central to the Jewish learning process. The presence of another person - or of other people - stimulates one's thoughts. Our tradition tells us that, in the same way one iron instrument is used to sharpen another, learning partners sharpen each other's thinking. Further, just as a fire cannot be sustained with only one piece of wood, lasting learning can only be accomplished by studying with others (Babylonian Talmud, Ta'anit 7a). Dialogue, the effort of two people to really listen and respond to one another, enriches each person's learning. In much of Judaism, from life cycle to learning, communal participation is a key ingredient because doing something together both creates and enriches the experience.

Furthermore, communal learning can be a powerful experience. First of all, it establishes a group norm. It says to the learners, "This is who we are. This is what we do." As we know, there is power in numbers and knowing that there are others who are traveling the same path often makes the journey even possible. Seeing learners of all ages actively engaged in Jewish learning—and using that learning to join in a community that lives what it learns—goes much further toward motivating one to learn than being told that we all ought to be lifelong learners. Learning among others is also very stimulating. One person's comment triggers another's objection, which, in turn, causes yet a third person to ask a new question. Often the interaction spurs the participants into further learning. Someone will look something up before the next session. Another will be inspired to read a book that was mentioned in discussion.

Interestingly, it is not uncommon for leadership to emerge from a group learning experience. Jewish learning, especially learning from primary texts and sources, can be very empowering. And it's not necessarily the ones who know the most who rise to the top. Often, it's those who

learn how to read a text, clarify issues, search for meaning, and appreciate what traditional and contemporary voices have to add who have the skills necessary to step up. Finding oneself, and one's role in a community, is possible through learning.

What else is important to learn besides information?

When designing learning, we need to keep in mind the differences and relationships among instructional learning, experiential learning, and enculturation into a community of meaning and Jewish practice. We probably can agree that instruction is important, but we also know that how a learner experiences that instruction will influence what is ultimately retained and valued. The context in which learning happens, which can be defined in many ways, greatly impacts the effectiveness of the learning.

One way of defining context is to look at who the other learners are and the dynamic between the individual and the group. For the individual, learning within a community of learners can create a place where it's safe to ask "risky questions" and one can be comfortable exploring new ideas and practices. A few examples: Studying *Parashat Hashavua* (Portion of the Week) in a regular group before services on Shabbat morning, you may be bothered by how often God seems to lose patience with the Jewish people, threatening each time to annihilate them because of their insubordination. Far from being a frivolous matter, you need a place where it's safe to struggle with our tradition—where you can express heartfelt misgivings about a God that would resort to such extreme measures.

Likewise, if you are taking a class on Jewish Ethics, you may think that the Jewish laws of *Shmirat Lashon*, Guarding One's Tongue, are unreasonable to expect in today's society. Your perspective might change when the person sitting next to you shares a story about a friend who confronted someone who was spreading gossip and how much the people being talked about appreciated it. A learner's experience can be made much richer by virtue of the support others provide.

> *When I was young, I asked my father, "If you don't believe in God, why do you go to synagogue so regularly?" My father answered, "Jews go to synagogue for all kinds of reasons. My friend Garfinkle, who is Orthodox, goes to synagogue to talk to God. I go to talk to Garfinkle."*
>
> *Harry Golden,* **The Right Time** *(1969)*

Another way of thinking about the value of learning within a community is to think about who comprises that community and the benefits of homogeneous and heterogeneous groups. Students preparing for *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* are involved in and worried about the same things, all leading up to the big day. If you meet with them as a group, as a homogeneous community, they are open and eager for specific kinds of learning that address their immediate concerns and needs. Now, imagine Jewish life for these students after the big day. What if, as a way to both recognize and reinforce their accomplishments, they expected to receive honors during Shabbat or holiday services over the following year? They may be called on for an *aliyah*, or a *d'var Torah* or as an usher. They may be asked to read *Torah* or *Haftarah* for a holiday service. By taking their place in an active, practicing community of adults, these students would be assuming the responsibilities of Jewish adults. Mixing them in, thereby creating a heterogeneous community, creates new opportunities.

The meaning of becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah would become real and meaningful. What they learned and the competencies they developed would matter to the community.

Building community makes sense Jewishly. Judaism was meant to be lived in community. Community matters because sharing Shabbat meals with other families makes Shabbat better. Community is indispensable because people who are sick need others to keep them company or to bring them food. Community is essential because we are the Jewish people. As Harry Golden, the 20th century American Jewish writer and humorist noted, many Jews come to synagogues primarily in order to meet other Jews. These relationships need to be encouraged, affirmed and nurtured. Synagogues are at their best when they concern themselves with the conscious building of community.

What do you think?

Now that you've thought a little more about the role of community in a learning experience, what do you think it should be and what weight would you give role of community in your vision for learning? Jot down a few notes to bring to the next team conversation.

Mini-Lesson #3: What should be the role of the learner in setting learning goals?

Too many people feel that Jewish education is something that was done to them. They were sent to Religious School or Hebrew school where they were told what to learn and what to do. Questioning was not encouraged. There was little room for dissent. Even as adults they sense that the Jewish community has an agenda for what they should be learning, caring about, and doing.

> *More and more, the meaning of Judaism in America transpires with the self. American Jews have drawn the activity and significance of their group identity into the subjectivity of the individual, the activities of the family and the institutions (primarily the synagogue), which are seen as extensions of this intimate sphere.*
>
> *Steven M. Cohen and Arnold M. Eisen,* **The Jew Within**

Contemporary sociologists who study American Jewish identity talk about Jews of the 21st century as having "constructed" identities. By this they mean that, unlike for their parents' or grandparents' generation, Jews today are making very individual personal choices about their engagement in Jewish life, their affiliations and their practice. They are constructing meaning in their Jewish lives one experience at a time. Much less guided by what a particular movement says, or what their parents did, Jews today make Jewish choices that reflect their interests and needs, regardless of the existing communal institutional infrastructure or even concern for survival of the Jewish People. And the choices one makes at one stage of life may not be consistent with the choices made at another. (See **The Jew Within**, Cohen and Eisen)

So, the question is, should learners be applying this same independent and selective spirit to their learning? "Why not?" you might say. Who better to make choices about which experiences to

seek out or what information to learn than the potential learner him/herself? We all know of situations in which someone has what he thinks is a great idea for a program or workshop but doesn't do enough to see if anyone really might be interested in it—and then no one shows. Learners vote with their feet. They always have. When they are not interested they won't come. When they are interested, you can't keep them away.

When seeking Jewish learning, the Internet has opened up opportunities in ways we never could have imagined. Whatever your interest, you can learn something about it on the web. Just entering "Jewish learning" in a search engine generates 331,000 results! This presents a challenge to congregations. Instead of the synagogue being the sole locus of Jewish life and learning, people are able to find directions about how to perform Jewish rituals, answers to questions, interactive blogs, Talmud study and so much more online. "Niche learning," when people seek personalized learning experiences, may meet the individual's needs, but then where does that leave the community? Gradually, we're beginning to figure that out. Some congregations sponsor password-protected blogs where members can discuss issues of interest. They might be moderated by the rabbi or other synagogue professional, which reinforces the connection to the congregation. Many congregations provide links to Jewish resources on their websites, thus giving their "seal of approval" to select sites of Jewish interest and learning. The Internet is challenging us to think very differently about how, where and through whom people connect to Jewish life and learning.

At a time when "you're not the boss of me" rings true for two year olds as well as adults, is it possible for congregations to help the individual learner make autonomous choices that also support and honor the call of our tradition and the values and culture of the congregation?

What do you think?
Now that you've thought a little more about the role of the learner in setting learning goals, what do you think that role should be and what weight would you give this question in your vision of Jewish learners and learning in your congregation? Jot down a few notes to bring to your next team conversation.

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Mini-Lesson #4: How important is it that Jewish learning be grounded in Jewish texts?

As People of The Book, ours is a tradition based in our core text—the *Torah*—that has inspired myriad translations, anthologies, commentaries, commentaries on the commentaries, compendia and even more commentaries on those. Even today, when religious authorities are asked to rule on an interpretation of Jewish law they will make every effort, first, to find a Torah text that supports their position and, second, to suggest rabbinic texts that explicate it further.

> *Turn it over and over for everything is contained within it. Delve into it, grow old and frail in it. Do not depart from it for there is no pursuit better for you than it.*
>
> *Pirke Avot 5:26*

The Mishnaic rabbi, Ben Bag Bag, believed that familiarity with the Torah, our core text, is a basic requirement for Jewish living. Many Jews would agree with him. Much of our liturgy is drawn from the Torah as are parts of our holiday (e.g. the Passover haggadah) and lifecycle (e.g. wedding) rituals. Acquainting children with the biblical hero narratives can bring our tradition alive. Starting a board meeting by studying a text that teaches about respecting and recording minority opinions can help situate the board's business in an historical context and set a tone for an important deliberation. Our texts can enrich our lives.

Unless you follow Ben Bag Bag's advice to delve into the Torah, can you really say you know it? Until you actually find and read the verses that tell the story of creation and compare them with the verses that describe the building of the *mishkan* (tabernacle) in the wilderness, can you appreciate what the two have in common? And if you don't grapple with the text—with the actual words themselves—the meaning you take away will be based on what others have said is important, not what you uncovered for yourself. Is this authentic learning?

Being able to cite chapter and verse when explaining the origin of a Jewish concept or ritual, or even knowing whether a particular observance is biblical or rabbinic in origin, or not even from our textual tradition at all, can be empowering. Knowing the sources of your tradition can serve to support your choices and keep you feeling connected to the past. Being able to explain where our holidays originated, which practices are textually based, and which are based on custom, can go far in giving one a sense of authenticity today.

Our sacred texts, however, are anything but straightforward. The *Torah* is a complex book replete with repetitions, contradictions, difficult language (in both Hebrew and translation), strange names and, often, sketchy information. And the *Talmud*, though appearing to be organized by subject, gives the word tangent a whole new meaning! Just the idea of approaching a Jewish text—let alone turning it over and over—can be an intimidating prospect.

And yet, are fear and apprehension sufficient excuses not to engage with our sacred texts? Some would argue that studying Judaism without going to the primary sources isn't the real thing.

They would call that studying *about* Judaism. Without coming face to face with the texts of our tradition, can Jewish learning be authentic?

What do you think?
Now that you've thought a little more about whether and how Jewish learning should be grounded in Jewish texts, what do you think should be the role of text and what weight would you give this question in vision for learning? Jot down a few notes to bring to the next team conversation.

Mini-Lesson #5: What factors inspire and support Jewish learning over a lifetime?

Some of the best learning is both cumulative and generative. Take basketball, for example. You first learn to handle the ball, then to dribble, then to pass. Only after learning these basics do you begin to learn actual plays, along with how to play offense or defense, and what it means to play as a team. Each step of the learning builds on the previous steps and it might seem that the goal is to put this learning all together to play in an actual game. But anyone who is serious about playing a sport knows that the desire to play better and smarter pushes you to continually refine your skills and improve your game. The skills build on each other, and the drive to improve sustains your interest over time.

Or have you ever seen a movie in which the story revolves around an historical personality and the story line piques your interest just enough that, when you get home, you go online to find out whether the drama on screen reflected the way history actually played out? In this case, your introduction to a bit of information acted as a trigger and inspired interest in learning more. Now, what does this look like in a Jewish context?

