

PARNASAH: פארנסה

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Joint Commission on Rabbinic Placement

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This guide reflects the accumulated experience of many rabbis and congregations that have gone through the process of looking for a new rabbinic position. There are many job search manuals and books in the marketplace. There is much help available on the Internet. While these resources should certainly be consulted, there are aspects of the rabbinic search process that are special and unique, which we wish to highlight in this publication. Placement needs to be understood in a broader context than referrals [references?], eligibility and other technical requirements. Although this handbook will discuss specific placement procedures for individual rabbis in great detail, we also need to be aware of the dynamic and emotional issues for both the rabbi and the institution as the process unfolds. Your task is not only to find the right position for you, but to be aware of the underlying emotional issues that complicate the process.

I. TOUCHING BASE: YOU ARE NOT ALONE IN YOUR SEARCH

Over the years, you may or may not have had opportunity to touch base with the Rabbinical Assembly office's experienced personnel and take advantage of the many resources it offers. However, recognizing the tension, anxiety and opportunity this period generates, rabbis may be comforted by renewing and strengthening ties with the International Rabbinical Assembly as a whole and with the Joint Placement Commission more specifically. We welcome your contact and communication with us. The Placement Commission is here to help.

The Placement Commission looks after the placement process and is in direct touch with colleagues about their search for new rabbinic positions. Our international director of placement for over seventeen years, Rabbi Elliot Schoenberg, strongly desires a personal relationship with each rabbinic candidate. The quickest and most efficient way to reach the international director is by e-mail: eschoenberg@rabbinicalassembly.org. He welcomes your contact. Rabbi Julie Schonfeld joined the staff in August 2001 to work directly with graduating students and small congregations. She is also responsible for senior interview week, which takes place in February, and interim placement. Colleagues are encouraged to make appointments to visit or contact Rabbi Schonfeld by email: jschonfeld@rabbinicalassembly.org. Lori Brooks-Hislop, administrative assistant, can answer technical questions, especially about routine matters, computer usage and the status of your search. She can be reached at placement@rabbinicalassembly.org. The Rabbinical Assembly placement team can be reached by phone: 212-280-6000 or fax: 212-749-9166.

II. SELF KNOWLEDGE: WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP IN MY CAREER?

Beginning a rabbinic career, changing rabbinic positions, looking for a new career, or filling out a resume for the first time in years certainly raises normal anxiety. *But it also is an opportunity for self assessment, self-reflection, personal growth and individual learning.* Job-hunting is a rare opportunity to reflect on what we do as rabbis and how we are doing in our careers. Self-knowledge can be defined as awareness of our internal feelings, preferences, strengths and weaknesses. The Placement Commission believes the greater our self-knowledge, the more appropriate decisions we will make about the next step in our careers. Self-knowledge and self-awareness of who we are and what we enjoy doing will translate into stronger resumes, better interviews, the correct choice of position and, ultimately, more effective leadership. Why? Because the deeper and broader our self-knowledge, the better we will know how to leverage our strengths, compensate for our weakness and build more effective relationships with others. This internal search is counterintuitive because corporate culture values tell us to look outside of ourselves for answers. The Placement Commission has learned from years of experience that self-study and self-understanding are the keys that make it possible to select the right match for one's next rabbinic position.

What might we want to learn about ourselves?

Our first task of self-knowledge is to **discover our strengths**. Ideally, we will look for a position that utilizes our strengths. In their book, *Now, Discover Your Strengths*, Marcus Buckingham and Donald Clifton define a strength as "consistent, near-perfect performance in an activity...and you must also derive some intrinsic

satisfaction from the activity...What is the acid test of a strength? If you can fathom yourself doing it repeatedly, happily and successfully.”¹ Buckingham and Clifton tell us there are three clues to strengths. “First, there are yearnings. A strength is something you always wanted to do and that exerts a consistent pull on you. Second, a strength is something you learn rapidly. Third, when you use a strength it feels good and provides a sense of satisfaction. When performing a professional activity, if you keep asking yourself when will it be over, it is not working with a strength. However, if when performing the activity you keep asking yourself, when will I do it again, it is probably a strength.”

Our second task of self knowledge is **documenting our accomplishments**, those things we have done well and which give us a sense of satisfaction. Demonstrated past work is the very best indicator to a future employer of what they can expect from the candidate in the new position. One’s accomplishments are one’s success stories and they prove the capability of a candidate in a chosen field. Accomplishments, glimpses into proven performance, are a statement about what you have achieved. It is important, perhaps imperative, to comprehend the distinction between a job responsibility and an actual accomplishment. Job responsibilities are common to many of us; however, accomplishments are what make us stand out. Job responsibilities are generic; accomplishments are personal testimonies to our unique abilities. Rather than state, “I was responsible for all holiday services,” say, “I created our synagogue’s learners’ minyan and chaired the committee to establish the community-wide Holocaust memorial service.” Rather than say, “I was responsible for all office administration,” declare, “I streamlined the process of identifying the contributions of volunteers and initiated our school-wide volunteer appreciation dinner.” Rather than write, “I taught the bar/bat mitzvah students,” write “I developed an expertise in working with adolescents.”

Our third task of self knowledge is to **learn what our passions are**. Passions are what drive and motivate our work. Passions are found in our hearts and not in our heads. They are harder to see than either strengths or accomplishments. In some cases, they lie below the surface and we may not be conscious of them. Passions motivate our accomplishments. In the job search, it is important to identify them. “Passions, like values, are what you believe in.” You chose them from among alternatives and you are willing and able to proclaim them publicly. Some examples might be: “I am called to do social justice work,” “I believe in the philosophy of Conservative Judaism,” “I went into the rabbinate because...” Others might be : “egalitarianism,” “feminism,” “democracy,” “family.”

The Placement Commission suggests four possible paths to an increase in self knowledge. (See **Appendix C**)

- A. Your SYMBOL or METAPHOR: What is your rabbinic metaphor? A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another, thus making an explicit comparison. A metaphor can be a tool to see the world. Peter Senge, in *The Fifth Discipline*, calls them mental models – internal images of how the world works. Some examples might be: Rabbi as Park Ranger “My image of myself is as a rabbi who teaches within a specific environment and also enforces the rules.” Rabbi as Elephant “I think of myself as a presence that cannot be missed and, like the elephant, it is important to me to nurture the young in the congregation. I want to be a good professional and a good mother.” What is the metaphor you use to characterize your rabbinic work?
- B. SELF ASSESSMENT: Who are you? What is your personality type? You need some objective tools or resources to go even deeper into your self-understanding. The Placement Commission most often uses the Myers Briggs Type Inventory. The MBTI is an instrument designed to explore basic aspects of our

¹ *Now, Discover Your Strengths*, Marcus Buckingham and Donald O. Clifton, The Free Press, 2001, pp. 25, 26.

personality. It is a self-reporting instrument. It is well researched and validated. MBTI is the most widely used psychological instrument in the world. Using this self assessment we can learn what motivates us and what energizes us. We learn that what we assumed to be our weaknesses are healthy and normal so we experience a sense of relief. There is a free instrument at: <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp> and also a free modified instrument in the book, *Please Understand Me*, by David Kersey. My MBTI TYPE is _____

- C. SELF REFLECTION: In the midst of the intense and emotional work of the rabbinate, how do we get a perspective on how and what we are doing? How do we “hit the pause button?” If we can self-reflect, we can ask ourselves what do we need to do so that, rather than responding in an automatic way, we can consider what options are available to us. Ron Heifetz and Marty Linsky, writing in *Leadership on the Line*, say, “Any military officer knows the importance of maintaining capacity for reflection in the ‘fog of war,’ as Walt Whitman described it, ‘being both in and out of the game.’ We call this skill ‘getting off the dance floor and going to the balcony.’” The balcony is a metaphor for a safe time and safe place to assess yourself from a distance in a mindful way. After you have spent time on the balcony, and you are rested, you can go back down to the dance floor. Where is your balcony? When do you go there?
- D. AUTHENTIC FEEDBACK: For most of us, even if we are self-aware and seek self-understanding, there probably are areas about which we can not access information by ourselves. We call this the blind area. The **blind area** is what you know about me what you keep from me, what you observe about me, or think or feel about me, of which I am unaware. Sometimes, the only way to penetrate this area is with feedback from someone whom we trust and who trusts us. People often give out a signal that they do not want feedback; it can be scary or hurtful. On the other hand, there is some information about ourselves we can not access unless someone shares that information with us. We need to cultivate others who will give us honest feedback. We need to know when we can absorb the comments. We should only ask for it when we are ready. When we receive it, our job is to listen and ask questions of clarification. It is not the time to defend or explain our actions or behaviors. When we receive feedback, make sure to thank the person so they know we appreciate the risk they took to be vulnerable with us.

This may be very difficult:

1. Identify at least three people from whom you can solicit authentic feedback about your leadership. They may be subordinates, those with more authority than you, peers, or others. If possible, try to identify people who can offer different perspectives on your leadership.
2. Jot down notes about your feedback strategy – e.g., good situations in which to invite their feedback, timing, lead questions, areas of your leadership you hope to learn more about from this person, and so on.

