



Thriving Communities'
Favorite Tips for New(ish)
Presidents - 5784 edition

#1: You Are Not Alone

Parashat Yitro, Exodus 18:

14. But when Moses' father-in-law saw how much he had to do for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing to the people? Why do you act alone, while all the people stand about you from morning until evening?"...

17. But Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing you are doing is not right;

18. you will surely wear yourself out, and these people as well. For the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone.

וַיֵּרָא חֲתָן מֹשֶׁה אֶת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־הוּא עֹשֶׂה לְעַם וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה־הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹשֶׂה לְעַם מִדּוּעַ אַתָּה יּוֹשֵׁב לְבַדְּךָ וְכָל־הָעָם
נֹצֵב עֲלֶיךָ מִן־בֹּקֶר עַד־עֶרֶב:
וַיֹּאמֶר חֲתָן מֹשֶׁה אֵלָיו לֹא־טוֹב הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹשֶׂה:
נָבֵל תִּבְלַגְּמִי אֶתָּה גַם־הָעָם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר עִמָּךְ כִּי־כִבַּד מִמֶּךָ הַדְּבָר לֹא־תוּכַל עֲשֹׂהוּ לְבַדְּךָ:

Delegate. Delegate. Delegate. - Susan Levine, Former President Dor Hadash

#2: Your Thriving Communities liaison would love to be your *chaver*

Pirkei Avot 1:6

“Acquire for yourself a *chaver* - a friend”

וּקְנֵה לְךָ חֵבֵר

Tresa Grauer, Ph.D. – Vice President for Thriving Communities

Rabbi Maurice Harris – Associate Director for Thriving Communities & Israel Affairs Specialist

Rabbi Micah Weiss – Associate Director for Thriving Communities & Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Nina Korican – Assistant Director for Thriving Communities

*Don't know who your Liaison is?

Ask Jacob in the chat!



Other members of the Thriving Communities Team

Rabbi Sandra Lawson – Director of Racial Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



Rabbi Elliot Skiddell - Interim Director of Rabbinic Placement

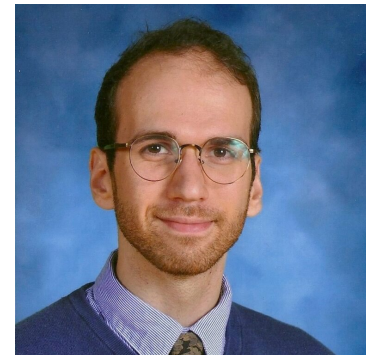


Rabbi Lily Solochek – Director of the Education Initiative of the Wenger-Markowitz Family

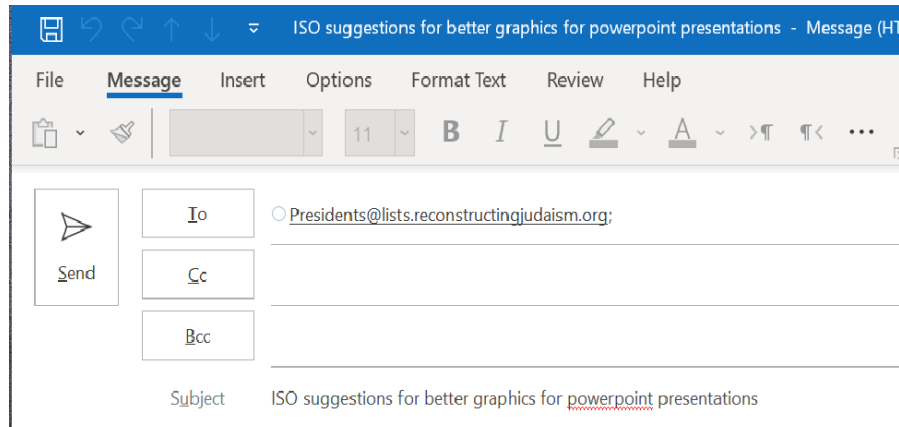
Jackie Land – Senior Consultant for Education



Jacob Weinberg – Thriving Communities Associate



#3 The Presidents Listserv is Your Friend



Rabbi Micah Geurin Weiss | Assistant Director for Thriving Communities and *Tikkun Olam* Specialist

Pronouns: he/him/his

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#4 - Schedule a standing meeting with your rabbi, or leadership team