Imagine a Jewish learning experience that excited you so much that you couldn't wait to come back for more. What could grab you like that? If you've ever talked to a teenager just back from her first youth group convention you might know. She comes home so excited about the other kids, Jewish issues and singing Hebrew songs that she wants to get ten new kids to come to the next youth group event and can't wait until the next convention. What makes this happen? These kinds of experiences are rarely left to chance. Rather, they are carefully and strategically orchestrated by youth workers who know how to turn kids on and keep them engaged over time. We would do well to think about engaging others in comparable ways.

Too often learning experiences are packaged in such a way that there's a built-in assumption that the learning has an endpoint. The most obvious example of this is bar/bat mitzvah. Many families see it as the goal of childhood learning, a finish line to be crossed, instead of the change in status and transition to Jewish adulthood it actually is. If we stop Jewish learning at bar/bat mitzvah we are left with a generation of future Jewish leaders who have only a pediatric understanding of Judaism. Extending that finish line out further, through Confirmation, or to high school graduation is not impossible, just challenging. It means changing how we talk about

bar/bat mitzvah, offering compelling reasons for continuing Jewish learning through adolescence and not being afraid to tell our families we want and expect more.

We sometimes do this with adult learning too. A congregation might offer a Beginner's Hebrew class every year, which is very nice for people who want to start learning Hebrew. But what about those people who want to move beyond the Beginner's level? Are there opportunities for them to extend their learning? Or are we satisfied with the implicit message that either we don't really expect anyone to be interested in going any further or that a rudimentary knowledge of Hebrew is sufficient?

> *We begin with the hypothesis that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development…A curriculum as it develops should revisit…basic ideas repeatedly, building upon them until the student has grasped the full formal apparatus that goes with them.*
>
> *Jerome Bruner,* **The Process of Education** *(1960)*

Educators talk about the concept of a spiral curriculum, which is a plan for teaching based on readiness and interest that revisits ideas that have been previously introduced while also continually adding new learning along the way. Over time, the learner is exposed to information and experiences that build on themselves and extend learning. Think about the holiday of *Sukkot*. With young children you provide hands-on experiences with the symbols of the holiday—building and decorating a *sukkah*, eating in the *sukkah*, shaking the *lulav* and *etrog*. You talk about the harvest and about what it would be like to live in a *sukkah* and, perhaps, our important connections with nature and all of God's creations. Then, when they are older and studying Hebrew, you add the blessings that go along with those experiences. And when they are even older they may design and build a *sukkah*, focusing on an appreciation of the importance of shelter, and you might involve them with a local homeless shelter. And then, as adults, they can expand their understanding of the holiday by studying texts on the harvest, or growing a vegetable garden at the synagogue, or working to create a *Sukkat Shalom*, a safe haven, for struggling families in your congregation or in the surrounding community. At every point the learners are exposed to the core ideas of the holiday, and yet many associated experiences are introduced along the way. The learning is designed to engage students, according to their readiness and interests and be self-reinforcing. Each experience builds on the last, inspires the next, spiraling ever upward.

It is important to realize that, in the examples above, the next steps in learning were not left totally to the learner to determine and create. Learners need others to help point the way to new possibilities. They need guidance, and may not realize it or know how to ask for it.

What do you think?
Now that you've thought a little more about how to inspire and support Jewish learning over a lifetime, how important do you think this is and what weight would you give this question in your vision for learning? Jot down a few notes to bring to the next team conversation.

Activity: Writing/Examining Your Vision

Usage

Most likely, your congregation already has a statement of its vision for Jewish learning (or for "education"). In that case, these pages should serve to guide your team as you revisit, and perhaps, reshape the vision. If your congregation does not yet have a vision statement, now is the time to write one. This may be the work of your team or another task-force established for this very purpose.

Outcome

After reviewing guidelines for writing a vision as well as their current vision statement, the team assesses if their vision statement is a powerful vision statement that effectively conveys their congregation's hopes and dreams and desired direction for Jewish learning.

Grouping of Participants

Full team, small groups of three or four

Time Required

20 minutes

Facilitation

1. Break into small groups and ask each to read Writing/Examining Your Vision.

2. Give each member a copy of your vision statement. Groups read and review the vision statement looking for the characteristics of a powerful vision statement and alignment with the hopes, dreams, and desired direction for Jewish learning of the congregation.

3. The team reconvenes. Groups share their comments and recommendations regarding the vision statement.

4. If needed, ask for two or three team members to revise your current vision statement before your next team session.

Writing/Examining Your Vision

The Basis of Your Vision

Whether you are rewriting an existing vision or starting from scratch, you need to have an articulated vision for learning in order to move ahead. As the saying goes, "If you don't know where you're headed, any road will take you there." Your vision will guide your upcoming decision-making, focusing you on what is important. It will also serve as your touchstone when you want to be sure that your planning hasn't veered off track.

The discussions you have had prior to and during your LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP work will generate ideas for what should be included in your vision. As a team you will need to come to some consensus about what is most important to include and what ideas and images convey your intentions.

Looking Beyond Your Words

Step back and think about the broad themes that have been mentioned in your discussions. What ideas were raised repeatedly? What possibilities seem to capture your imaginations? What would people find very exciting? What kind of vision would signal that you are about to embark in a bold new direction?

Write this vision under the assumption that anything is possible. By tapping into people's passions and what they find meaningful you will craft a vision that reflects their desire for meaningful and purposeful Jewish education for children and inspires them to do everything they can to make it happen. Don't hold back!

What are the Characteristics of a Powerful Vision?

Looking over visions developed by other congregations, those that are most compelling and most useful in guiding decision-making in the future include these elements:

• They evoke emotion.

• They use Jewish language, metaphors and/or imagery.

• They can be summarized easily.

• They are action-oriented.

• They describe a boldly different future state.

They paint a vivid picture that addresses: Why is learning taking place? When and where is learning taking place? Who are the teachers? Who are the learners? How is learning taking place?

They uniquely define the organization (this is who we are, this is what we value).

Format of Your Vision

Your vision should be simple, concise, inspirational, and clear. Writing often requires struggling to find the right words to convey the tone and meaning you intend.

It is best to leave the wording of the first draft to one or two people. After they have crafted it, they should either circulate it among the team members by email or present it for discussion at a session.

Don't forget to be aware of the length of your vision. It needs to be just long enough to convey where you are headed and short and clear enough to be readily understood by your congregation. Some common formats of visions include:

One paragraph that describes what you want your new model for learning to achieve;

Several short paragraphs, each building on or clarifying information in the first;

After a brief introductory paragraph, bullet points called either "planks," "statements," "goals," or "principles" that list the key aspects of your vision;

Any of the above formats could be annotated. You could offer background information about where the ideas came from or why your team believes they are important.

Content of Your Vision

It is tempting to craft a vision solely focused on the students—primarily about what the students will learn and how they will feel and act. In addition to thinking about the learning experience of the students, your vision should also address the learning environment, the role of the teachers, a broad sense of the subject matter, the role of parents and/or families and how the total experience complements congregational life.

Revising Your Vision

Keep in mind that it is the vision—not the wording—that is important; the wording is just a way to share the vision with others. Your first draft may not be your last. You may decide to reformat it or even adjust some of the content. The effort put into getting it right now will pay off as you depend on your vision in your work ahead.

LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP: Materials and Activities

Phase 2: Clarifying Your Vision for Learning
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In Phase 2 of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process, your team will analyze your vision for learning. They will: 1. identify words or ideas that they find unclear or incorrect and, 2. write explanations or elaborations on parts or the whole of the document to gain a clearer understanding of your vision statement. Next, the team will formulate 1–2 priority goals and a list of powerful learning experiences aligned to the goal(s) that help learners move toward knowing, doing, believing, and belonging.

> **Clarifying Your Vision
> for Learning**

Outcome:
Having analyzed your congregation's vision for learning, the team will formulate 1–2 priority goals and list powerful learning experiences aligned to the goal(s).

Materials and Activities:
- Text Study: In the Tradition of the Rabbis, p. 39
- Activity: Writing a Page of "Talmud", p. 42
- Activity: Priority Goals and KDBB, p. 44
- Understanding Priority Goals, p. 46

Session #2: Clarifying Your Vision for Learning

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Desired Outcome(s): Having analyzed your congregation's vision for learning and defined the qualities of a priority goal, the team will formulate 1–2 priority goals and list powerful learning experiences aligned to the goal(s).

Time	Session Part	Activity or Discussion and Specifics of Process to be followed	Person Responsible	Items Needed
	Welcome			
	Connection			
	Text Study			
	Core Discussion(s)			
	Reflection			
	Next Steps	Reflect on how looking at learning through the lens of KDDB will shape your congregation's learning model.		
Other Preparation: Provide copies of the congregation's and/or school's educational Vision and/or Mission.				

In the Tradition of the Rabbis

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After saying the blessing before study, please read this text and discuss the questions below.

Offering commentary—elucidating the meaning of a core text by explanation and association—is a fundamentally Jewish activity. Some say it even began with Moses:

דְּבָרִים פרק א פסוק ה
בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב הוֹאִיל מֹשֶׁה בֵּאֵר אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת
לֵאמֹר :

On the other side of the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to expound this Teaching.

Deuteronomy 1:5

...the ambiguity of the Hebrew *be'er* [is that] "expound" means "set forth" or "clarify." The meaning "set forth" agrees with the fact that this verse introduces the addresses of Deuteronomy, which were not previously delivered. On the other hand, "clarify" agrees with verses...which imply that these addresses recapitulate and clarify earlier teachings. The ancient translations understood the verse in the latter sense.

JPS Torah Commentary, Deuteronomy

• To you, what is the difference between "set forth" and "clarify?"

• What difference might it make if Moses was "setting forth" or "clarifying?" How might it change what you think of the words in Deuteronomy?

Here is some background for understanding the next text: *The Talmud (compiled between the 3rd – 6th centuries CE) is composed of two parts: the Mishnah and the Gemara. The Mishnah (dating from the 3rd century CE) is a discussion of rules for Jewish living extrapolated from the Torah. The Gemara, essentially, is elaboration on the Mishnah.*

> What makes the Talmud particularly appropriate as a study of the evolution of ideas is that each page not only has text that integrates the Mishnah and Gemara, but is surrounded by commentary that spans hundreds of years. It not only explores meanings and different interpretations, but also raises questions that are tangentially connected to that text. It is virtually impossible to be engaged by a Talmudic text without feeling that you yourself are participating in an emotionally charged intellectual debate over hundreds of years.
>
> On each page, we find not only comments and reflections upon comments, but we come upon aphorisms and stories that provide an associative/emotional bond rather than a strictly logical one. Furthermore, even when the discourse is in a problem solving mode, it is not unusual for a carefully reasoned debate with conflicting points of view to end with the Hebrew word "Taku," which translates as "Tie." That is, neither side has provided a definitive enough argument and it is left to the reader to decide upon a conclusion or appropriate course of action.
>
> Stephen I. Brown, A Modern/Ancient Encounter with Text:
> *Revisiting the Talmud*

- According to this text, what are the various specific ways in which Talmudic commentary helps us to understand the meaning of the text?

- What are the advantages and challenges presented by this non-linear kind of commentary?