III. ORGANIZATION AND SELF-ORGANIZATION: STARTING THE PLACEMENT PROCESS

The Placement Commission monitors the placement process for members of the RA and senior students of the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies. Its major obligations are to monitor the rabbinic search and election process and to administer the Movement Placement Code. The Commission brings order and dignity to the process by establishing and maintaining a set of regulations and parameters both for rabbis seeking a congregation and for congregations in search of a rabbi (see **Appendix A**). These policies and regulations, carefully conceived, are continuously evaluated. The Joint Placement Commission of the RA, working together with the representatives of the USCJ and those of JTS and the Ziegler School, make decisions about rabbinic employment. For example, it is this body that determines whether a congregation is eligible to

speak to a new rabbi. The Commission meets six times a year. Rabbis and congregations can always direct any questions, comments or problems to the Placement Commission for a thoughtful response. If a particular action is requested, such as a waiver, the request must be made in writing to the Commission. Every member of the RA needs to be aware of the Placement Code in its entirety. A few rules should be highlighted:²

1. A rabbi may search for a congregation only through the offices of the Joint Placement Commission. Eligible candidates are those whose resumes are on the file in the RA office and are members in good standing.
2. An RA colleague may utilize only the placement service of the Rabbinical Assembly.
3. The Placement Commission forwards a resume to a congregation initially. A rabbi is not permitted to forward a resume to congregation without the knowledge of the Joint Placement Commission.
4. The Placement Commission may deny placement to any rabbi because of an ethical or halakhic violation or a violation of the placement code, as determined by the appropriate Rabbinical Assembly body.
5. Violators of placement rules are subject to disciplinary action by the Placement Commission or the international Rabbinical Assembly, which may include denial of placement or other appropriate consequences.

However, the RA Executive Council of the International Rabbinical Assembly is the final decision-making body with regard to rabbinic pulpit placement in the Conservative movement. Certain changes in the structure of placement may only be made by the Rabbinical Assembly at its convention. The best way to reach the international association is through the director's e-mail, eschoenberg@rabbinicalassembly.org.

A. HOW THE RABBI BEGINS:

If you are engaged in placement and need to utilize the new system, go to the member's section of the website and click "Rabbinic Placement" midway down the right-hand side of the members' index page, or go directly to http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/placement/rabbi/rabbi_login.php. You will be taken to a login screen where you will be prompted to acknowledge the placement code and create a new username and password. You may use the same information as for your regular username and password or choose something completely different, but this new username and password is only necessary for those currently engaged in placement.

STEP ONE: Please complete the Rules Acknowledgement Form. The asterisk (*) indicates required fields. You enter your own login name and password. Please record them because you will need them later to access your account.

You may download several resources: 1) The Model Engagement Agreement is the mutually accepted standard contract advocated by both the USCJ and the RA since 1991; 2) *Parnasah* is a manual with detailed instructions on how to do an effective job search; 3) Message from the Joint Placement Commission (JPC) announces any time sensitive information; 4) the Full Registration Form you will need to fill out.

STEP TWO: When you are ready, click on "Submit to acknowledge you agree to the Placement Code."

STEP THREE: The JPC will check that all matters of termination between the rabbi and their prior place of employment have been completed. The rabbi must be a member in good standing of the RA. Dues must be current and a dues declaration for the current year have been filed. The rabbi must be eligible to conclude

² Similar rules apply to congregations.

his/her contract with his/her current congregation or other place of employment. The Joint Commission will review your registration form and your membership status. The Placement Office will notify you that you have been approved for placement.

STEP FOUR: Fill out the Full Registration Form and save it to your computer or flash drive. (It may be found on the RA website in the placement section or you can log in to your own e-placement account and go to the “Registration” tab. Please note: this is a different form from the “Acknowledgement of the Placement Code.”)

STEP FIVE: Log back into your e-placement account using your login and password. You will be linked to the page titled “Rabbi Information.” Click on the section that says ‘placement documents.’ Use the browse tab to upload your registration form from your own computer or whatever storage device you used. Use the browse tab again and upload your resume from your own computer.

STEP SIX: The placement office will notify you that your placement file is now open. MAZAL TOV! You are now officially in the system. Using your login and password you may update your resume or change your contact information at anytime.

B. FORWARDING A RESUME

The Placement Commission formally publishes a monthly placement list in writing which appears in the placement section of the RA website, www.rabbinicalassembly.org. Check the web site regularly for additions to the monthly listing. All questionnaires are available on the RA website as well.

The Placement Commission is the only agent in the Conservative/Masorti movement that is permitted to forward a student or a rabbi’s resume to a congregation. All contact between students, rabbis and congregations must be initiated by and through the Placement Commission. All resumes will be forwarded by e-mail to the address designated in the congregation’s signature form. When you have been accepted for e-placement you will be able to self-refer. There is no prescreening of resumes by the international director or the Commission except to confirm that the member is in good standing.

How to Forward Your Resume:

- 1) On the page labeled “Rabbi Login,” enter your e-placement username and password, and hit the login button. You will be linked to the page titled “Rabbi Information.” This is YOUR page. On the left hand side of the page, select the arrow to “Search for Congregations.”
- 2) You will now be on the page titled “Search for Congregations.” Here you may enter the name of the specific congregation(s) [one at a time please] and the congregation’s position will appear. You can then click the tab labeled “Positions.”
- 3) Click on the position for which you want to be referred. (Optional: Further down on this same page, labeled “Congregation Information,” you will see a text box in which you may address the congregation with any specific details, comments or concerns that you may have.) You may then click the “Send Resume” button. Your resume will be emailed to that congregation.
- 4) You will receive an email message from the website that will thank you for your recent self referral to congregation “X” and it will mention the position to which you have applied. The congregation has been instructed to confirm receipt of your resume directly via email (please be sure that your resume contains a current, working email address). Once you receive that confirmation from the congregation, you are then free to be in direct contact with the chairperson(s).

C. GRADUATING SENIORS

The Placement Commission directs the placement process for all senior rabbinical students of the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies. In the final year, with the permission of the dean, graduating students will be informed of all openings electronically and begin receiving placement materials.

1. HOW DOES THE STUDENT BEGIN?

STEP ONE: Each graduating student will be given a login name and password by the RA placement office which you can then use to enter the membership section of the RA website. This same login name and password will be used to access your eplacement account. Please record them because you will need them later to access your account.

STEP TWO: Please complete the Rules Acknowledgement Form. The asterisk (*) indicates required fields. You enter login name and password forwarded to you by the placement office. You may download several resources: 1) The Model Engagement Agreement is the mutually accepted standard contract advocated by both the USCJ and the RA since 1991; 2) *Parnasah* is a manual with detailed instructions on how to do an effective job search; 3) the Membership Application to the RA; 4) Message from the Joint Placement Commission (JPC) announces any time sensitive information; 5) the Full Registration Form you will need to fill out.

STEP THREE: When you are ready, click on “Submit to acknowledge you agree to the Placement Code.”

STEP FOUR: Fill out the Full Registration Form and save it to your computer or flash drive. (It may be found on the RA website in the placement section or you can log in to your own eplacement account and go to the registration tab. Please note: this is a different form from the acknowledgement of the Placement Code.) Fill out the Membership application. Write your resume. These three documents are due by January 1.

STEP FIVE: Log back into your e-placement account using your login and password. You will be linked to the page titled “Rabbi Information.” Click on the section that says “Placement Documents.” Use the browse tab to upload the following: your registration form, membership application and your resume.

STEP SIX: The students should have spent time meeting and discussing placement and career choices with Rabbi Schonfeld. Rabbi Schoenberg and Rabbi Meyers seek a personal relationship with each graduating students as well.

STEP SEVEN: The student must have completed all requirements for graduation and the dean of the school must sign off that all academic courses and requirements have been satisfied and the student is eligible for placement. A note from the dean must be on file in the international office of the RA.

STEP EIGHT: The placement office will notify you that your placement file is now open. MAZAL TOV! You are now officially in the system. Using your login and password you may update your resume or change your contact information at anytime.

D. INTERVIEW WEEK

The key way the Commission seeks to help the soon to be ordained students from all movement seminaries is to centralize the search process into a one week “Interview Week” in a single location. In our experience most congregations seriously seeking a student to become their next rabbi make it a point to come to Interview Week. In recent years, congregations of fewer than 250 families (those in the “A” category) and

senior rabbis seeking assistants come to New York to interview seniors. This program has been expanded to include invitations to JCC's, schools, camps, chaplaincies, and Hillels. Interviews are held at the New York office of the Rabbinical Assembly.

In early February, the Commission will inform all students which institutions have signed up for interviews. Information about which institutions are coming and how to make reservations will be found on the placement section of the membership section of the RA website. To request an interview date, the students will also use the RA website. Using your login name and password, students will be able to access and download all congregational questionnaires. Information on how to schedule your interviews will be on the placement section of the web site. Rabbi Julie Schonfeld directs this process for the students. She may be reached at jschonfeld@rabbinicalassembly.org or 212-280-6067.

E. PLACEMENT FOR NON-PULPIT POSITIONS

Although some think the RA primarily focuses on congregations, the RA has long worked with non-pulpit colleagues. The RA centennial volume, *A Century of Commitment*, relates that the first full-time employee of the RA was a placement director working to place rabbis as chaplains in the military. More than 25 percent of the RA membership now serves as non-pulpit rabbis. Several presidents of the RA in recent years have served as non-pulpit rabbis. We have been involved with non-pulpit placement for more than a generation. In recent years, we have strengthened our focus on serving the employment needs of our non-pulpit rabbis. Non-pulpit rabbis can benefit as much as our pulpit colleagues from personal time spent conferring with the RA leadership team. Just because non-pulpit positions are not handled directly by the RA does not mean a rabbi cannot contact the office for advice or perspective. The placement staff welcomes these conversations. The monthly placement bulletin lists not only synagogues seeking a rabbi, but community and non-pulpit positions as well. We list all positions we are aware of in the non-pulpit sector.

