

# The “Business” of Youth Professionals

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Rabbi Adir Posy - Orthodox Union & Beth Jacob  
Congregation  
[Posya@ou.org](mailto:Posya@ou.org)

# DISCLAIMER

- This presentation is not going to deal with the passion that you bring to your jobs- that passion is not only laudable - it is necessary.
- No one is in his job as a default, but you are really on the front lines of educating the next Generation. This is not meant to be a chizuk - it's just the reality. But there are certain unique things about this position, certain challenges that are common enough to be near universal and what I want to present is a Mahalach - a path to navigate those challenges.
- This is also not meant to demean anyone lay or professional who engages in this avodas Hakodesh. It is purely meant to be a utilitarian presentation to address issues directly.

**You are a professional - but with none of the support professionals have in other fields.**

- No HR policy
- No uniform compensation practice
  - No clarity of boundaries and expectations
- No adherence to hours worked - you are 24/7.
- Often no job descriptions and not necessarily metrics of success.
- Minimal legal protections - Hosanna Tabor
  - All volunteer Bosses.
- While exciting programming is great,            boring employees is even greater.

So What Do we do?

**You are your  
best and  
sometimes  
only advocate.**

Your main advantage:

You can present a vision as you may have thought about things more than they have.

- You are running a business, and have the ability to apply business best practices to set you up for success.
- Clarity about spouse involvement - they only have rights to the people on salary!

# Shul educational priorities

- Census: Understanding the landscape
  - Are there kids you want to be getting? (Is the Youth Department a recruitment tool)
  - What are the educational needs these kids have?
    - Is this babysitting or education?
- Goal setting, expectations and benchmarks
  - Be proactive in laying these things out!

# Big Picture Issues you can help the Shul resolve.

## **Needs & Tools**

- Potential internal and external resources to help achieve our goals
  - Local resources (i.e. schools)
  - Youth Committee
- Networking with other shuls/youth directors
- You!

# Advocating for yourself - 2 paths

Build on your written vision and list benchmarks.

Knowing your metrics is your key to success.

- Number of kids in the “building”
- Number of events
- Member families who join
- Some bosses rule by “Nachas Notes”

Enlist a formal Advocate

- Focus on those same priorities
- Can be more forceful if relationships with peers or friends are in play.

# ONLY AFTER THE PREVIOUS STEPS - SHOULD YOU POTENTIALLY RETHINK JOB DESCRIPTION

- Performance appraisal based on metrics and goals.
- Path for growth
- Alternative compensation possibilities
  - Housing Stipend
  - Parsonage
  - Clothing Allowance
- Clarity is your Friend
  - It isn't arrogant if you promote the "Department" and show clear growth in whatever the metrics are.