> All learning takes place in dialogue. While solitary study also has its place, the soul of rabbinic Judaism is found in the debate—typically associated with the academy. All opinions are given serious thought for everyone adds to the living notion of sacred literature. The give and take in the Talmud, generally referred to as *pilpul* (literally, "pepper"), actually gives flavor to rabbinic texts. Such struggle is necessary to ascertain the true meaning of any text.
>
> Kerry M. Olitsky and Leonard Kravitz,
> *Pirke Avot: A Modern Commentary on Jewish Ethics*

CONTINUED…

- What does it mean to you for a reader to be "in dialogue" with a text? How does that happen for you when you read the newspaper or a novel? How might this dialogue be different when reading a Jewish text?

- Do you agree that "struggle" is necessary in order to find meaning in the text?

- Through what other approaches might someone find meaning in Jewish texts?

Activity: Writing a Page of "Talmud"

Usage

This exercise will enable the team to clarify and expound on your vision for learning. You may also want to consider using this exercise with others in the congregation to elicit their thoughts and ideas.

Outcome

After analyzing your vision for learning, the team will: 1. identify words or ideas that they find unclear or incorrect, and 2. write explanations or elaborations on parts or the whole of the document.

Materials

• Copy of the vision for each team member

• Several volumes of the Talmud or **The Commentators' Bible**

• Large Post-it notes in two colors

• Large mural-size (i.e. butcher paper) paper with the vision written in the center

Grouping of Participants

Small groups of three to four

Time Required

45 minutes

Facilitation

1. The facilitator should explain that the goal is to better understand what your vision means and suggests to those who read it. The team members must raise points of clarification and expound on its content, just like the rabbis commented on our core Jewish texts in the Talmud. Show and/or pass around copies of the Talmud or **The Commentator's Bible** so everyone can see how the pages are laid out with the core text in the center and the various commentaries around the border.

2. For 5 minutes, group members should read the vision individually, making notes to themselves about the words or ideas that trigger two categories of specific reactions.

The first category of reaction, to be written on one color post-it, includes anything they find incorrect, unclear or confusing. The second category of reaction, to be written on a different color post-it, includes explanations, connections to other aspects of synagogue life, an elaboration on a particular point or a personal perspective on a part or the whole document. These explanations and perspectives should serve to make the vision statement clearer to those who are reading it for the first time.

3. In small groups, team members should then take about 10 minutes to share with each other their two categories of reactions, deciding which they think might be the most common among congregants hearing or reading the vision for the first time.

4. At the end of the small group discussion, everyone should place their post-its on the mural paper with the vision in the middle. The post-its containing points of clarification can be placed down one side, while the commentary post-its should be placed around the text of the vision. This creates a commentary on the vision that visually resembles a traditional page of text with commentary.

5. Give the team a few minutes to look at what has been posted before reconvening. Direct the group to look for what they believe are the most relevant reactions, and issues that need to be resolved. When you reconvene, the facilitator should ask the group to identify the reactions and issues they noticed. You should not try to rewrite the vision as a group. If there are changes to consider, you may want to ask 2-3 people to meet before the next session to suggest changes.

Activity: Priority Goals and KDBB

Usage

This activity will help the team identity your priority goals and the implications for learners that are embedded in them.

Outcome

The team will be able to define the qualities of a priority goal. They will formulate 1–2 priority goals and a list of powerful learning experiences aligned to the goal(s) that help learners move toward knowing, believing, belonging and doing.

Materials

• Handouts (pages 46–49)

• Pen/pencil

• Flip chart or board

• Markers

Grouping

Start as a whole team, break into small groups and then reconvene.

Time Required

50 minutes

Facilitation

1. In preparation for this session, team members read Understanding Priority Goals. Encourage members to jot down any questions they have about Priority Goals. As a team, review the qualities of priority goals. (pages 46–48)

2. As a team, decide what you think are the 1-2 priority goals embedded in your vision. You may find that this is easy; there may be a few ideas you have kept returning to in your discussions that just naturally stand out. If not, talk about the key ideas that lie behind the words of your vision, i.e. the ideas that are most important to you regardless of the words.

3. If you have one priority goal, divide the team into 4 groups (1-2 people each). If you have two priority goals, divide the team in half and have the two groups work simultaneously on their goals.

4. For each priority goal, have 1-2 people fill in one box on the handout. (p. 49) In the box, list 3 responses to the question as it relates to your priority goal.

5. When everyone is finished, have them post their work on a board or flip chart so the whole team can see it.

6. Lead a discussion focused on the following questions:

   • What are you surprised to see listed, if anything?

   • What do you think is missing, if anything?

   • How did using the KDBB framework change your thinking about the purposes of Jewish education? How does approaching education using the KDBB framework help you better understand your vision and its possibilities?

Understanding Priority Goals

Priority goals can be understood as the long-term accomplishments that stand beyond subject matter mastery and are transferable to real life. Wiggins and McTighe describe priority goals as what an educational program "is meant to help the learner achieve over the long haul" (2007, p. 12). If you reflect on and analyze your vision, and you pare away the inspirational language or imagery, you will see that it contains 1-2 core ideas that are essential to what you want to accomplish. It is even possible that, when writing your vision, you started with these priority goals and then built a compelling vision statement around them.

To be useful and directive, these goals need to:

• Be focused;

• Be about the learner's experience;

• Have meaning at their core;

• Address the whole of a person.

Priority Goals Are Focused

A priority goal brings an educational program into sharp focus. Instead of trying to accomplish a laundry list of goals, vision driven leaders focus their energies on one, two or three goals, often elevating one as a priority.

Priority Goals Target the Learner's Experience

Too often, an institution's goals focus on serving the direct needs of the institution, e.g. developing new leadership or creating support for on-going needs. Instead, priority goals address a learner's experience and outcomes believing that learning and experiences that speak to the learner, ultimately, will benefit the synagogue.

## Priority Goals have Meaning at their Core

Priority goals aim to affect a deep life commitment and way of living, at the core of which is meaning. To some, meaning may seem the product of soft-pedaled education. However, leaders who have set priority goals are developing an unapologetic narrative about trying to shape Jewish educational experiences that promote meaning for their learners. Pamela Ebstyne King of Stanford University notes, "Meaning can be understood as a set of beliefs, attitudes, and commitments that act as a guiding source to bring about life satisfaction. Meaning acts as both an organizational construct by enabling an individual to make sense out of the world and one's experience, to assist in decision making, and to facilitate personal growth as well as serve a

motivational function, giving inspiration and hope in life and providing impetus and incentive for action." ("Faith Communities as a Resource for Meaning," 2002) At the core of priority goals is a life well lived, not a subject covered.

Priority Goals Engage the Whole Person

Priority goals are multi-dimensional; they can't be achieved only in a learner's head. It takes the whole of a person. If learners know certain facts, or have good experiences, that alone won't achieve these goals. So the tired argument of "should religious school be fun or cover content" is not relevant to the emerging re-imagined goals. They seek to reach the mind, the heart, the soul and an individual's very sense of being—how an individual exists in the world.

The following graphic captures this characteristic of priority goals. Educators use it to identify areas to attend to when designing meaning-making learning that addresses the whole of a person. It represents the system of influences—each influencing the other in a non-linear way—that informs a learner's lifetime internal dialogue of how to "be" in the world. Priority goals, after all, are not about reciting a prayer. They tend to be about long-term outcomes like growing throughout a lifetime as a prayerful person.
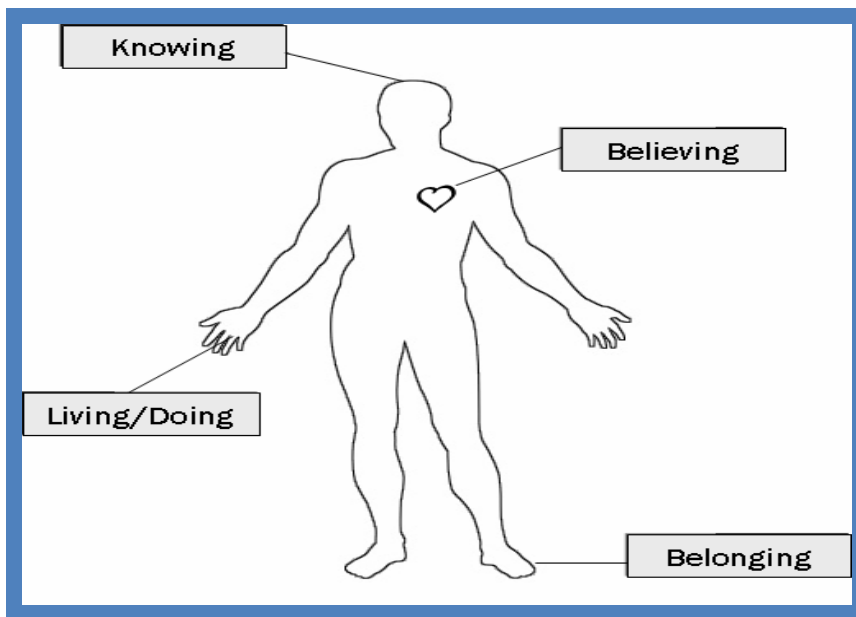
Using this KDBB rubric (Knowing, Doing, Believing, Belonging) requires practice, but it can be extremely useful when designing courses and lesson plans from priority goals that address the whole person. Challenge yourself to answer the questions below for each of your priority goals.

- **Knowing:** What knowledge will learners need to enact our priority goal?

- **Doing:** What skills will learners need and what actions will learners need to take now to live our priority goal today and tomorrow?

- **Believing/Valuing:** What beliefs or values will learners need to explore and experience now to value living the goal in the future?

- **Belonging**: What experiences with the community (parents, peers, others) will enable a learner to experience living our priority goal?

Examples of Priority Goals

Now that you have had a chance to think about how you would articulate your 1-2 priority goals, here are some examples from other congregations:

- Being on a spiritual journey rooted in Jewish tradition;

- Continually growing in relationship to Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael;

- Being on a journey of applying Torah to daily life;

- Being on a journey of mending the world guided by a Jewish moral compass.

You may find that adapting one of these works for you, or you already may be moving in a different direction. Keep in mind that you will need to articulate an idea that is truly one of your priorities and that grows out of your own vision.

Activity Handout: Priority Goals and KDBB

Priority Goal:	
Know What skills and knowledge will learners need to enact our priority goal?	1. 2. 3.
Do What actions will learners need to take now to live our priority goal today and tomorrow?	1. 2. 3.
Believe/Value What beliefs or values will learners need to explore and experience now to value living the goal in the future?	1. 2. 3.
Belong What experiences with the community (parents, peers, others) will enable a learner to experience living our priority goal?	1. 2. 3.

LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP: Materials and Activities

Phase 3: Connecting to Stakeholders

In Phase 3 of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process, your team will identify what they need to learn before designing a model and a pilot. The team will decide which constituencies and stakeholders, as well as which formats, will yield the most valuable feedback about your vision for learning.

> **Connecting to Stakeholders**

Outcome:

The team will decide which constituencies and stakeholders, as well as which formats, will yield the most valuable feedback about your vision for learning.