Here are some tips on how a rabbi pursues a non-pulpit position effectively and efficiently:

1. Join the professional association in the field of your interest. It gives you direct access to job listings in that field. It can also be a source of networking leads and serve as a support group during an anxious period.
2. Name recognition is important. How does a pulpit rabbi move into the non-pulpit world? Network, network, network. Meet people and let them know you are interested in a particular kind of work. The rabbi can also publish and speak on a particular subject of interest. For example, publishing an article on some aspect of pastoral care is a good way to open a door to the chaplaincy. Seek out opportunities to be a public presence in communal and conference settings.
3. Learn to play the rabbi card well. Most of the positions you are applying to are also open to non-rabbis. How do rabbis best present themselves? Because you are a rabbi and have an intense and extensive Jewish education, advocate how this will add an important Judaic perspective to the position. Your background will also enable you to teach. Even though it may not be part of the job description, people will gravitate to you for counseling. Demonstrate how this training will add value to the position. Think about what your ordination can offer the institution. The Placement Office can help you best present this unique aspect of your qualifications.
4. Think about entering the field one level under your experience or competence. For example, even though you have five years experience, you might choose to take an entry-level position. Your prospective boss might hold a negative stereotype; ask for an opportunity to prove yourself. The rabbi does not need to be the primary leader; he/she can come in as second in command. Once in the door, your innate skills and talents will sell themselves for future promotion.

Our community and non-pulpit rabbis have clarified their rabbinic employment needs in the non-

pulpit setting. For example, non-pulpit rabbis may utilize parsonage allowance, enroll their pension funds in the Joint Retirement Board, and attend RA conventions. The RA created an official document entitled, “A Letter to Non-Pulpit Employers” to advocate for these professional benefits for non-pulpit colleagues. It is found as **APPENDIX E**. We can also email additional copies to you directly. Colleagues have told us it is helpful to have a document that details these talking points in order to initiate a negotiation with their employer.

IV. RESUME WRITING

What is a resume? Most certainly, it is not the definitive declaration of everything you have done for the last fifteen years. It is also not just a list of places, jobs and organizations. *Rather the resume is a brief, compelling description of you as a leader in the workplace, presented in the very best possible light.* The purpose of the resume is not to get a candidate a position; rather the main purpose of the resume is to get you an interview. This means it must arouse enough interest in the reader so he/she will want to meet you personally. The resume is the rabbi’s marketing brochure, an excellent organizational tool to prepare you for interviews, and a personal invitation to a group of people to meet you.

What should the resume look like? There are no hard and fast rules. One can purchase a book that illustrates different formats. There are, however, accepted ways of presenting resume material that rabbis should bear in mind. A rabbi’s resume should never be more than two pages long. The first page should detail work experience and the second page education, organizational memberships and publications. Like any good marketing brochure, a resume cannot tell the whole story. Electronic resumes should be simple – without whistles, bells, fancy lettering, graphics or elaborate formatting. There are two accepted formats in the business world: reverse chronological and functional. The former is far more common in the Jewish organizational world. A functional resume which highlights many job skills and activities but not job history is rarely, if ever, used because it is taken as a signal that the rabbi has held too many positions.

Congregations and organizations read rabbinic resumes very carefully. They care about appearance, spelling and neatness. To make the resume pleasing to the reader’s eye, avoid dense paragraphs of text. Use bullets, generous spacing and clear typefaces. The appearance of the resume is as much a statement about you as its content. Pay attention to the way it looks on the page; it is good to have some white space between the printed words to help organize and highlight the important components. Bold, underlining and italics can be useful, when used properly, to draw the reader’s eye to key words or phrases (job title, name of organization, location, etc. In particular, pay attention to typos. Proofread your resume carefully. Then have some of your friends or family check it for typos and misspelled words. Your resume should use a font no smaller than 12 pt. Resumes need not necessarily include full sentences. As a result, deleting superfluous prepositions can help save space and make for a quicker read.

Include the date and size of congregations you served. Include more information about your most recent rabbinic position and your latest accomplishments. Several congregations told us, “Simpler is better.” Above all, be honest. For example, if you are working toward a degree, say, “enrolled in a PhD program.”

While a resume must document work experience, highlight the most attractive aspects. Emphasize actual accomplishments rather than a list of job responsibilities. Use the “cross over the desk strategy.” The reader of the resume is asking, “What can you do for my synagogue?” The Cross Over involves an attitude adjustment: instead of thinking about what you want, you think about what the employer wants to know. Cross Over the desk and put yourself in their shoes. Try to understand their way of thinking. As you begin to plan your resume, imagine you are the employer: what about you would be exciting or alluring to a congregation looking at your record?

What are the elements of a resume?

- 1) The Heading: at the top of the page, include your name, address, telephone, and email address (at work and at home). Make it easy for search committees to find you. Let prospective employers know the best way to contact you, especially if you are in between positions or residences.
- 2) Below the heading goes the Career Summary. One or two sentences highlight your depth of experience and fields of expertise.
- 3) The next section contains Professional Experience and should fill the remainder of the first page. This is the heart of your resume. Provide the name and location of the institution, your title and accomplishments. Dates should be in yearly increments, avoid showing gaps in your work record if possible.
- 4) The second page starts with the same heading about how to find you. Beneath the heading follows your education. Include degrees, majors, completion dates. Courses, training and awards *related to your objective* like professional certificates, licenses, scholarships and honors should also be included.
- 5) The remainder of the page includes activities related to your targeted job goal. Some categories might be: military experience, languages, special skills, organizational memberships and books and articles published. Even if you have done a million and one things, only include those activities that connect with what a possible rabbinic employer might want to know.

A. CAREER SUMMARY

Start with a summary, because it is your first chance to show the reader your ability to make a valuable contribution. Make a good first impression. Resume readers want a summary and not a written job position or career objective. The summary includes: your functional areas of expertise, breadth of experience, career advancement and particular strengths.

For example, instead of:

Objective: to obtain a challenging pulpit position commensurate with the education and pulpit experience I have acquired.

It is better to write:

Summary: Eighteen years of leadership positions in three pulpit positions of increasing size and scope. Strong experience in pastoral counseling and innovating liturgical change. Particular strength in resolving conflict.

Summary: Ten years experience as a rabbi, five as a rabbi in Israel and five as a rabbi in Europe.

B. PARS FORMULA

Your resume should not merely list the jobs you've held; it should provide SPECIFIC examples of how you achieved success. One resume-writing professional who chaired a successful search recommended using the PARS formula: Describe a Problem, the Action you took, the Results you achieved and Skills you applied.

Use factual illustrations to demonstrate your ability to solve problems. Use strong verbs.

"Attendance at our Friday night service was on the decline. Took initiative to reorganize our Friday Night Service by introducing instrumental music to *Kabbalat Shabbat*. Service attendance tripled. Applied my leadership and conflict resolution skills."

"Analyzed the membership decline in our congregation. Developed plan cooperatively with membership committee and the city council to grow the congregation by 25% over a 5-year period. Applied my organizational skills."

C. CONTRIBUTIONS

There is a difference between a job description and a resume; the former lists duties, but the latter goes beyond that list to spell out unique contributions made by the candidate.

It is not sufficient or interesting to write: "Carried out all pulpit rabbinic functions."

Better to write: "Dynamic and inspiring pulpit presence. Sermons are marked by scholarship, humor and spiritual relevance."

"Praised in the local press for my expertise of working with the children in our after-school *huggim*."

"Community-wide reputation for being a sensitive and empathic listener."

D. SKILLS

List your skills every chance you get; leadership, team-building, communication, conflict resolution, public speaking, teaching, counseling, etc.

"Constantly working with our volunteers to be a team."

"Soccer Coach 2000-2005. Motivating, inspiring and teaching local teenagers to play as a team."

"Demonstrated my conflict resolution skills when introducing the Imahot to the Amidah with grace and understanding."

E. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

What was accomplished because you were there? Make sure to both begin and conclude your resume with a significant accomplishment. How do you know if it is an accomplishment? Are there quantifiable achievements that you can list (#s of people affected, range of grades taught, dollars raised through development efforts)? In your head, answer the question below and insert it into the resume: "Talk about a specific project where you analyze the situation, then talk about how you completed the project."

"Identified that there was a growing population of young parents in our community not yet affiliated."

Worked with the school committee to create a program to pull in this group to the synagogue. Our Tot Shabbat program was recognized by the Masorti Foundation with their "Excellence in Outreach Award."

Did you identify and resolve important issues?

"Identified that our young parents with small children were intimidated by the adult service. Created a safe religious haven for the parents and the children that we call Tot Shabbat. Although it has a regular volunteer leader, I make my presence felt at least once a month."

Did you install, invent, create a new program or process?

"Created Tot Shabbat service for 4-year-olds and their parents."

"Working together with our worship committee to invigorate our early Friday Night service with the addition of new tunes and more learning."

How did you resolve a particular crisis or overcome a particular challenge?

"When the lay leader of our Tot Shabbat program resigned because of health issues, I recruited and trained a new leader within a short period of time."

Did you demonstrate your willingness to be a team player?

"Worked with our volunteer board to create a lay-led monthly Mommy and Me program."

Have you served as a coordinator, liaison, representative or committee member that made a difference?

"Demonstrated leadership and conflict resolution skills when working with the local *מרתן* (community center) board to create a joint Passover model *seder*."

Have you demonstrated a willingness to assume extra responsibilities at work?