Pirkei Avot 1:6

Make for yourself [a relationship with] a teacher

עֲשֵׂה לְךָ רֵב



#5 - Use your committees

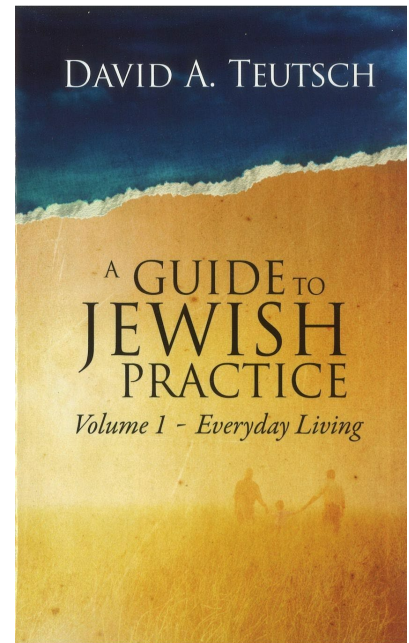
“Decisions should be made at the lowest level at which there is sufficient competency and trust and diversity and commitment.”

-Rabbi David Teutsch (and Tresa Grauer)



#6 - Study up on Jewish Speech Ethics

“Gossip involves statements that are damaging. When those damaging statements are true, they are usually known as *l’shon hara*, bad speech. Such gossip need not be done with ill intent in order to be damaging. The original speaker cannot know its effect on the hearer or on anyone else who hears it later. A person who listens to *l’shon hara* without a morally significant reason to do so is a partner in an immoral act. After all, gossip requires both a speaker and a listener. The preferable response is asking the speaker to stop or simply walking away.” -pg. 123

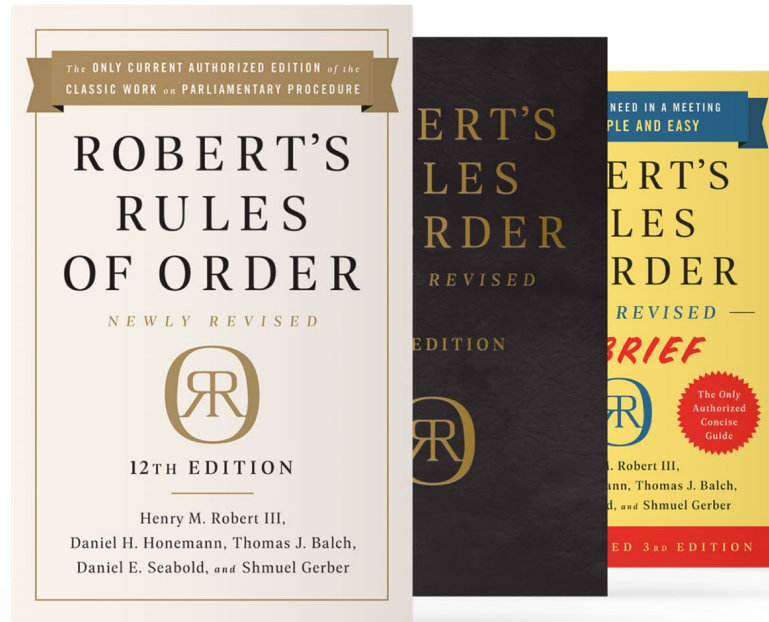


#7 - Set an intentional culture of your board meetings

- You can start with Torah!
We've published four volumes of text studies for board meetings.
- Establish Community Norms & Expectations
- Do meetings start on time? Is there shmoozing before and after?



#8 - Learn the Torah of running meetings (*tachlis*)

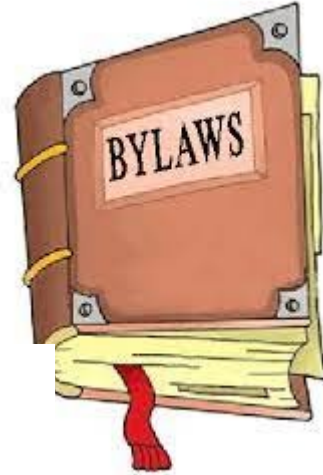


#9 - Study and Teach the Torah of Your Community

-Reconstructionist Bylaws and policies are the texts of the community, and essential to decision making.

-Mission Statement

-Community Values



#10 - Learn from Past Presidents

“The Past Has a Vote, Not a Veto”

- Reconstructionist maxim from Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan.



#11 Hybrid and Meetings on Zoom

Be flexible with meeting on Zoom, in person or hybrid.

Consider inclusivity and building relationships and engagement.