Materials and Activities:

- What Do You Need to Learn?, p. 52
- Suggested Formats for Engaging the Congregation in Conversation, p. 56
- Text Study: Learning from Others, p. 58

Session #3: Connecting to Stakeholders

- -

Desired Outcome(s): *The team will decide which constituencies and stakeholders, as well as which formats, will yield the most valuable feedback about your vision for learning.*

Time	Session Part	Activity or Discussion and Specifics of Process to be followed	Person Responsible	Items Needed
	Welcome			
	Connection			
	Text Study			
	Core Discussion(s)			
	Reflection			
	Next Steps	Connect with various members of the congregation to gather information and data needed for designing your pilot.		
Other Preparation:				

Activity: What Do You Need to Learn?

- -

Usage

This activity will help the team identity what they need to learn from the congregation about learning for students and families.

Outcome

The team will clarify why they want to engage stakeholders in the conversation, identify whom they want to reach, and propose how they plan to reach them. The team will design a plan for gathering the information prior to the next team session.

Materials

Handouts (pages 53–57)

Pen/pencil

Grouping

Alternate working in small groups and then reconvening as a team.

Time Required

90 minutes

Facilitation

1. In small groups, team members read What Do You Need to Learn. (page 53) Each group writes responses to the first two questions in the What Do We Need to Learn chart (page 57).

2. The team reconvenes and arrives at a shared understanding of why they need the conversations and whom they want to reach.

3. The team again divides into small groups and reads Suggested Formats for Engaging the Congregation in Conversation (pages 54–56). Each group refers to the guiding questions on pages 54–55 to respond to the third question in the chart.

4. As a team, share ideas on how to engage the congregation in conversation about learning for students and families.

5. Map out a plan of connecting to stakeholders prior to your next team session, assigning specific roles and tasks to team members.

What Do You Need to Learn?

Before deciding *how* you want to engage stakeholders within your congregation in a conversation about learning for students and families, you need to be clear about *why* you want these conversations to occur. This might seem obvious, but pushing yourselves to articulate your goals will help you choose better which format(s) of congregational engagement to pursue.

Congregations like yours have considered the goals below when making these decisions:

- To inform the congregation about what you are discussing and considering

- To generate enthusiasm about the possibilities

- To help identify additional people who would actively support and help with planning as you move ahead

- To elicit information about the interests and needs of the congregation, in relation to learning.

- To keep the your team from becoming too insular, in two ways; by:

    — Serving as a kind of "reality test" for the discussions you've had about your vision and learner outcomes; and
    — Adding some new ideas to the process.
- To give members of the congregation a sense that they are being heard, included, and that someone cares about their opinions.

Likewise, before you decide *how* you want to engage the congregation you will need to think about *who* you want to be sure to reach. There may be some who, as a general rule, are easier to reach one way than another. Certainly, consider talking with your key stakeholders who include:

- General Membership

- Board of Trustees or Directors

- Religious School, Adult Education, and Youth Committees/Education Board

- Staff, including teaching faculty

- Learners of all ages

- Parents of religious school, early childhood, day school, and high school students

Suggested Formats for Engaging the Congregation in Conversation

Engaging your congregation in conversation about learning is much like the process of playing an accordion. The accordion is only effective when it expands in order to take in air from the outside. This air enables the accordion to continue to make music. Likewise, you need your congregation's input and to bring them along as you move ahead in your thinking. It is a continual balance of give and take.

A number of formats have proven successful for involving the broader congregation in the discussion of new possibilities of learning for students and their families. Below you will find a description of these formats followed by questions to help you think strategically and thoroughly how to achieve your desired outcomes. You may decide to focus your energies on one or perhaps more than one, as long as they are not equally labor-intensive.

You may be tempted to administer a written survey to the congregation. Surveys can be helpful in specific instances (particularly once a new learning initiative is underway) but often are misused. It takes unique expertise to design an effective survey and the data needs to be evaluated quite carefully. We recommend that you consult closely with your mentor prior to deciding in favor of using a survey.

Whichever format(s) you choose, think carefully about the questions below as you script the outlines of your conversations:

- How will the contact be initiated? By whom?

- What information, if any, will you want to collect about those you engage? How will you collect it?

- How will you describe succinctly what you are doing and why?

- What ground rules for discussion, if any, will be set? How will you establish an atmosphere of open and candid conversation while establishing some norm of confidentiality?

- What will you tell attendees to expect about the duration of the session?

- What are the core questions you want participants to discuss? Will you engage them in an activity? Will you introduce and gather reactions to your vision? Will you invite attendees to share aspects of their own Jewish journeys or discuss their needs, interests, or dreams regarding Jewish learning?

- How will you shape the conversation so that it flows and ideas build on each other?

- How will you balance the common tendency to engage in evaluative discussion of what is, versus what could be? How will you free people (at least temporarily) from discounting possibilities due to assumed resource constraints? How will you handle comments critical about current programs or leadership if they emerge?

- How should the feedback be formatted so that it is readily useable by the team?

The suggestions below fall into four categories:

- Personal contact

- Small group contact

- Large group contact

- Online contact

Personal contact

Individual conversations with stakeholders in your congregation can yield in-depth information and create a personal connection that also helps build community. These conversations can be in person or over the phone. Either way, they should be scripted with an opening, pointed questions and a closing. Be prepared to hear comments about other aspects of synagogue life and decide, in advance, how they will be handled. Consider these conversations to be like interviews in which you both gather the information you need as well as learn something about the interviewee. Finding 1-2 people who have experience interviewing, or who you know can draw out individuals and not get defensive, is critical to the success of this format.

Small group contact

Asking to be put on the agenda of a synagogue board or committee meeting is one of the easiest ways to schedule an opportunity to engage small congregational groups. Again, scripting the conversation is critical. You may want to facilitate a text study or an activity designed to have the participants "taste" a different kind of learning experience and generate the feedback you need. Keep in mind that, although these participants are active synagogue members, they may not know too much about your existing school structure and operation. Certainly, those who have school-age children will be able to respond based on their personal experience. You also may want to schedule time at synagogue staff meetings or teacher in-service workshops.

If you are considering convening focus groups to engage the congregation in discussion about Jewish learning, understand that the planning and implementation of such an endeavor can be labor-intensive, time-consuming, and must be planned and executed with care. If you decide to go this route, ECE can provide detailed guidance and support materials to help make this undertaking both manageable and effective.

Large group contact

If you choose to hold a Town Hall-type meeting, speak with your mentor about how it will fit within the flow of the project and about how to structure and manage the meeting so that it is both focused and productive. You will also need to be sure that those facilitating this meeting are well prepared. One way to help the facilitator is to anticipate questions and concerns and develop a sheet of Frequently Asked Questions or talking points.

Online contact

You may want to facilitate email- or web-based discussions, if this fits with your congregation's culture and capabilities. Blogs may be useful if you want to share your thinking and seek comment. Easy to use blogging sites include WordPress.org and blogger.com. Even an email sent out to a targeted group of recipients, asking one intriguing question, can elicit a variety of interesting responses and can pique curiosity about what you are working on.

What Do We Need to Learn?

Why do we want these conversations to occur?
Whom do we want to be sure to reach?
How will we engage the congregation in conversation about learning for students and families?

Text Study: Learning from Others

- -

After saying the blessing before study, read the texts below and answer the questions in small groups of 3-5 people each

> בֶּן זוֹמָא אוֹמֵר, אֵיזֶהוּ חָכָם, הַלּוֹמֵד מִכָּל אָדָם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (תהלים קיט), מִכָּל מְלַמְּדַי הִשְׂכַּלְתִּי
>
> Ben Zoma taught: Who is wise? The one who learns from every person, as it is written (Psalm 119:99), "From all my teachers I have gained understanding."
>
> Pirke Avot 4:1

1. What's the lesson here about learning? Who might one consider his/her 'teachers'?

2. Maimonides said, "I have learned much from my teachers, more from my colleagues, and from my students most of all." How does this add to your understanding of the learning process?

Please read the following text and then answer the question below:

> הוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר, אַל תְּהִי בָז לְכָל אָדָם, וְאַל תְּהִי מַפְלִיג לְכָל דָּבָר, שֶׁאֵין לְךָ אָדָם שֶׁאֵין לוֹ שָׁעָה וְאֵין לְךָ דָבָר שֶׁאֵין לוֹ מָקוֹם:
>
> He (Ben Azzai) would say, "Do not disdain any person, and do not underrate the importance of anything, as there is no person without his hour, and no thing without its place."
>
> Pirkei Avot 4:3

3. What does this add to your previous discussion? How does this help you think about whose input you want to include in your conversation(s) about new initiatives in Jewish learning?

4. In light of these two texts, who are you inclined to include in your conversation that you might have previously excluded?

LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP: Materials and Activities

Phase 4: Incorporating Feedback into Systemic Thinking and Design

In Phase 4 of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process, your team will report the data and feedback gathered from the congregation. Team members will describe the qualities of a model and a pilot. Team members will identify the five building blocks of a learning system and value the need to ask questions in order to pay attention to all the elements of a full design. The team will then identify specific human, physical and monetary resources available for implementing your new model.

Incorporating Feedback into Systemic Thinking and Design

Outcome:

The team begins to define a new model for learning by synthesizing feedback from the congregation with your understanding of the building blocks of an educational system and an appreciation of your resources.

Materials and Activities:
- What's a Model? What's a Pilot?, p. 61
- Five Building Blocks of a Learning System, p. 65
- Leveraging Your Existing Resources, p. 68
- Text Study: Designing with Wisdom, p. 70

Session #4: Incorporating Feedback Into Systemic Thinking and Design

Desired Outcome(s): *The team will begin to define a new model for learning by synthesizing the feedback from the congregation with your understanding of the building blocks of an educational system and an appreciation of your congregation and school's resources.*

Time	Session Part	Activity or Discussion and Specifics of Process to be followed	Person Responsible	Items Needed
	Welcome			
	Connection			
	Text Study			
	Core Discussion(s)			
	Reflection			
	Next Steps	Reach out to staff, clergy, administrators, lay leaders and others who can either serve as resources or can obtain resources for your model.		

Other Preparation:
- Collect data and get feedback from the congregation about your vision for learning
- Organize the data into a form in which it can be understood and discussed

What's a Model? What's a Pilot?

Usage

The team shares data and feedback that has been gathered from the congregation. Using this document as a guide, the team defines both a model and a pilot.

Outcome

The team will report the data and feedback gathered from the congregation. Team members will describe the qualities of a model and a pilot.

Materials

Handouts (pages 62–64)

Grouping

Full team

Time Required

40 minutes

Facilitation

1. Present the data that has been gathered from the congregation. Inform team members that these data will be used to inform design of your new model for learning and your pilot.

2. As a team, describe the characteristics of a model and the qualities of a pilot.

What's a Model? What's a Pilot?

▬▬▬ ▬

Imagine. You're ready for a change.
It's time to either move into a new home or renovate.

Your home doesn't work as well for you as it used to. You realize your tastes have changed. You need a better flow, or more storage, or dedicated space for interests you didn't even have 10 or 15 years ago. Your family has expanded, or shrunk. Your neighborhood and the location are great but your home doesn't quite "fit" as well as it used to.

Your needs have changed so it's time for a change.
Likely, you have a vision of how you want your house to look and function. Maybe you want something that is less cluttered, simple and with clean lines. Or you're missing natural light and you've come to realize how important light is to how you start and get on with your day. Has your kitchen become dysfunctional for a growing family? Have you lost your need for a formal living room? Is there wasted space that could be used more efficiently? You may have innocently gotten a new lamp or moved some furniture around and now realize that the feel of your home just isn't right any more.