“Led the Tot Shabbat service when the leader resigned because of illness.”

Have you accomplished anything that was considered difficult or impossible?

“Demonstrated leadership and conflict resolution skills when working with the Matnas (community center) staff to create a center religious policy that was agreeable to the Masorti community.”

“Working together with our volunteers, reinvigorated our early afternoon bar/bat mitzvah training”

Have you ever been told by a colleague, congregational officer, or member you made an important difference?

“Worked with the local Tali school to create a religious policy that was agreeable to the entire community.

Members of the school staff told me my presence made it possible to come up with a workable solution.”

“Created Tot Shabbat service for 4-year-olds and their parents. Vice President of Education for the synagogue publicly thanked me at the recent board meeting, “for meeting the needs of our youngest members.”

F. ACTION VERBS

The resume is about accomplishments. Here is where the action verbs come in. Tell the search committee what you achieved, analyzed, built, created, developed, doubled, established, expanded, implemented, invented, launched, organized, produced, reorganized, solved, strengthened, translated, unified, unraveled or wrote. Also, be careful of overuse of any one verb. Try and use different verbs that describe similar actions.

“Wrote Creative Service for Second Day of Rosh Hashanah”

“Expanded outreach to the Russians in the neighborhood by offering bi-monthly ‘Coffee with the rabbi’ in local Café Hillel”

“Launched new adult education series every year.”

“Suggested new bar/bat mitzvah standards to the synagogue board. Board implemented my suggestions for raising the education bar.”

G. BE EVEN MORE FOCUSED when discussing community activities, education, awards, hobbies, and memberships. This information should always focus on why you are qualified to do your next rabbinic job. This is one more opportunity to display a skill or contribution.

Instead of saying: “President of Teaneck Clergy Council 2002-2005.”

Better to write: “Served as chair of the Teaneck Clergy Council 2002-2005, the local religious advisory counsel to the mayor. Learned how to build community with diverse and competing constituencies.”

Instead of saying: “Member of the Rabbinical Assembly since 1979.”

Better to write: “Used my organization abilities to coordinate local study programs for the RA colleagues.”

H. LIST AWARDS

Describe how competitive the award is.

“Received the Bergen County New Jersey Young Leadership Award. Given every year to two leaders in the community under 35 years of age.”

After reading your resume, the search committee should be able to ascertain your passions, your priorities and your religious values as a rabbi.

I. COVER LETTER

Your cover letter, combined with your resume, is your first written contact with a potential employer. *In the rabbinic world of pulpit job searching, a cover letter is not expected.* However, there may be times when it can be helpful: First, if necessary, use a cover letter to emphasize the confidentiality of your job application. Second, if you have done your homework well, use a cover letter to mention a compelling accomplishment or attribute that demonstrates your compatibility with this particular synagogue or institution. (For example, to tell them

your grandparents were founding members of the congregation.) Cover letters must be individually tailored to each prospective employer. But again, in most circumstances a cover letter is not expected for a pulpit assignment. If you are seeking a non-synagogue position, do write a cover letter to indicate what value and advantage there will be to engaging a rabbi for the position.

J. REFERENCES

References need not be on the resume itself, rather, you should create a separate page of about 4-5 references to be taken to the interview. Make sure you ask permission of the people you want to use and choose carefully to allow for those who can reflect on different aspects of your work and personality. Recruit the best people. Speak to them about your strengths as they apply to the particular job opportunities and decide with them what you want them to say on your behalf. Give them a copy of your resume. You probably want people who can refer to your most recent work accomplishments and your future potential. Employers want to talk with people who have actual knowledge of your work.

Hand out the names of your references to the Chairman of the Search Committee at the conclusion of an interview. On a single sheet of paper, include all your references' names, addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers and email addresses and how they know you. On the same sheet of paper, include your name and contact information. Contact your references after the interview to alert them to the possibility of a call from the interviewer. Make sure the references have the information they need to make relevant remarks about your experience and your job search. Go over with them again precisely what you want emphasized. Ask them to let you know when they are called and what they said. Stay in touch with your references and let them know how you are doing.

One rabbi told us the following story. The president of the synagogue where he was currently serving as assistant rabbi was called by prospective employers and was asked if he would engage this promising young man as a senior rabbi. He replied, "He is an excellent young man but our prestigious pulpit would only engage someone with more years of experience." This reference loved this young rabbi but unfortunately did not understand what he needed to do in order to be helpful to the candidate. It is the role of the candidate to educate her/his references on what needs to be said.

V. INTERVIEWING

Interviewing is not a demanding intellectual exercise, nor, unfortunately, is it easy or anxiety-free. There is much we can do to enjoy the interview experience while being certain to make a good impression. Ideally, a good interview is like a free-flowing conversation in which neither party dominates and both parties ask for and receive information. Most initial business interviews last for less than an hour, while initial rabbinic interviews are at least two and sometimes three hours long and ultimately include a site visit.

Here is a six-part structure for a "perfect" interview for a rabbi.

A. PREPARATION

The first and by far the most important portion of the process is preparation. Some rabbis "wing it" and show up for the interview unprepared, leaving search committees disappointed.

Be sure to bring: pencil, paper, your resume, a copy of the congregational or organizational questionnaire, other supporting documents, copies of articles and sermons and finally, your list of references.

Think about the people with whom you will be meeting and what you want to know about them. It is appropriate to do research about the institution. A congregation or institution formally listed with the Rabbinical Assembly will have a questionnaire on file with the Placement Commission and can be found in the placement section of the RA website. A questionnaire is an organization's resume. Call the previous

rabbi or rabbis. Ask around the movement about the congregation.

These questionnaires have been carefully crafted after much consultation with veteran rabbis and search committee chairs. The questionnaire is an initial document meant to create interest, not detail every possible truth about the community. In other words, a thoughtfully-completed questionnaire will make you want to interview with the community. Follow-up inquiries and oral questions to the organization's representatives are important to confirm information given in the questionnaire.

One important caution about the questionnaire is in order. Sometimes congregations describe what they think the community ought to be, not what it currently is. A rabbi is always wise to check for additional information with colleagues in the area. **It is the rabbi's obligation to confirm information put forth in questionnaires.**

Before the interview, ask the institution to send you other public documents such as the synagogue bulletin, a membership brochure, a booklet commemorating the 25th anniversary of the congregation, an outline of adult education offerings sent out to students last semester. In addition, ask for information about the general community. Do not neglect the Internet. Google the area, the region, local institutions. *It is particularly worthwhile to check the individual website of the synagogue or organization.* From these materials, prepare a list of questions you have about the institution. Be ready to state what you like about the congregation and why you think you would be a good fit. How do your skills and talents fit their needs? How can your skills be transferred from your current position to the anticipated one?

Next, think through what you want to say about yourself. You should expect the first question of almost any interview to be "tell us a little about yourself." Your answer should be a short, carefully thought out response. You are preparing a presentation of yourself to people who do not know you. Now is the time to think about: Who am I? What do I like? What am I good at? Prepare a five sentence answer.

Third, make some informational phone calls to selected individuals. Call the individual who held the post previously. Rabbis sometimes ask if this is appropriate. It certainly is, but put the incumbent's view into an overall perspective. Call someone in the community, such as the JCC director. Talk to colleagues in the field or your teachers in rabbinical school who might know the community.

Finally, prepare for the interview by rehearsing in a role-play situation. The best way is to have several people ask you questions to recreate the panel interview situation you expect to encounter on the day of the interview. A good rehearsal is the basis for an easier interview later. This preparation is a lot of work, but will ensure you put your best foot forward at the interview.

B. PRESENTATION

You have done all this hard work to get ready, now it is time to present it. *The rabbinic position does not always go to the most qualified candidate, but to the one who makes the best presentation of her qualifications at the interview.* This is not the time to be shy or reserved; it is the time to prove that you can do the job well. First, you must bring confidence. Prepare yourself mentally and emotionally. A positive and upbeat attitude is critical. Much of your attitude and confidence is communicated non-verbally. Be aware that your body language says as much about you as your words do. Maintain eye contact with the person asking the question. Use your facial expression and posture to communicate enthusiasm. Masorti congregations and Jewish institutions are always on the lookout for passion, joy, enthusiasm and vitality.

You will present the highlights you have identified in **Appendix C** that make you the best fit for this particular position. Don't just respond to the questions being presented but think about your answer as an opportunity to emphasize what you want the committee to know about you. This is the art of interviewing. Examples of the type of questions that search committees frequently ask: "You just graduated, what makes

you think you have the experience to be our rabbi?” “How will you handle liturgical innovations in our setting?” Of course you want to respond to their questions, but the key is to communicate the essential information that you have already identified that will make **YOU** the outstanding candidate for the position, no matter what they are asking. Keep a note card (or a copy of **Appendix C**) with your list of highlights with you at all times and memorize it. Use every opportunity to make those points because they are the assets that will sell you. Think of each of the committee’s questions as a springboard to make your points. If they really think you missed the point they will ask the question again and you can answer it directly.

A candidate should prepare a *dvar Torah* to use during the interview. Usually the rabbi uses the *dvar Torah* as a way to begin, but sometimes a word of Torah is a good way to summarize and bring closure to a meeting. The rabbi’s teaching reminds everyone involved of the sacred relationship that is being sought in this search process. A well thought out Torah teaching sets a religious tone that distinguishes this interview from the many other business and professional settings with which people are familiar. By creating a “teaching moment,” the rabbi demonstrates that he/she is a religious leader in all situations, even while being a job applicant.

