

Assessing Success: A Consultation on Developing Strategic Indicators of Impact for Continuing Rabbinic Education

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The Jewish Federations of North America, New York
25 Broadway, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10004



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Demonstrating Impact Beyond Rabbis



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Preparation for Today's Convening

- Review of Program Information
- Interviews with Key Informants
- Glimpse into Practices in Analog Fields



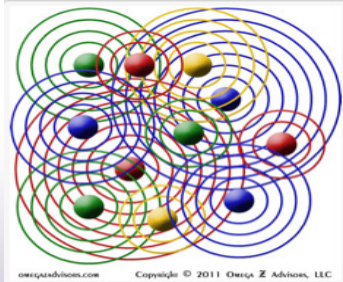
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What We Learned From You



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Different Organizational Models



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Diverse Goals and Visions

- Rabbi as authority figure in community
- Rabbi as organizational manager
- Rabbi as lighter of souls



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What is the Primary Purpose of Continuing Rabbinic Education?

- Technical Knowledge
- Spiritual Development/Recharge
- Clergy Renewal



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“We found the rabbis that came (to our programs) were so depleted, so burned out, so drained by the experience of being a rabbi, that the emphasis sort of shifted to “you need to self-care”, there wasn’t even expressed expectation (of what they would do in their home communities) ...”



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A Prominent Focus

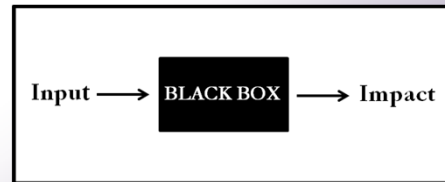


“My primary responsibility is to the rabbis.”



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The Black Box: Theory of Impact



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“My (job) is helping rabbis. How exactly that translates into a particular seat, in a particular pen, in a particular synagogue is the motivating factor but it’s not my focus... I am committed to supporting the rabbis with confidence that with a stronger rabbinate there will a stronger community.”



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“The assumption was that as the rabbis cultivated their own inner lives there would be a natural, organic, inevitable connection to their communities. That transfer from individual (rabbi) to community in the majority of cases is not happening.”

“I’m having trouble with this, I don’t know how to measure if recharging makes them better clergy.”



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"My question is: Are we making an impact?"

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Why Measure? What to Measure? How to Measure?



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Challenges for Assessing Impact

"I want to believe that the folks that our rabbis serve are enriched as the result of the rabbis getting high quality education, but I don't have much usable data."

"(I wonder) whether the thing that matters to them (layperson) most is the thing that continuing rabbinic education touches upon?"

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Challenges for Assessing Impact

"Very few people have an ongoing steady relationship with a rabbi. (There is) no point of reference of change with the rabbi if you barely interact."

"One of the things I've noticed over my years as primarily involved in Jewish education. ...Often what ends up getting measured is what can easily be measured and not what the actual impact is."

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Continuing Rabbinic Education: A Case of What?

- Doctors
- Lawyers
- Teachers
- Social Workers
- Nurses
- Clergy in Other Denominations



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Are Rabbis Like Doctors?

- *“No one would go to a physician that didn’t maintain certification, but there is no rabbinic expectation of professional development.”*
- *“I don’t know whether patients of doctors can express what it means for their doctor to be engaged in continuing growth. If you asked them, they want their doctor to be learning best-practices, but can they notice ?*



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Analog Field: Health Care

Assessing Impact Includes....

- Self-report of knowledge gained
- Self-report of change in clinical practice
- Patient outcomes as measured by time spent in hospital, amount of pain reported by patient, etc



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Analog Field: Social Work

- Level 1: Acquisition - Theory + Skills
- Level 2: Practice in Program
- Level 3: Practice in Situ (in Practice)



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“Case Study” – Worked Example

RABBIS WITHOUT BORDERS

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