You have several options. You could hope to find an available home that better meets your needs and move. But the thought of putting your house on the market, hoping for a good offer and getting what you need – in the neighborhood you like – might be overwhelming. That leaves the possibility of redecorating or renovating your current home.

And there are two ways of doing renovation. One is you just do it all in one fell swoop. You work on every room simultaneously, from ceiling to floor, driven by a vision of what you want to create. It may disrupt your life and require you move out but, in the end, you should have a space that is what you imagined and works better for you.

The other way of redecorating or renovating is room by room. This gives you the chance to experience the change you want incrementally. You can try out a new look and feel in one space before wholly committing to it throughout your home. It also allows you to apply what you learn along the way as you progress. Your vision for how you want your new space to look and feel will remain constant but you may discover different ways of expressing it along the way – ways you hadn't imagined or thought were possible when you first began. Love the color paint you used in the hallway? Use it in the bathroom as well. Happy with the indoor/outdoor feel you created in the family room? Maybe you want to rethink your bedroom plans so you can incorporate the same feel there.

Envisioning living in a newly designed space is analogous to imagining a new model of learning for your students and families. Sure, aspects of your school may still feel right and function in ways that reflect your vision. But you have embarked on this process because you believe there is more you can do, and do better, that will move you toward your vision and better reflect who you are.

If your congregation were just starting off you could create your school, aligned with your vision, from scratch. That would be like moving to a new home or even building a new house. You could control for all the variables simultaneously. You would get to build, from the ground up, everything you do. But this is a luxury few congregations can enjoy (and don't think that those who can get everything right from the start!). Instead, you are remodeling.

What is a model?

A model is the concept or paradigm by which you think about accomplishing your vision. Think of it as your blueprint for Jewish learning. Whether you are aware of it or not, how learning is imparted to the children of your congregation is based on a model of some sort. Most likely, parts or all of your school currently are based on a secular school model: children grouped by ages, with a teacher assigned to each group, learning largely if not exclusively delivered within the four walls of the classroom, success measured by tests and grades, content determined by centralized authorities, and so on.

Your new model will differ in many ways from your old one. You may be thinking very differently about who the learners are, how they are grouped, where and when learning takes place, who facilitates the learning, the content covered and the dynamic of the learning process. How you decide to design and carry out all of this – the "big picture" architecture or structure of your idea – is your model.

What is a pilot?

Your model should enact your vision. But how can you get there if either you aren't starting a new school from scratch, or you see the impracticality of "moving out" and renovating everything at once? Remodeling room by room is like piloting your model. You get to move towards a realization of your vision by isolating bits of your model that you can try for defined periods of time and/or with limited populations. A pilot allows a school to gradually build new capacities among administrators, faculty, students and parents. A pilot gives you valuable information about what you need to do more or less of in order to successfully move forward with your model.

Sometimes just one pilot will not give you enough information; you may find that multiple pilots give you the foundation you need to make the next big leap. And though it may take longer to remodel this way, as long as you hold onto the blueprints and refer to them frequently, the deliberative and reflective process it requires will serve you well as you continue with future innovations.

A pilot can be a smaller version of a model, making changes only to some of the levers, such as who the learners are, who the teachers are, when and where learning takes place. This can include launching something in a few grades instead of all grades, running a program as a six-week unit instead of for a full year. It also can mean making changes now to how children are learning, knowing that a planned parent or family learning component might not be put in place until later. The decision about what needs to be included in the pilot and what can wait is completely dependent on what you are trying to achieve for your school (or if you are trying to create something that doesn't look like "school" at all).

To yield the benefits you need, keep in mind:

A pilot should contain the spark of your vision and elements of the model so that participants can see how it is connected to your aspirations;

A pilot should be bold enough to signal to participants and other stakeholders that things are going to be different around here, and it should be bold enough to make them a bit uncomfortable as they try something new;

A pilot should be different enough to make you think creatively about how to find resources, but not so challenging that you cannot provide a quality experience.

Five Building Blocks of a Learning System

Usage

The team discusses the building blocks of a coherent learning system, focusing on the alignment among the building blocks and the congregation's vision and goals for learning.

Outcome

The team members identify the five building blocks of a learning system and value the need to ask questions in order to pay attention to all the elements of a full design.

Materials

Handouts (pages 66–67)

Grouping

Pairs or individuals then reconvening as a full team.

Time Required

20–30 minutes

Facilitation

1. Introduce the team to the graphic of a coherent learning system.

2. Each pair or individual reads about one of the building blocks.

3. Each pair or individual describes the type of questions that need to be asked about its building block. The team reflects on why these questions are important and how they enter into the process of designing a model and a pilot.

Five Building Blocks of a Learning System

As you think about the overall design of your new model for learning, you can organize your thinking around the five building blocks of a coherent learning system. Pay close attention to how they relate to each other and how they, individually and as a whole, align with your vision. You may want to refer back to this diagram regularly to help structure your thinking and discussions. Each component is described below.
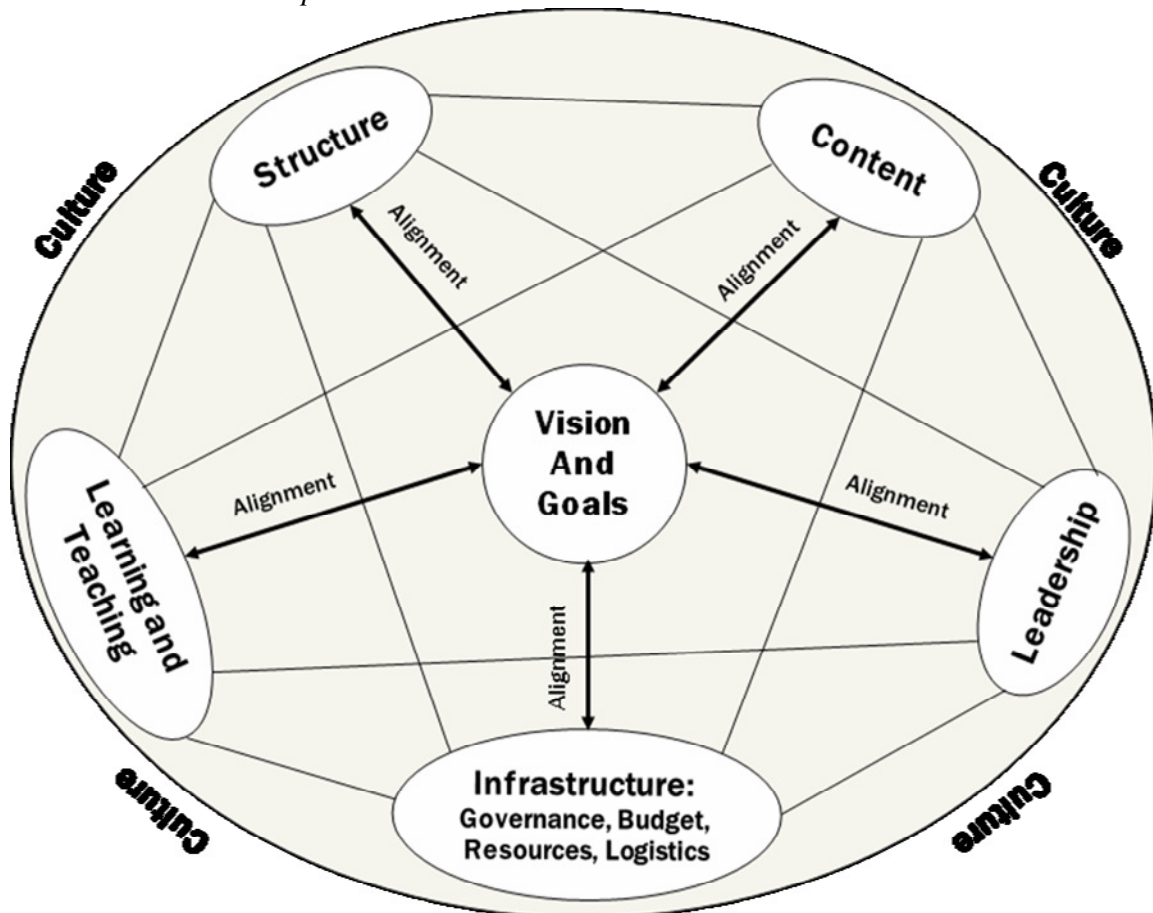
Within the context of your congregation's culture and the learners you seek to engage, each of the five building blocks—Structure, Content, Learning and Teaching, Leadership, and Infrastructure—has to align with your vision for learning. That means that the model(s) you develop need to bring to life the image of learners and their learning that is expressed by your vision. To do that you must pay attention to all the elements of a full design:

Structure: What will be the "outer architecture" that surrounds, contains, and facilitates the learning experiences? What will be the elements of learning and how will they fit together? Will learning take place in groups or individually? What sorts of learners will be grouped together (and for what purposes)? Will it occur regularly or sporadically? Will learning be ongoing or episodic? Where will learning take place? How often? How will learners get involved— voluntarily or by requirement? All of these structural factors define the architecture for learning.

Content: What will the learners learn? This includes both the subject matter and the nature of the outcomes toward which the learning will be directed. Will learning be focused on acquiring knowledge, building skills or competence, taking action or fostering participation, clarifying purpose and meaning, or forging a sense of belonging? What will be true of learners as a result of the experience that wasn't true without it?

Learning and Teaching: What will be the nature of the learning process that takes place? Will it emphasize instruction, experiential learning, or enculturation? Will it be text-based? What role will teachers, mentors, guides, or facilitators play in helping learners learn? What combinations of the philosophy, methods, strategies, and practices of learning and teaching will be applied? Who will teach/facilitate learning and how will they be recruited, selected, trained, supervised, supported, and rewarded?

Leadership: What kind of leaders and leadership—lay, professional, and clergy—will be required to advocate for, align, assess, and advance new educational model(s) that bring your vision to life? Can professionals or lay people do it alone or must they work collaboratively?

Infrastructure: What are the basic facilities and resources needed to allow all the rest of this occur? This includes physical space, funds, budgets, and logistical arrangements relative to other activities. It also includes the kind of formal governance structures needed to oversee and support a new model. Do existing governance bodies—considering their make-up and charters—lend themselves to making key decisions about new models or are new types of governing groups required?

Not only must each of these "building blocks" work in common purpose to enliven your vision for learning, but they also must integrate well with one another.

Leveraging Your Existing Resources

Usage

The team ask themselves a variety of questions to help them gain a greater awareness of their resources.

Outcome

The team will identify specific human, physical and monetary resources available for implementing their new model.

Materials

Handout (page 69)

Grouping

Full team

Time Required

20–30 minutes

Facilitation

1. After reading Leveraging Your Existing Resources, the team brainstorms resources they might use for the new model.

2. Ask for volunteers to reach out to staff, clergy, administrators, lay leaders and others who can either serve as resources or can obtain resources for your model.

Leveraging Your Existing Resources

▬ ▬

As you imagine your new model for learning, you are not starting with a blank slate. Far from it. As a congregation and school, you have existing programs, staff, relationships and a track record on which you can build your model. Not only does doing so save you time and money, but it also grounds your new model in the best of what you already have to offer.