C. PROBE

The third piece of the perfect interview is to probe. Feel free to ask strong questions. Questions show care, thought, interest and intelligence. When you do not ask questions, you create the impression that you are not interested in the position. You will want to ask some standard prepared questions that you will use with every interview situation. “What are you looking for in a rabbi?” “What do you think ought to be the priorities of the person who takes this position?” “What is the most important thing a candidate needs to know about this position?” Your research on an individual institution will also reveal specific target questions. For example: “I see that this is the first time your congregation is looking for a rabbi. What factors led you to make this decision at this time?” “This is a half-time position, how and who will determine my priorities?” Specific, targeted questions will show the search committee that you care enough about the position to have done your homework.

D. PROGNOSIS

The fourth piece of the perfect interview is prognosis. This is an internal dynamic that is not found in any job manual. Prognosis is situation-specific. Somewhere in the middle of the interview, after listening, dialoguing and intuiting, rabbi and search committee click. A light bulb goes off in the candidate’s head. All of sudden, she understands exactly what the congregation or organization is looking for and that she is the right fit for this specific position. The candidate is now able to respond in such a way that the institutional leadership feels that the candidate understands them.

A rabbi told us the following story. The congregational questionnaire talked about the need for growth and new membership. “Potential” was a big word in the questionnaire. “New” was the most frequently-used adjective in the congregational documents. Before he visited, the rabbi prepared several examples of how he successfully introduced new programs in his current congregation. In the interview, the candidate learned that the congregation had recently completed a successful major building project, but people were tired of being asked for money. The former rabbi had been an outstanding pastor but little programming had been going on for twenty years. As the interview unfolded, the rabbi understood that the congregation was not ready to make the changes it hoped for.

This wise candidate presented a gradual plan for change and growth. He talked about what would remain the same in the community and that his first priority would be healing, loving and developing bonds with the people in the community. Then the rabbi said that a second stage would follow at a point when all the constituents felt the time was right for the next chapter in the life of the congregation and at

that point, he would lead the change. There was an immediate connection to the emotional needs of the congregation and the candidate felt an emphatic response from the search committee. Because the rabbi understood that the congregation needed stability before change would be possible, he really connected with the interviewers.

E. PARTING

The interview is coming to a close. The hour is late. This moment can be critical to the candidate. Look at your note card for the highlights that you want to emphasize. Did you miss any? Do any need to be restated or reinforced? You might want to summarize your highlights in a way that demonstrates your fit for this institution. Possibly in the course of the interview there was a question that was unkind or difficult and you responded not at your best. Now is a time to return and restate your answer that asserts your best answer – it puts you in the best light. When the chair of the committee turns to you and says, “Do you have final thoughts or closing comments?” the answer is, “Yes.” Did you cover your points? This is the opportunity to state or restate them. It is one more opportunity for you to express your enthusiasm for the position, the place, and the people. Thank the committee for their time and consideration. Give the committee chair the list of references that you prepared. The way that you leave creates a lasting impression. In ending, thank the interviewers individually. Shake hands and make eye contact. On the way out thank the secretary, receptionists, spouses, drivers, hosts, etc., because their recommendations often count and because it demonstrates that you are a mensch.

Your final question should be, “What is the next step in the process?” A source of great anxiety is not hearing from congregations and organizations in a timely way. This is normal anxiety and some of it will always be present. However, the rabbi should educate the institution as to his/ her needs in this regard and push the institution to face this issue as well. The congregation is seeing several candidates over a long period of time, but they also need to be aware that the rabbi is making decisions. Agreement about when the next communication will take place reduces anxiety for all parties and keeps the process moving forward.

F. POST-CLOSING

Once the interview is over and you are at home, take notes about the interview. What did you like? What didn't you like? How did it compare to some other places you have been recently? Do some self-reflection as well. What questions surprised you? Which answers would you like to rephrase? What memorable line did you spontaneously create that you want to add to your repertoire because it made you shine? What do you need to practice doing before you go out to interview again?

Write a thank-you note within two days of the interview. This note serves many purposes. In addition to acknowledging the time and effort invested by the institution, a thank-you note allows you to highlight your strengths and reframe any issues that you feel are important. This note is another opportunity to stress why your specific qualifications make you the right fit for this specific institution. If there was a point you missed in the interview, include that information in your thank-you letter. Let the committee members know that you are interested in the job. This note has often made a lasting impression on a committee. Months after an interview, a congregation returned to a rabbi for a second look because the primary candidate took another position. The thank-you note summarizing the fit kept this rabbi in the mind of the committee chair. A short thank-you is a wise employment investment. Do not forget any follow-up actions that need to be taken. For example, is there additional correspondence to be written? Did you talk to your references? Does the synagogue or school need any additional materials from you?

VI. COMPENSATION, NEGOTIATION AND SIGNING A CONTRACT

Rabbis consistently tell the Placement Commission that they find compensation negotiations to be the hardest part of the job search. On the other hand, laypeople tell us what formidable negotiators rabbis are. If you think about it, rabbis negotiate all the time. We persuade people to try to put on tefillin for the first time in 20 years or negotiate peace between a frustrated parent and an alienated child. Rabbis need to feel comfortable using their expertise in communication and persuasion to influence the process of their own financial negotiation.

When do you talk money? Timing is everything. Negotiate terms after you have received a firm job offer. You can expect to be asked about money at any time in the process, and usually during an interview. An interview is not the time to answer questions about compensation. If members of the search committee insist, “Rabbi, we need to know now,” keep in mind that this is just a tactic. Be patient. Respond with, “Let’s see if the chemistry is right, and then I am sure we can work out the financial details later.”

You will probably receive an offer over the phone. One should answer, “Yes, I accept, pending the outcome of our negotiations.” Let them know how excited you are about the new position. The negotiations should then take place in person, face to face, and rather soon. After the search committee has made an offer, you are in a position of great psychological strength because you know the search committee thinks very highly of you and wants you to join the congregation or organization. Despite how anxious you are to complete the process or how uncomfortable you are in talking about money, the fact that they have made an offer means the institution is the more vulnerable at this point.

Laypeople think rabbis are great negotiators not because you have extensive experience at financial dealing, but because the laypeople strongly sense their vulnerability. In their minds, you have already been engaged through a very public process. The people who offered you the position need to close this deal or they will be embarrassed. Even though many rabbis do not think so, when you receive an offer for a new position, you start the negotiation from a place of great strength. You will negotiate better and achieve stronger results when you enter the process with a positive attitude about the outcome. Allow yourself to be confident and enthusiastic about the results.

What do you need to start successful negotiations?

1. *You should negotiate the negotiation.* It is probably best to negotiate with a small group of two or three people. One person may take the discussions too personally and see it as a win-lose situation. A small group means that there are witnesses to what was said if there is confusion later. More than three is unnecessary and can be intimidating.
2. *Time parameters should be established.* When does the process begin and by when will it be concluded? These parameters should be agreed to in advance. **You do not want the negotiation to go on too long** in case it is not successful and you wish to consider other options. Concluding financial details within three or four weeks of an offer is reasonable.
3. *Establish where the discussions will be held and by what means.* If possible, go to their turf. They will be more comfortable.
4. *Clarify what is going to be negotiated.* This is probably a discussion about money, compensation and benefits. What are the housing arrangements? Role responsibilities should also be included. For example, are you responsible for reading the Torah every week or is there someone else? Leave precise contract language to a later time and to the legal professionals. The rabbi, and not just the laypeople, has a right to give input into all of these matters before the negotiations begin.
5. The most important thing, by far, is to *clarify the authority of those negotiating with the candidate.* You must ask the negotiators, “Do you have the authority to negotiate with me? Do you have the authority to close the deal?” If they do not, it is critical to send them back to the board for that authority. The trap

for the rabbi is work out a deal with the committee with compromises and concessions by both parties, only to hear the chair of the committee say, “Now, the board has to approve it. I do not know what they will do.” A week later the chair comes back with lower numbers set by the board. You can prevent this scenario with some initial questions.

6. *Finally, all interim agreements and partial understandings should periodically be put down in writing* so there are no misunderstandings later. After you and the negotiators have come to an agreement, they become your advocate.

Like a good interview or a good sermon, preparation is the key ingredient to successful compensation negotiation. Below are listed the five key types of preparation that you need to do before you begin a compensation negotiation:

A. PEOPLE PREPARATION

Before you look at the numbers, look at the people. Who are they? Why were they selected to do this? What do they need from this negotiation? Build relationships. See the negotiators as individuals. Ask them personal questions. Can you create a personal bond with them as individuals? By building relationships before the negotiations begin, you increase the chances that all parties will be able to see their way to a “win-win” negotiation.

B. ISSUE PREPARATION

What is the organization’s financial goal? What are their assumptions? What interests, desires, needs and hopes give rise to their negotiating positions? What is going on behind the numbers put forth on the table? Do they need to stay within budget? Are you the first full-time rabbi? You are asking questions and then listening, not for agreement, but for understanding.

C. PERSONAL PREPARATION

What do you, the candidate, need to have? Understand the difference between what you want and what you are willing to live with. What is your highest goal? You need to know the bottom line below which you will walk away from the job offer. You need to be able to answer two questions:

1. What is the minimum (salary and/or benefits) I am willing to accept?
2. What is the value of the position? (salary and/or benefits)

Write down your objective. By committing your goal to paper, you make the desired end point clear and explicit.

D. WRITE DOWN YOUR OBJECTIVE

By about negotiations to get “psyched up” for beginning this process. *Getting to Yes*, by Roger Fisher and William Ury is the classic text; it is a quick and easy read. Negotiations are always stressful and tense, but do not take them personally. Control your emotions. In *Getting to Yes*, Fisher and Ury stress that it is helpful to separate the people from the problem and the first person to separate is yourself. Control your words and actions so they work for you and not against you. There is a saying, “Everyone has butterflies. The key is to get them to fly in formation.”

E. FINANCIAL PREPARATION

First, start with the financial health of the institution. Negotiations always begin with the reality of what the congregation, school or department can pay. Look at a budget. A non-profit institution never says it is doing well financially. There is a big difference, however, between a school that makes up its deficit with an annual fundraiser and a school that just cut back its faculty by ten percent because they could not make payroll. Lyle Schaller points out that it is normal for a congregation to carry debt, similar to a homeowner’s mortgage. It is a normal way of doing business. Second, refer to the RA salary survey. It is statistically reliable and precise

because it is conducted by the School of Public Policy of American Jewish University, an agency independent of the Rabbinical Assembly. It is available on the RA website or by sending an email to sgunther@rabbinicalassembly.org.

What is the best strategy to use to get the most compensation? The best advice is not to put the first offer out on the table. The first offer immediately sets the upper or lower limit for the negotiation. You want to be in a position to react. When they say, "So, rabbi, what are you looking for?" defer to their expertise. Say something like, "You've been thinking and meeting about this much longer than I have..." or "You are much more of an expert about finances than I am..." In most situations, the best strategic advice is to let the school, campus or synagogue make the first offer.

Second, you need to sell. Show how your talent and experience will benefit them. *A strong case does not include listing your own needs, such as two children in college or your need to buy a new home. The employer's responsibility is to pay a competitive salary, not to meet your personal needs.* For example, you would make a strong case with the following information: you and the rabbi who just left the position have the same number of years of experience (so you expect to be paid in the same bracket); you are switching jobs (all employers know that this is a time when employees receive more compensation than in their prior position); your previous congregation was the same size. The salary survey will give a basis of comparison to other congregations the same size. Based on this type of information, you would have a strong case for expecting a significant increase over your last congregation.

How do you conclude the negotiation? Be gracious and generous at the end. If it is not okay, do not accept it. Renegotiate or decline the position, because you will only resent it later. If it is okay, it is okay. Let it go. When it is done, it is done. Write a letter summarizing the negotiations until a contract comes. Finally, remember that now you must live up to the generous salary you have successfully negotiated.

F. COMPENSATION

As of 2008, we can give you a rough guideline for minimal compensation levels by size of congregation.

Compensation includes the value of the benefits and housing:

"A" congregation (less than 250 units): compensation no less than \$100,000

"B" congregation (less than 500 units): compensation no less than \$135,000

"C" congregation (less than 750 units): compensation no less than \$185,000

"D" congregation (greater than 750 units): compensation no less than \$300,000

Assistantship: compensation no less than \$100,000

G. BENEFITS

1. One of the most important standard benefits is a pension contribution. We strongly suggest that congregation and rabbi make an effort to maximize contributions to the Joint Retirement Board, the movement's pension program. It is to the benefit of both rabbi and congregation that the rabbi's pension fund be maximized so that sufficient funds will be available to the rabbi at retirement.
2. A second important standard benefit is medical coverage for the rabbi and her family. At this time, there is no movement health plan available.
3. The third standard benefit is disability coverage, which statistically is more important than life insurance. Disability insurance protects the rabbi and the congregation as well.
4. Rabbis feel the need for companionship and for ways to continually grow as rabbis. The fourth standard benefit is coverage of the cost of attendance at the international RA convention. Attendance at the RA convention is also a benefit to the congregation because the annual convention opens up the rabbi to the world of broader Jewish learning and additional practical rabbinic knowledge. From these meetings you will bring back insights, program ideas and renewed enthusiasm.

5. Finally, the negotiation will include a conversation about days off and vacation. Rabbis begin their tenure with no less than one month of vacation.

These five benefits are in addition to salary and are considered to be usual and customary. Some other items are often open for discussion between the rabbi and the congregation: cell phone, private telephone line for the rabbi at home, car insurance, books, professional expenses, maternity leave, discretionary fund and professional expenses, Shabbat hospitality fund and life insurance. Most rabbinic contracts now include clauses for maternity or paternity leave and a future sabbatical. Social Security should not be considered a benefit but an administrative expense to the congregation.

H. HOUSING

This is a sensitive and complex issue. Over the last ten years, rabbis' views of housing have changed. Most rabbis expect to purchase their own home, while only a small minority still insists on living in a congregational manse. Our Salary Survey reveals that almost 70 percent of North American rabbis own their own home and the number continues to increase. Of course, if the rabbi lives in a synagogue house, normal maintenance like cleaning and painting should be done before the new rabbi arrives. Living in a congregational manse is often cited by our colleagues as one of the frustrating and disappointing parts of a relationship with their lay leadership, so the Placement Commission advises that standards of annual maintenance and periodic housing upgrades be established at the beginning of the rabbinic relationship. Even when there is a congregational parsonage, it may not fit the needs of the new rabbi. For example, the reliable parsonage, which served the prior rabbi and his small family very well, may not be comfortable for a rabbi with a large family. It is necessary to inform congregations early in the negotiation process that they may need to consider housing upgrades immediately to enable a rabbi to come.

As housing prices have risen, it has become common for congregations and other organizations to loan rabbis money above their compensation for a down payment or to give the rabbi some form of equity in the congregational parsonage. Sometimes congregations make low interest loans from endowment funds or interest-free loans that would be forgiven after a certain number of years. It is often advantageous for a congregation or school to enable the rabbi to purchase a house because it quickly builds strong loyalty to the institution. Sometimes after a rabbi has found the right match in a congregation and has been able to agree to financial terms, the agreement has broken down over housing arrangements. *The Commission finds that housing is the most common point where negotiations break down.* Congregations are aware that most rabbis wish to reside within walking distance of the synagogue. Housing is both a rational and an emotional issue and must meet the needs of the rabbi, spouse, children and the congregation. The key is for the rabbi to be aware of his own housing needs and clearly communicate them to the search committee.

I. CONTRACTS

The Rabbinical Assembly maintains that rabbis benefit from formal written understandings between the candidate and the organization. A formal document is an excellent tool to make sure that all the issues have been "put on the table" and discussed. Contracts are usually written, signed and then filed away. Generally speaking, contracts are only consulted in a worst-case scenario. The Rabbinical Assembly insists that when a rabbi signs a document, he is accountable for what is contained in it. If you do not understand something or do not accept some part of it, do not sign it until there has been a change or a clarification. Once signed, a contract is binding on both parties. Most often the employer will draft the contract, it is critical that the rabbi's own legal representative review the document, no matter how amiable the negotiation was.

The USCJ and the RA have negotiated and agreed upon a Model Rabbi Engagement Agreement. (Rabbis Joel Meyers, Vernon Kurtz and Elliot Schoenberg advocated strongly and robustly on behalf of pulpit rabbis.) Although this new model contract represents some compromises, we believe that overall it

will serve our membership well. It is not a “standard binding upon the parties,” but a document “endorsed and supported by both the USCJ and the RA” which provides an agreed-upon outline of provisions to be considered by the rabbi and the congregation. It is a good checklist to make sure you at least discuss all key areas of employment and compensation. It will also serve our non-pulpit colleagues well as a good starting point for a conversation. We expect it to be used whenever a rabbi comes to a new synagogue. As a sample clause, both the RA and the USCJ agree that the new congregation will pay for the actual cost of moving the rabbi and his or her family, plus the packing of breakables. This document is available on the RA website or from the placement office. When a synagogue begins the process of looking for a rabbi, the contract is forwarded to them along with the blank questionnaire.

A committee of the RA worked to identify overarching employment issues for our non-pulpit colleagues. After identifying needs and concerns, the RA drafted a model advocacy letter (see **Appendix E**). The letter advocates for attendance at the RA convention, enrollment in the Conservative movement pension fund, the right to parsonage, and the use of in-house conflict resolution mechanisms. The RA is prepared to send this letter on your behalf wherever or whenever you feel it will be helpful, or you may simply use the attached draft.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch with the RA office if you need information or perspective on pulpit or non-pulpit employment documents. The senior team of the RA often counsel and consult with colleagues before they sign contracts. *We again remind you that you should consult your own legal and accounting professional before signing any contracts.*

VII. TRANSITION (עַת רִצּוֹן) – A FAVORABLE TIME

You have been elected to your new rabbinic post. The contract has been signed. It is likely that you are an outsider who does not know most of the names of key people and are not familiar with many of the local customs. There is both welcome and tension in the air. The workplace literature calls this phase transition. Business literature teaches this in-between time can have a great impact on long-term success. The Placement Commission has learned from experience that transition can have an even greater impact in the synagogue setting. Just as our forebears used the *מה טבו* prayer to transition into the divine service, so too does the rabbi need tools to transition into the relationship with the new congregation. Just as the prayer book uses a mechanism with intent, we need to create a conscious process for our congregations.

Research attests that how a rabbi says goodbye to her former position is critical to the rabbi's future emotional well-being and her ability to engage emotionally with the new congregation. By being honest about the range of emotions that departure stirs up inside, the process of saying goodbye can be a process of personal development. The rabbi passes through periods of separation consisting of grief, anxiety, guilt and anger and then peace of mind when he separates from his place of employment, similar to an individual who experiences a personal loss. Eventually there is acceptance and healing and a desire to move forward. The research confirms it is healthy to be in touch with all these emotions in saying goodbye and then to deal with their impact. Conversely, repressing the feelings or denying the expression of emotions that separation engenders cripples our ability to function well within our next synagogue community. These repressed emotions will ultimately surface in unhealthy ways, endangering the relationship with the new congregation.