As you think through your design, consider the following:

What do your school and congregation already do really well? Take some time and make a list of 3-5 core strengths. How might your design incorporate and build on these strengths?

What are your staff's strengths and how might they support and/or be part of your design? Think about both your professional and your support staff. This is more than plugging in your rabbi to teach one thing or another. Rather, for example, what are your rabbi's passions? What is the best use of your rabbi's influence and powers of persuasion? What kind of system would a secretary create to track attendance? Which aspects of your new model are best suited to your educator and which are better suited to others?

There are people in your congregation who have professional and avocational skills that will help you out, if only they are asked. Teachers and administrators are the most likely candidates, but also think about those with artistic or computer talent. What about someone who owns a restaurant or a sign shop? Mobilizing new people around a new project is likely to create a buzz and generate exciting energy around your new model.

Finding the money to do what you want is usually a challenge. If you are very lucky you may find one or several people who are so intrigued by your new model that they will provide seed money for it. Most congregations, however, start off by shifting around money already in the budget. Look beyond an adult education or family education budget line. How might an already budgeted and scheduled Shabbat dinner work into your model? What might the Sisterhood or Brotherhood be willing to contribute? Maybe there is a fundraiser coming up and some of the proceeds could be earmarked for this purpose? You may even decide there are aspects of your model that could be sponsored by local businesses with whom you've built up some good will.

Tap into the relationships you have already built in the community. A model that includes a social justice component may require working with others in your local community. Who has your congregation partnered with in the past that would welcome your call? Which organizations are your natural allies, either because of common views, official relationships or because you share leadership?

Text Study: Designing with Wisdom

After saying the blessing for study, discuss the questions and text below.

1. In Exodus, God selects Betzalel to be the master architect and artisan of the *mishkan*, the portable tabernacle that accompanied the Israelites during their years in the desert. (Fun fact: The Betzalel Academy of Arts and Design, Israel's national school of art, was founded in 1903.) What skills and qualities would you think Betzalel needed in order to do his job well?

Now read what the Torah tells us…

שְׁמוֹת פרק כה פסק א-ה

א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָֹה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר : ב רְאֵה קָרָאתִי בְשֵׁם בְּצַלְאֵל בֶּן־אוּרִי בֶן־חוּר לְמַטֵּה יְהוּדָה : ג וָאֲמַלֵּא אֹתוֹ רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים בְּחָכְמָה וּבִתְבוּנָה וּבְדַעַת וּבְכָל־מְלָאכָה : ד לַחְשֹׁב מַחֲשָׁבֹת לַעֲשׂוֹת בַּזָּהָב וּבַכֶּסֶף וּבַנְּחֹשֶׁת : ה וּבַחֲרֹשֶׁת אֶבֶן לְמַלֹּאת וּבַחֲרֹשֶׁת עֵץ לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּכָל־מְלָאכָה :

The Lord spoke to Moses: See, I have singled out by name Betzalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. I have endowed him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, understanding and in knowledge, and in every kind of craft; to make designs for work in gold, silver, and copper, to cut stones for setting and to carve wood – to work in every kind of craft.

Exodus 31:1-5

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2. Do God's reasons for choosing Betzalel match the skills you came up with? What do you think it means that Betzalel is endowed with the "spirit of God" and how do you think it would help him do his work?

3. The combination of wisdom (*chochmah*), understanding (*binah*) and knowledge (*da'at*) are known in our tradition to go hand in hand. The mystics consider them the three intellectual attributes of God and their acronym forms the word *Chabad*. What kinds of wisdom, understanding and knowledge do you think Betzalel might have had in order to be chosen by God for this job?

4. As you develop the design of your pilot for a new kind of learning, how is your work endowed by "the spirit of God?" What wisdom have you acquired that will guide your thinking and decision-making? What do you understand now, that you didn't when you started LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP, and that factor into your plans? What do you know – about yourself, your congregation and/or the possibilities – that will be important to you as you move ahead?

Please note that God's Hebrew name appears in this text study. As a sign of respect, instead of discarding it after use you may prefer to store it in a geniza—a place where printed materials containing God's name and old ritual objects are collected in preparation for ritual burial.

LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP: Materials and Activities

Phase 5: Designing a Pilot

In Phase 5 of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process, your team will propose plans for your pilot and larger-scale model. The team will review and evaluate the proposed pilot, identifying aspects of the pilot that need to be developed further as well as aspects that are critical to its success.

> **Designing a Pilot**

Outcome:

The team will decide on a pilot that will align with your vision, offer a "taste" of your model and engage learners and stakeholders in new ways.

Materials and Activities:

- Activity and Handout: Aligning Design to Vision, p. 74
  - Thinking Ahead about Implementation, p. 76
    - Choosing a Pilot, p. 78
    - Activity: Six Hats, p. 79
  - Text Study: Going to a Place of Torah, p. 81

Session #5: Designing a Pilot

Desired Outcome(s): *The team will decide on a pilot that will align with your vision, offer a "taste" of your model and engage learners and stakeholders in new ways.*

Time	Session Part	Activity or Discussion and Specifics of Process to be followed	Person Responsible	Items Needed
	Welcome			
	Connection			
	Text Study			
	Core Discussion(s)			
	Reflection			
	Next Steps	Respond to questions related to one of the five building blocks outlined on pages 66-67.		
Other Preparation:				

Activity: Aligning Design to Vision

Usage

Turning a vision into the pilot of a model takes several steps and it helps to have some practice before tackling your own. This exercise gives the Team practice with actual wording from other congregations' visions in an effort to hone the interpretation and application skills necessary for work on your own model.

Outcome

The team will propose which design element(s) align with a particular vision. Team members will value the importance of aligning design elements with a vision.

Materials

Handout for each participant (p. 75)

Pencils or pens

Time Required

15-20 minutes

Facilitation

1. Ask each participant to read through both columns on the handout: "Excerpts from Visions" and "Design Elements That Might be Part of a New Learning Model." Ask participants to identify which design elements they think align with which vision excerpts. Keep in mind that these excerpts are not all from one vision and these design elements would not likely all be part of one model. There may be some excerpts and/or some design elements that don't seem to match up. Some design elements may fit more than one excerpt.

2. After 5-7 minutes, discuss each of the excerpts and which design elements seem to match best.

3. Wrap-up with these questions:

   • What did you learn from this exercise about keeping the design of a model aligned with a vision?

   • How do you think working with your model will compare?

Activity Handout: Matching Vision to Design

Please read through each excerpt and each design element and indicate which you think match, or align.
Be prepared to explain your choices with the others.

	Excerpts from Visions		**Design Elements That Might be Part of a New Learning Model**
1	…strengthening the connections between synagogue, home and the diverse urban community around us.	1	Multi-generational Shabbat programming that includes prayer, learning and eating
2	…every congregant will have opportunities to learn Hebrew.	2	*Madrichim* (guides) who are trained to support individuals and families on their Jewish learning journeys
3	We bring spirituality into the lives of adults, youth and children…	3	Promotion of cross-cultural community-based learning opportunities
4	Our programs will be student centered, employing a variety of teaching styles and methods designed to engage our diverse learning community.	4	Offer on- and off-site Hebrew learning opportunities for both children and adults
5	… participants feel empowered to direct their own learning.	5	Develop lay oversight that sensitively tracks and follows-up with those who don't participate
6	We will continuously identify and address obstacles and barriers to learning…	6	Prayer and celebration experiences that incorporate multiple modalities, such as music, movement, nature, meditation.
7	Our teaching of Israel and Zionism will be connected more organically to intergenerational congregational trips and teen trips to the Jewish homeland.	7	Create a feedback loop that allows participants to regularly express what is/isn't working. Pay special attention to marketing strategies and issues, i.e. e-blasts, face-to-face recruitment, scheduling
		8	Learning opportunities targeted to different ages and people in various stages of life
		9	Learners will choose from a menu of learning opportunities

Activity: Thinking Ahead about Implementation; Choosing a Pilot

- -

Usage

Thinking Ahead about Implementation encourages the team to see their pilot as a piece of their new model for learning. It opens up the team's thinking to extend past the initial pilot into the future. Choosing a Pilot reminds the team to keep in mind the characteristics of a pilot as they decide upon their pilot.

Outcome

The team will propose plans for the pilot and the larger-scale model.

Materials

Handouts for each participant (pages 77–78)

Time Required

20 minutes

Facilitation

1. As a team, review and discuss the guidelines and questions discussed in Thinking Ahead about Implementation. Encourage discussion that highlights that the pilot is a first step of a very exciting shift in the congregation.

2. Present the various pilots your team is considering. As you present each model, have team members refer to the three characteristics of a pilot (A pilot should…) to assess if that model meets the description of a successful pilot.

3. As a team, decide on a pilot to move your congregation forward. You may then engage in the Six Hats activity (pages 79–80) to reflect and analyze the proposed pilot.

Thinking Ahead about Implementation

As you narrow down your choices and zero in on your choice of pilot, invite feedback from others about your ideas. This need not be as formal as how you engaged the congregation earlier. Rather, find ways to update the congregation on the direction you are going and listen for support and concerns. Keep in mind that, at this point, it's not a question of whether you will be creating new learning experiences for your students and families but, instead, how, when and for whom you will do so.

Think about your pilot as a piece of a larger picture – a new model for learning. As you plan for your pilot, keep in the back of your mind where you are headed. In particular, note the following stages you can anticipate:

Expect your initial pilot to run for 2-6 months. This will give those involved a chance to experience an aspect of changes you imagine and will give the planners valuable experience and feedback. You may find that, after one pilot, you will decide to pilot another aspect of your model. This incremental approach has its merits, as does getting your feet wet and then jumping right in.

Ultimately, you should imagine larger-scale roll out of your model will follow, involving more people in the planning and touching more learners—students and families.

Expect to decide whether advocacy and oversight of the model should rest with one or more existing groups (your team? A committee?) or whether a new group, comprised of people representing different perspectives and/or constituencies, should be formed.

Start thinking now about the budget and staff implications of your model. By planning and adjusting now you may be able to position yourself better for your future needs.

This is a particularly exciting time. You are on the brink of creating learning experiences that will touch people's lives in profound ways. As your work expands you will have opportunities to include even more people in planning and implementing your model. Your school and synagogue are about to experience the first steps of a paradigm shift.

Choosing a Pilot

Undoubtedly, your Team has come up with several possible pilots that could move your congregation towards fully enacting your new model of learning. The questions below are to guide your discussion as you compare the possibilities' key features and determine which one to choose.

Consider the following:

A pilot should contain the spark of your vision and elements of the model so that participants can see how it is connected to your aspirations;

A pilot should be bold enough to signal to participants and other stakeholders that things are going to be different around here, and it should be a stretch; bold enough to make them a bit uncomfortable as they try something new;

A pilot should be different enough to make you think creatively about how to find resources, but not so challenging that you cannot provide a quality experience.

A pilot often is a smaller version of a model, making changes only to some of the levers – who the learners are, who the teachers are, when and where learning takes place. This can include launching something in a few grades instead of all grades, running a program as a six week unit instead of for a full year. It also can mean making changes now to how children are learning, knowing that a planned parent or family learning component might not be put in place until later. The decision about what needs to be included in the pilot and what can wait is completely dependent on what you are trying to achieve for your school and congregation.