A. THEORY OF WILLIAM BRIDGES

William Bridges notes that there are three distinctive stages to a successful transition: Endings, the Neutral Zone and New Beginnings. In order for there to be a successful beginning, people need to take care of the Endings. The external change is when everything stops. In addition, there is an internal, emotional

transition: the way things have been experienced is now over. A piece of life is now gone. That is why endings have so much impact. The task is to let go of the past by acknowledging all the emotions raised by the ending. People tend to underestimate the impact of leaving. There is a natural resistance to leaving; it is hard to say goodbye. But repressed emotions will ultimately surface in unhealthy ways, endangering the relationship with the new institution or with the new rabbi. Rabbis need to be intentional about the letting go. The greatest loss is what is familiar to us. Students tell us it is particularly hard to leave the nurturing community of their Seminary days.

Bridges has a brilliant insight that there is a middle stage of transition. He calls it the Neutral Zone. A colleague, quoting Genesis 1:2, called it “*tohu vavohu*,” unformed and void. The Neutral Zone is an in-between state when the old way of doing things, the old way of life, is gone, but the new one has not yet become operational. It is a chaotic time where things appear out of sync and it feels a little like being in quicksand. This is the time in-between congregations. You know you are leaving, but you have not yet started in the new congregation. Because it is such an uncomfortable place, people are tempted to return to their past. Old wounds tend to emerge. Though the Neutral Zone may feel like dead, empty space and it appears that nothing productive is getting done, in fact, important internal work is taking place. Bridges says “It is during the gap between the old and the new that the individual’s system of immunity is weak enough to let truly creative solutions emerge unhampered. Only when the old way of seeing things disappears are habit patterns broken, and a new way will emerge.”

Despite the desperate feeling that the Neutral Zone engenders, it is critical to work through the feelings it evokes because it can lead to new highs and new insights. To deal with this “dead time,” first name it and then appreciate the need for reflective time and space. Journaling is helpful here, as is time alone. The rabbi can see the Neutral Zone as a blessing. If you use this time for reflection and self-evaluation, it can lead you to deeper self-understanding. If you are feeling particularly stuck, you might try to write a creative blessing for this period.

Finally, there is the New Beginning. The New Beginning is the emotional renewal of identification with an organization. It comes slowly after a healing process. It cannot be done mechanically. A New Beginning means the creation of a new identity, a new sense of purpose and a new sense of meaning. A New Beginning is not easy, and is a long process. Creating a new identity takes time.

When there are problems with beginnings, it could be because there are unresolved problems with endings either involving the rabbi in the former environment or the congregation in the current environment. Both rabbis and organizations tend to overlook Endings and the Neutral Zone and to start with the New Beginning, so it is the final phase that gets the blame. It is helpful to see the difference between a start-up and a New Beginning. The new situation, the external reality, starts. That happens on day one. When somebody objects to your transition management efforts on the grounds that “We have to get started right away,” agree with them. Many changes do, indeed, have to be made immediately. But then point out that, although a start-up can happen right away, the New Beginning of getting everyone realigned cannot. Parallel to Endings, New Beginning is the internal, emotional component of the change. The New Beginning requires that people be comfortable with their new rabbi, that they have rebuilt their Jewish world, and gained confidence in their new religious leader. At the same time, the new rabbi seeks a path to comfort and to feeling at home. That rebuilding takes time for the rabbi and the congregation.

B. ENDINGS

An initial announcement has been made, a letter of resignation has been sent. For most rabbis, our work is not a job but a calling. Rabbis feel intensely proud of what we do. Losing a job, choosing to change positions, or moving to a new institution can feel like a partial loss of your core identity. Whatever

reaction an individual has, he always experiences a level of anxiety and concern about leaving well. However, if a rabbi is to succeed in the new setting, the rabbi needs to be able to do the “finishing work,” separating appropriately from her former congregation. Laying the groundwork for the future must include acknowledging and celebrating the past. The rabbi has to put closure on that phase of his work life which is now coming to an end.

Here are six practical steps that will help the rabbi separate well from the congregation.

1. Embrace Emotions

Attention must be paid to the rabbi's relationship with members of the congregation. This is important even when the rabbi has served for a relatively short period of time. She has established many personal relationships that are meaningful both to him or her and to many members of the congregation. The principles and strategies of transition apply both when rabbi and congregation separate graciously and when they do not. In fact, while they apply under normal conditions, they can be particularly helpful when rabbi and congregation part under less than ideal circumstances. There may be a reluctance to deal with uncomfortable feelings and hostile emotions. However, when transition with the former congregation has been handled graciously, negative emotions have been resolved and don't often transfer inappropriately to the new congregation.

2. Communicate Directly to Congregation

When a rabbi is not continuing with a congregation, a letter from the congregational leadership should be sent immediately to inform the congregation. This letter should announce that a rabbinic search committee has been established (or is being established), and should list the steps of the congregation's search process. At the same time, the president should send a second public letter thanking the rabbi for his years of service. This goodbye letter acknowledges the end of an important relationship and celebrates accomplishments. The rabbi may have to remind the congregational leadership that these letters are customary. Then the rabbi should compose his own personal letter thanking the congregation and reminding everyone of some of the highlights and accomplishments during his tenure. The congregation and the rabbi should be as honest as possible about the why the rabbi is leaving.

3. Public Goodbye

There should be a ceremonial, public goodbye to you, the religious leader of the community, to foster a sense of closure for both rabbi and community. Rabbis tell us that a public goodbye ceremony where they get to restate their values and commitments to the Jewish people and the institution is very helpful to their being able to move on. Emotions and feelings are often better crystallized through symbolic events. Ritual can be powerful tools in saying goodbye to a congregation or organization. The symbolic farewell gesture evokes and restates the values and commitments of the rabbi. The farewell may be either a service or social event, as time and place dictate.

A public good-bye is important even when the relationship between the rabbi and the community has been less than harmonious. The rabbi still has had an impact upon the community, and the public goodbye serves as an opportunity to restate the rabbi's message and agenda which will continue after she has left. Sometimes when a rabbi is angry or upset, he or she believes that this “formal” goodbye is hypocritical or painful. The rabbi simply may feel too much pain and not be willing to go through a public goodbye. The Placement Commission has learned that the rabbis often later regret this overreaction. Healing is a crucial part of the search process for the rabbi.

Ritual in general and this public goodbye in particular can serve as a healing experience for the rabbi.

4. Take Time to Reflect

Reflect on what is over and what is not. Take stock. Remembering the continuities helps. It is important to remember that not everything changes. Think about what you learned. What will be different for you? One way to do this is to keep a log, diary or journal. As people grope through a transition and feel “caught in the quicksand,” jotting down feelings and observations is a way to capture the experience, and to begin to make sense of it. The process of journaling slows us down and helps us focus, even when the journaling is a stream of consciousness. When one writes without giving thought to spelling, grammar, or anyone else reading what is written, one can frequently bypass the logical, rational self and get into one’s heart space. Many rabbis have informed us that they benefited from keeping a journal. Some questions to think about might be:

- * How am I feeling about my departure?
- * At what other time did I have similar feelings?
- * What is my legacy?
- * What do I want to celebrate?
- * What would I do differently next time?
- * What was my relationship to the congregation?
- * What do I need to let go?
- * How can I be helpful to others who are feeling a loss?
- * What are my family members going to lose?
- * What has been my greatest satisfaction?

5. Private Goodbyes

Less public goodbyes may also occur. Goodbyes need to be more than program-oriented; they must be people-oriented. You have established a host of personal relationships with the individual congregants, some good, some less so. Now is the time to thank those who have been your allies and friends. Now is the time for letting go of old grudges and for asking forgiveness from former congregants. You will want to visit with some congregants privately. To others, you will want to send a note. One rabbi shared with us that his congregation circulated a diary, enabling all the members of the community to write personal notes about their experiences with the rabbi over the years. It was a satisfying document for both the rabbi and the community. By consciously saying goodbye, the rabbi will be able to move on with a fuller heart and a sense of personal closure to the next employment relationship.

6. Closure Meeting

The rabbi should meet with a sub-committee of the search committee to share his view of the synagogue’s past and future. The rabbi’s observations are an important input into the questionnaire and offer perspective for the search committee. This discussion should help the congregation in its self-study. The information that the rabbi is able to share with the committee can become part of the search committee’s process of seeking the widest possible consultation on the challenges facing this particular congregation. The outgoing rabbi can help delineate issues of concern, but should not be part of the process of interviewing candidates or of the formal placement process. This meeting is also a critical time to discuss and to clarify expectations and responsibilities for the daily activities and planning that will occur over the next few months. What will be your final responsibilities? This meeting also enables the outgoing rabbi and the congregation to keep lines of communication open during this awkward and complex transition period.

C. NEW BEGINNINGS

One rabbi told us he arrived at the congregation on July 15, just as his contract stipulated, only to discover that the every member of the search committee was away on summer vacation. There was no one prepared to even welcome the rabbi and his family to the community. What a way to start!