Activity: Six Hats

Usage

This exercise can be done by the team once you have a pilot you want to reflect on and analyze before moving forward. It is adapted from **Reflective Practice to Improve Schools** by Jennifer York-Barr, William Sommers, Gail S. Ghere and Joanne K. Montie.

Outcome

By reviewing and evaluating the proposed pilot, the team will identify aspects of the pilot that need to be developed further as well as aspects that are critical to its success.

Supplies

To dramatize the different roles that each person has in this activity, consider buying inexpensive plastic hats in six different colors or making simple hats from construction paper.

Preparation

The facilitator should ensure that participants in this process understand the pilot that will be analyzed. The central question being addressed is: Is this the right pilot for us? Select a recorder who will takes notes of ideas that are raised by the various "hats."

Time Required

45 minutes

Facilitation

1. Assign one color hat to six different participants or sub-groups of the larger group. If you have sub-groups, each sub-group should work independently and select one person to report their findings to the larger group at the end.

2. Each color hat will focus on looking at the model through the lens of their particular hat.

   • **White Hat = Data**. What do you know, if anything, about how a similar pilot has worked elsewhere? Who are the learners who will be most directly engaged? What are the costs involved?

   • **Yellow Hat = Sunshine.** What are the positive aspects of this pilot? Ultimately, what will be the benefits to those engaged and the congregation?

   • **Black Hat = Caution.** What are the downsides to this pilot? What, if anything, has happened in the congregation that would lead you to be cautious before proceeding?

Materials for Leadership Institute RE-IMAGINE iMAP are designed by the Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE), adapted and implemented in collaboration with The Leadership Institute and The Jewish Education Project, and sponsored by UJA-Federation of New York.

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- **Red Hat = Emotion.** How will people react to this pilot? Who will be upset, disgruntled or hurt? Who will be your greatest support?

- **Green Hat = Growth.** What will you learn as a result of implementing this pilot? How might your school change and grow as a result?

- **Blue Hat = Process.** What information will the participants, the board and the congregants need in order to understand this model? What should be done to make sure that the school community understands what is going to happen? Who could put this process together?

3. After each individual group has had time to reflect on the questions, each "hat" should report its findings to the entire group. After each "hat" reports, the facilitator leads a discussion focused on: Given this analysis, is this the right pilot for our congregation? Which aspects of the pilot need to be developed further? Which aspects are critical to its success?

4. The recorder should make notes of the findings for use when refining the pilot.

Text Study: Going to a Place of Torah

*After saying the blessing before study, read the text below and discuss
the questions that follow.*

> רַבִּי נְהוֹרַאי אוֹמֵר, הֱוֵי גוֹלֶה לִמְקוֹם תּוֹרָה וְאַל תֹּאמַר שֶׁהִיא תָבוֹא
> אַחֲרֶיךָ, שֶׁחֲבֵרֶיךָ יְקַיְּמוּהָ בְיָדֶךָ. וְאֶל בִּינָתְךָ אַל תִּשָּׁעֵן :
>
> Rabbi Nehorai said: Leave home and go to a place of Torah. Don't say that Torah will
> come to you or that your companions will make it yours. Don't depend on your own
> understanding.
>
> Pirke Avot 4:14

1. The medieval commentators interpreted these ancient maxims literally; that is, one should be
    willing to leave home to find Torah scholars to learn from. Have you ever left your
    community to further your learning, Jewish or otherwise? What led you to believe you
    needed to do that?

2. We could also understand these words metaphorically. What might "home" represent? What
    might "to go" symbolize? How might you define "a place of Torah"?

3. What examples are there in your congregation of people who seem to think that "Torah will
    come to [them]" or "[their] companions will make it [theirs]" or who rely on their "own
    understanding?" What do you think leads them to think this way?

In what ways do you hope your pilot will inspire people to "leave home and go to a place of
Torah?" What can you include in your design to help counteract any resistance or hesitance you
might encounter

LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP: Materials and Activities

Phase 6: Organizing for Implementation of the Pilot

In Phase 6 of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process, your team will develop a comprehensive action plan that takes into consideration the five building blocks of a learning system.

> **Organizing for Implementation of the Pilot**

Outcome:
The team will develop a comprehensive action plan that takes into consideration the five building blocks of a learning system.

Materials and Activities:
- Creating an Implementation Plan, p. 84
  - Action Planning Grid, p. 89
- Text Study: Building the Mishkan (The Tabernacle), p. 90

Session #6: Organizing for Implementation of the Pilot

- -

Desired Outcome(s): *The team will develop a comprehensive action plan that takes into consideration the five building blocks of a learning system.*

Time	Session Part	Activity or Discussion and Specifics of Process to be followed	Person Responsible	Items Needed
	Welcome			
	Connection			
	Text Study			
	Core Discussion(s)			
	Reflection			
	Next Steps	• Implement and monitor your pilot • Let your vision guide your decision-making • Evaluate your success by soliciting feedback from multiple perspectives and use what you learn to decide how best to continue to move toward your new model of learning.		
Other Preparation:				

Creating an Implementation Plan

Usage

Pairs of team members present information and input they have gathered in response to questions around the five building blocks of a learning system. The team discusses and uses this information to prepare an Action Planning Grid.

Outcome

The team designs and proposes an action plan for implementing their pilot.

Materials

Handouts for each participant (pages 85-89)

Time Required

90 minutes

Facilitation

1. Each pair gives a brief (five minutes or less) presentation of the information gathered around a specific building block.

2. As a team, complete the Action Planning Grid. As you complete the grid, have team members volunteer for the various tasks that will need to be done.

3. Review the plan, making sure that all team members are aware of their individual and collective next steps.

Creating an Implementation Plan

Your pilot has the greatest chance of success if it is thoughtfully planned. This requires identifying and working out all the details in advance as well as considering how best to kick off and sustain your innovations over time.

We suggest that you start by preparing a preliminary outline of the plan, preferably in writing. Use the chart on page 84 to help guide your thinking. Answering the questions will help give shape to your pilot. Be sure that your pilot moves you toward the realization of your vision in obvious and significant ways.

As you refine the design of your pilot, pay close attention to each of the five building blocks of a learning system. You will need to address all five in order to realize your new model for learning, although your pilot might only address some of them. It is important to keep in mind that, as you develop subsequent pilots, you will need to return to each of these building blocks in order to repeatedly check that your innovations are still aligned with your vision and that each of the blocks continues to support the others.

The building blocks are listed below, along with questions whose answers will take you to the next stage of planning.

Structure

- What scheduling challenges does your pilot present?

- What would be the ideal space? Where does that space exist and when is it available? How feasible is it for you to use that space?

- How might your available space be adapted to meet your needs? Who needs to be consulted and involved in making any changes?

Curriculum

- Will your pilot require development of a new curriculum or use existing curricular materials or approaches? If a new curriculum is needed, what are the alternative ways it could be developed?

- What information and resources can your mentor and educator provide? What resources are available through your local agencies or institutions such as The Jewish Education Project?

- What information from other congregations with models for learning similar to yours would be helpful to have?

- What additional resources (human, printed, online, community, Jewish textbook publishers) exist that could be of benefit to you?

- Who are the necessary and qualified people to involve in this aspect of your plan?

Leadership

- What kind of lay and professional leadership will be necessary to support your pilot?

- Define the roles of your staff in the implementation of this pilot, e.g. Rabbi(s), Educator, secretarial/administrative support, custodian(s).

- In what ways will the administrators have different roles and/or different responsibilities than they have currently?

- In what ways will lay people (leadership and parents) have different roles and/or different responsibilities than they have currently?

- In what ways (numbers, qualifications and availability) will administrators be different from those you already have?

- When parents have questions and need to talk to someone, to whom should they be directed?

- What kind of feedback will be most helpful? From whom will you need that feedback?

- How will you define and document success? What would you expect to see and hear if your innovation is "working"?

- What else would you want to learn about how your pilot is going?

- Who will take responsibility for evaluation?

- At what times during the life of your pilot will you formally evaluate it?

- To whom will evaluation findings be reported? Who will be responsible for responding to feedback and deciding on modifications to the pilot or the possibility of subsequent pilots?

Infrastructure (Governance, Budget, Resources, Logistics)

- Which individuals, boards and/or committees in your congregation and school need to officially approve your plan?

- What kinds of presentation(s) and/or documentation might be helpful when seeking this approval? What formal or informal groundwork will need to be laid in advance of any presentation(s)?

- What more do you need to do to make the case to your congregation for the changes you are instituting?

- In preparing a budget, which of the school's or congregation's current budget lines might be affected by your plans?

- Will the pilot be self-supporting or require additional funds?

  - Are there funds currently in the religious school budget that might be available to help?

  - How might donors within the congregation be approached to help support the pilot?

  - What will the registration fees be, if any, for those involved?

  - What external funding sources (seed money, grants) might be available to you through the The Jewish Education Project or local or national foundations?

- In what ways do you imagine your budget and/or funding sources will change over the next five years?

- If successful, how might any costs associated with this be dealt with differently (e.g. absorbed into the budget) over time?

- What concerns might congregants express that you can anticipate and plan for?

- What messages about your innovations do you think are most important to communicate to the congregation and which aspects of the innovations do you think will resonate most with potential participants?

- How might you involve parents and other congregants in your plans in order to engage and invest them in your success?

- What kinds of ongoing communication need to be maintained with parents and your congregation once your innovations are in place?

- What information will parents need (e.g. goals, methods, expectations, schedules)? How does this differ from what they already need to know about your children's learning?

- What is the best way to orient parents to your innovations?

- How will you announce your actual kick-off? What are the messages you will need to convey? Who should be involved?

- What kinds of information will you need to have on record about your participants? How is that different from what you already ask from students and families? What enrollment materials need to be developed or modified to obtain that information?

- To what extent can enrollment be handled in the same way as current enrollment? In what ways might it need to be different?

Teaching

- In what ways will the pilot require teachers to play different roles, exhibit different behaviors, and/or take on different responsibilities than they have currently?

- How will your teachers be introduced to, and prepared to use, your curriculum?

- In what ways (numbers, qualifications, and availability) will teachers need to be different from those you already have?

- Who is responsible for recruiting, interviewing, and hiring this staff?

- What unique teacher training will be necessary?

- Who will be responsible for designing and coordinating this teacher training

Action Planning Grid

Part of developing an implementation plan for your pilot requires thinking through how each of the component pieces will be developed and then coordinated to create an exciting, clearly-articulated and well-coordinated whole. Using the planning grid below can help you identify exactly what needs to happen, the chronology of your planning and which pieces can be developed in tandem with each other.

Complete this grid for each of the pieces of your plan:

WHAT needs to be done	WHEN is it needed	Who is RESPONSIBLE	What are the required RESOURCES	Who must give APPROVAL	How will it be COMMUNICATED
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

Text Study: Building the Mishkan (The Tabernacle)

*After saying the blessing before study, read the following texts
in small groups and discuss the questions that follow.*

שמות פרק לה פסוק ד-כא

זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה לֵאמֹר: קְחוּ מֵאִתְּכֶם
תְּרוּמָה לַיהוָה כֹּל נְדִיב לִבּוֹ יְבִיאֶהָ...וְכָל חֲכַם לֵב
בָּכֶם יָבֹאוּ וְיַעֲשׂוּ אֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה: אֶת
הַמִּשְׁכָּן...וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר נְשָׂאוֹ לִבּוֹ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר
נָדְבָה רוּחוֹ אֹתוֹ הֵבִיאוּ אֶת תְּרוּמַת יְהוָה לִמְלֶאכֶת
אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּלְכָל עֲבֹדָתוֹ וּלְבִגְדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ:

This is what the Lord has commanded: Take from among you gifts to the
Lord; everyone whose heart so moves him shall bring them… And let all
among you who are skilled come and make all that the Lord has
commanded: the Tabernacle… And everyone who excelled in ability and
everyone whose spirit moved him came, bringing to the Lord his offering
for the Tent of Meeting [the Tabernacle] and for all its service and for the
sacral vestments.

Exodus 35:4-11, 21

1. The building of the *Mishkan* (the Tabernacle) was a voluntary effort. Only those who were
   "moved" were expected to contribute and participate. What is the value of organizing a
   communal effort this way? What is the downside?

2. Those who worked on the *Mishkan* "excelled in ability." What do you think happened with
   those who volunteered to help, but were not particularly skilled? What is your experience
   with people who want to help with something, but don't have the experience or talent you
   need?

3. In what ways is this collective effort similar, and in what ways is it different, from how your
   synagogue and our Jewish communities operate today?

*Please note that God's Hebrew name appears in this text study. As a sign of respect, instead of discarding it after use you may prefer to store it
in a geniza—a place where printed materials containing God's name and old ritual objects are collected in preparation for ritual burial.*

Materials for Leadership Institute RE-IMAGINE iMAP are designed by the Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE), adapted and implemented in collaboration
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LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP: Materials and Activities

Phase 7: Implementing the Pilot

In Phase 7 of the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP process, your team will identify stakeholders and learners who will be involved in the pilot as it continues to grow. The team will describe how the leadership team, the budget, and the teaching staff may change as the pilot grows.

> **Implementing the Pilot**

Outcome:

The team will identify stakeholders and learners who will be involved in the pilot as it continues to grow. The team will describe how the leadership team, the budget, and the teaching staff may change as the pilot grows.

Materials and Activities:
- Pilot Roll-Out and Beyond, p. 93
- Governance Groups Models, p. 95
- Text Study: Crossing the Red Sea, p. 98

Session #7: Implementing the Pilot

Desired Outcome(s): *The team will identify stakeholders and learners who will be involved in the pilot as it continues to grow. The team will describe how the leadership team, the budget, and the teaching staff may change as the pilot grows.*

Time	Session Part	Activity or Discussion and Specifics of Process to be followed	Person Responsible	Items Needed
	Welcome			
	Connection			
	Text Study			
	Core Discussion(s)			
	Reflection			
	Next Steps			
Other Preparation:				

Pilot Roll-Out and Beyond

Usage

As a team, review this description of the next steps involved in implementing your pilot.

Outcome

The team will identify stakeholders and learners who will be involved in the pilot as it continues to grow. The team will describe how the leadership team, the budget, and the teaching staff may change as the pilot grows.

Materials

Handout for each participant (p 94)

Time Required

10 minutes

Facilitation

1. As a team, read and discuss Pilot Roll-Out and Beyond.

2. Ask team members to speculate how the leadership team, the learners, the stakeholders, the budget and the staff might change as the pilot grows.

3. Inform team members that the next activity will give them the opportunity to consider a variety of models for leadership teams who have the job of guarding and advancing the congregation's vision for learning.

Pilot Roll-Out and Beyond

By now you are well aware that your pilot is a piece of a larger picture – a new model for learning. How you fully implement this model will require more conversations and more planning – and perhaps more pilots. In particular, note the following stages you can anticipate:

Expect your initial pilot to run for 2-6 months. This will give those involved a chance to experience an aspect of the kinds of changes you imagine and will give the planners valuable experience and feedback. You may find that, after one pilot, you will decide to pilot another aspect of your model. This incremental approach has its merits, as does getting your feet wet and then jumping right in.

With each successive phase of your roll- out, you should find yourselves involving more people in the planning and touching more students and families. Think of this as ever-increasing circles of leadership and engagement.

Expect to decide whether advocacy and oversight of the model should rest with one or more existing groups (your team for the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP? A committee?) or whether a new group, comprised of people representing different perspectives and/or constituencies, should be formed. You'll find more discussion about this is in the tool called "Governance Group Models."
Start thinking now about the budget and staff implications of your model. By planning and adjusting now you may be able to position yourself better for your future needs.

This is a particularly exciting time. You are on the brink of creating learning experiences that will touch people's lives in profound ways. As your work expands you will have opportunities to include even more people in planning and implementing your model. Your school and synagogue are about to experience the first steps of a paradigm shift.

Governance Group Models

Usage

As a team, review this description of the next steps involved in implementing your pilot.

Outcome

The team will propose which kind of group will best meet their needs as they advance their vision for learning. The team will suggest who should be part of the group, how often they should meet, what their mandate should be, and what the relationship should be between this group and other groups in the congregation.

Materials

Handouts for each participant (pages 96-97)

Time Required

30–40 minutes

Facilitation

1. Explain that the team will now examine different models for teams whose job it is to guard and advance the congregation's vision for learning.

2. Ask individuals or pairs to read one of the models and to identify the Who, Why and How for that model.

3. Individuals or pairs describe their model to the team.

4. As a team, respond to the Questions for Discussion. Suggest next steps for creating the group that best fits your congregation.

Governance Group Models

Below are four descriptions of groups in congregations whose job it is to guard and advance their visions for learning. Read each, focusing on the Who, Why and How of each model.   Discuss the questions at the end and be prepared to share your ideas with the rest of the team.

Congregation Aleph

The original team remains, with some turnover in participants, and becomes the governance group. It meets regularly to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the pilot and progress towards realization of the vision. Through an appointed liaison it shares information with the education committee and synagogue board. Additional pilots and the leadership for each are spun off of this group.

Congregation Bet

A new oversight group is created which meets monthly. It assesses how the vision is being enacted and regularly commissions new groups to tackle new ideas. It is comprised of the chair(s) of education committee(s), education staff, the synagogue president and members-at-large who rotate off periodically.

Congregation Gimmel

A Learning Council meets quarterly. It consists of 1-2 representatives of the school's (and, possibly, congregation's) different educational projects plus members-at-large. In addition to guarding the vision, this group looks for ways to coordinate what is happening in different areas of congregational life with each other. In its meetings, it models the deliberative and decision-making processes that were used in the LI RE-IMAGINE iMAP sessions.

Congregation Dalet

The Religious School Committee, perhaps with a new name that better reflects the congregation's new vision for learning, assumes guardianship of the vision. (This particularly works well when there has been significant overlap between the committee and the team) This expands the role of the Religious School Committee and embeds the work of educational innovation in the existing leadership structure of the congregation.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Which kind of group would best meet your needs and work in your congregation? Is there an existing group or committee that is the logical choice? How would you adapt one of the models above to work for your congregation?

2. Who should be part of this group?

3. How often should they meet?

4. What should be their mandate?

5. What should be the formal relationship between this group, the Education Board (if one exists), the Religious School Committee and the Board of Trustees?

Text Study: Crossing the Red Sea

After saying the blessing before study, please read this text and discuss the questions below.

שמות פרק יד פסוק י-טז

וּפַרְעֹה הִקְרִיב וַיִּשְׂאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת עֵינֵיהֶם
וְהִנֵּה מִצְרַיִם נֹסֵעַ אַחֲרֵיהֶם וַיִּירְאוּ מְאֹד וַיִּצְעֲקוּ
בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל יְהוָה׃ וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל מֹשֶׁה הֲמִבְּלִי אֵין
קְבָרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם לְקַחְתָּנוּ לָמוּת בַּמִּדְבָּר מַה זֹּאת
עָשִׂיתָ לָּנוּ לְהוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרָיִם׃ הֲלֹא זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר
דִּבַּרְנוּ אֵלֶיךָ בְמִצְרַיִם לֵאמֹר חֲדַל מִמֶּנּוּ וְנַעַבְדָה
אֶת מִצְרָיִם כִּי טוֹב לָנוּ עֲבֹד אֶת מִצְרַיִם מִמֻּתֵנוּ
בַּמִּדְבָּר׃ וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל הָעָם אַל תִּירָאוּ הִתְיַצְּבוּ
וּרְאוּ אֶת יְשׁוּעַת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה לָכֶם הַיּוֹם כִּי
אֲשֶׁר רְאִיתֶם אֶת מִצְרַיִם הַיּוֹם לֹא תֹסִפוּ לִרְאֹתָם
עוֹד עַד עוֹלָם׃ יְהוָה יִלָּחֵם לָכֶם וְאַתֶּם תַּחֲרִישׁוּן׃
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה מַה תִּצְעַק אֵלָי דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִסָּעוּ׃ וְאַתָּה הָרֵם אֶת מַטְּךָ וּנְטֵה אֶת יָדְךָ
עַל הַיָּם וּבְקָעֵהוּ וְיָבֹאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם
בַּיַּבָּשָׁה׃

As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites caught sight of the Egyptians advancing upon them. Greatly frightened, the Israelites cried out to the Lord…But Moses said to the people, "Have no fear! Stand by, and witness the deliverance which the Lord will work for you today…" Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to Me? Tell the Israelites to go forward! Lift up your rod and hold out your arm over the sea and split it, so that the Israelites may march into the sea on dry ground." **Exodus 14:10-16**

תלמוד בבלי מסכת סוטה דף לז עמוד א

אלא זה אומר אין אני יורד תחילה לים וזה
אומר אין אני יורד תחילה לים, קפץ נחשון
בן עמינדב וירד לים תחילה

Mechilta De Rabbi Ishmael, Parashat B'shalach

> ## לְפִיכָךְ זָכָה יְהוּדָה לְמַלְכוּת
>
> …one said: "I will not be the first to go down into the sea." The other said: "I will not be the first to go down into the sea." Whilst they were debating with each other Nachshon ben Aminadav (of the tribe of Judah) plunged with his tribe after him into the waves of the sea.
>
> **Talmud Sotah 37a**
>
> For this reason Judah was granted dominion in Israel…
>
> ***Mechilta De Rabbi Ishmael, Parashat B'shalach***

1. What did the Israelites need to know and believe in order to consider crossing the Red Sea?

2. Who might be apprehensive about what you are planning and the decisions you are making? What messages and information do you need to share with them in order to facilitate their ability to move ahead? Who are the people who will be excited? How can you take advantage of their enthusiasm?

3. As your team "takes the plunge," to whom might you be tempted to defer, as Moses did to God, when you meet resistance?

4. What parallels can you see between Nachshon taking the first steps into the sea and the work in which your team is currently engaged? As Judah was given prominence in Israel, what might be the ultimate rewards of your efforts?

Background

Sotah – A tractate of the *Talmud* that deals primarily with how a suspected adulteress should be treated. It also explains how the various tribes were chosen for their roles in Israel.

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Appendix

Blessing Before Study *

- -

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ
לַעֲסוֹק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה.

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech haolam
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la'asok b'divrei Torah

Praised are You Adonai, Ruler of the universe,
Who sanctifies us with mitzvot and commands us
to engage in the study of Torah.

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