The Placement Commission strongly recommends that the congregation search committee become a transition committee. If they have not done so, the incoming rabbi can educate the congregation about why such a committee will be of mutual benefit. When the rabbi first enters a new community, he will have all kinds of questions. Some questions will need official answers. Other questions will be of a personal or private nature, such as which dry cleaners should the family use? Ask the transition committee to supply a list of doctors, dentists, accountants and other professionals that the rabbi and the family might need. Some members of the transition committee dedicated to the success of the new rabbi must be available to supply practical information in a timely fashion.

What can the rabbi do to manage the New Beginning well?

1. Create Relationships: The most important thing the new rabbi can do is establish many relationships with numerous people as soon as possible. Creating relationships is priority #1 for rabbi and congregation. Recently-arrived rabbis and their synagogues often rush to create new programs, but the transition committee and the officers of the congregation need to slow everyone down and emphasize building personal relationships. Congregants want the new rabbi to know their name more than to propose a new activity. Thomas Gilmore writes: “Perhaps the single most salient difference between the successful and the failed transitions [of the businesses I studied] was the quality of the new manager’s working relationships at the end of his first year.” People are more important than programs.

Many congregations create parlor meetings by dividing the congregation into small units to introduce the rabbi in informal settings. The role of the rabbi is to be open, to listen, to learn about their needs. The rabbi should speak about his values, not his specific programs. The rabbi’s goal is to make people feel heard and appreciated for their prior achievements in the congregation. Afterwards, the rabbi can reflect on all the different observations and see if patterns emerge or priorities appear that can become the basis for future programming.

Every congregation or community has a key group of individuals who are the current active leadership. The rabbi should try to meet one-on-one with as many of these people as possible to create relationships and begin to build trust. One search chair reflected, “We must be in relationships with people first before we can do work together.” One rabbi summed it up this way, “Be a lover first, then a programmer.”

2. Teach the History of the Congregation: Successful rabbis honor the history and the tradition of their new institution. Every congregation has its own narrative independent of the rabbi. Being able to tell the congregation’s story is a trademark of a rabbi who has had a successful transition. How does the rabbi learn the congregation’s story? The classic exercise to discover the root story of the congregation is by drawing a timeline. The transition committee can help organize a timeline exercise for the rabbi and the board. This exercise reveals the founding story of the synagogue plus its history. The congregation recreates its times past in a public way. In this exercise, the board creates a collective reflection of the past that helps the new rabbi and the current board understand present realities and discern future directions.
3. Share the Culture and Identity of the Congregation: It is important for the rabbi to learn the synagogue culture promptly. How does the new rabbi learn local synagogue culture and customs

when sometimes this identity may be hidden or not yet articulated by the congregational leadership? Here are some suggestions. The rabbi could:

- a. Ask a representative group of the congregation in a public forum to draw a symbolic representation of the congregation – for example, a heraldic shield. What symbols or images or metaphors reveal themselves? Discuss.
- b. On six index cards, ask congregants to name six adjectives that describe the congregation's culture. Discuss.
- c. Ask the synagogue leadership to list any acronyms, nicknames, mottos for special events. What do they mean? Now create a dictionary.
- d. Ask the synagogue leadership to draw an internal map of the sacred space. What artifacts are important to the congregation? What ritual or which religious occasions highlight the values of the synagogue?
- e. Ask the synagogue leadership how many small groups does the congregation have? List and describe their functions. The latest small group founded was....?

Why does valuing culture lead to a successful transition? First, when the rabbi appreciates the congregation's culture, she builds trust and rapport with the congregation. Second, if there is a conflict between the culture and a proposed change, the culture wins. If a rabbi wishes to introduce a change, she must anchor the change in the culture. Congregational change is complex. The innovations of a new rabbi may have merit, but change also implies criticism. The best way to accomplish change is by positioning the change as congruent to the existing culture. Learn the new culture so later the change process will proceed smoothly.

4. Monitor the Surprises: Most initial conflicts between rabbis and congregations are not about large, controversial issues but about misunderstandings over expectations and a lack of communication. When a rabbi moves to a new congregation there are always surprises for the rabbi! Some surprises are small and disappointing, some are funny and some loom large. The more the rabbi can learn about the culture, the few big surprises will ambush him.

Surprises are almost always a sign that expectations have not been met. The rabbi and the leadership ought to keep track of the surprises they encounter. Six months or so into your term, hold a discussion with the transition committee to compare notes, to see if there are any patterns. The rabbi and the transition committee can agree on corrective measures and can affirm what has been accomplished thus far. Monitoring the surprises helps the rabbi and the congregation differentiate between expectations and explicitly expressed desires, between tacit assumptions and actual behavior.

5. Ask For Documents: As a candidate, you received a lot of information orally, you heard stories, you received answers to many questions. Now ask the transition committee to provide it all in writing. Review with the congregational president the minutes of the board for the last two years. Ask the chair of the ritual committee to provide the minutes of the past meetings for at least two years. It will be helpful to know what was discussed even if it was not implemented. Ask for synagogue bulletins for the last two years because it is an excellent way to learn about the congregational history and records of achievement and also about the synagogue's hopes and intentions. Written documents will help you be sensitive to the congregational history and culture.
6. Anticipate that First Change: There is always a certain pressure on the new rabbi to make changes. The competent rabbi will come with an agenda and normal congregational growth will mean changes as well. However, now is not the time to make quick changes, but to stress the continuities. The number one concern laypeople express about the new rabbi is the speed with which ritual changes will be introduced.

The task of the rabbi is to let people know you want to learn their needs and their priorities before you introduce a change. For example, the first Rosh Hashanah is a time to return to traditional congregational melodies that everyone knows, not an opportunity to introduce new tunes.

It is important that the first change be viewed as a success. The first change will make a memorable impression; it will have great symbolic value. First impressions really matter; it takes a very long time to overcome first impressions. So, the rabbi and transition committee might consider together what that first change will be, growing out of reflections of the congregation's needs and priorities. Does the rabbi really want to squander this opportunity by changing an inconsequential congregation melody? Years later, long after the rabbi has forgotten, congregants remind rabbis about their first service or sermon or the time the rabbi changed the tune on the High Holidays. What do you want your first impression to be?

The ability to transfer our rabbinate from one work setting to the next is a sign of a mature and healthy professional. Most rabbis are able to do it. It may be difficult, but it is part of our professional growth and our commitment to our future. How do a rabbi and a congregation make a successful transition? With intention. With time. With patience.

D. INSTALLATION

Every rabbi should have an installation ceremony. When carefully planned, an installation can be a powerful mechanism to reduce congregational and rabbinic anxiety, and provide energy for a successful New Beginning. The installation can be a vehicle for facilitating the transition to new spiritual leadership. The installation conveys a message within the congregation and to the general community. The Placement Commission sees the installation as a sacred moment; a time for emotional release, education and spiritual transcendence. Rabbis tell us how important the installation is to them both personally and professionally. The installation event is not just a program on the synagogue calendar but a religious ritual filled with symbolism and meaning. Done well, the installation facilitates both a good transition for congregation and rabbi and puts people in touch with the Divine. What message do you want your installation to convey?

Installation is a symbolic event containing meaning beyond the specific moment and beyond the specific rabbi. A rabbinic installation is a way to express connection to all rabbis past and present, to the Masorti movement and to the whole Jewish people. The installation symbolizes a connection to local synagogue customs and synagogue values. Some congregations mark the installation by the transfer of a symbol, a gift to the rabbi that expresses the connection to Jewish life and Jewish community. Some congregations give a Kiddush cup which symbolizes how many different roles the rabbi must now "fill." Other congregations have given the rabbi a synagogue history volume or communal history book to declare that "the new rabbi joins together with our past to build a bright new future." Still others give a yad (Torah pointer) to symbolize the rabbi's mandate to "point the way." A symbolic gift to the rabbi is a meaningful part of an installation.

Rituals create community. Community is strengthened when people gather around a set of specific values. The moment of installation is an opportunity for the rabbi and for the congregation to express and to recommit to their Jewish values. One rabbi wanted to emphasize a stronger and deeper commitment to Torah study. He combined his Installation weekend with a scholar-in-residence Shabbat. Another rabbi wanted to emphasize outreach to younger families, and so included a picnic at a local park as part of the installation weekend. The rabbi can use her installation talk to articulate her rabbinic values and not to announce a specific program. Around these core values, this new rabbi and the congregational leadership will build their community. What values do you want your Installation to emphasize?

VIII. HOW DO YOU DEFINE SUCCESS

You have now been in your new rabbinic position a little over a year. How are you doing? How do you, the rabbi, define success? How does your lay leadership define rabbinic success? How does the congregation as a whole think you are doing? How would they measure success? One of the biggest surprises for the Placement Commission has been how infrequently rabbis actually sit down and have a mutual conversation with the lay leadership to define rabbinic success. Not long ago, in polling a group of twenty rabbis, only one said he ever had such a conversation, and it was twenty years ago! In addition, the synagogue board has probably never done an evaluation of the board itself and its own performance. The synagogue has no sense of its own progress but is eager to evaluate the rabbi. Unfortunately, the model most frequently applied to rabbinic evaluations is taken from the business world and it is at best an awkward fit. The metrics of the business world are out of sync with synagogues values. But our lay leaders are not conversant with any other metrics. A synagogue president told us, every Friday he meets with his sales force and “goes over the numbers.” He asks them if “they reached their weekly sales goals or not.” **The rabbinic world is not about numbers but about relationships and mission.** Evaluations have sometimes been used as a hammer to beat up on rabbis. The evaluation or “congregational personnel survey” has sometimes descended into a negative critique of rabbinic leadership and then been used to orchestrate the departure of the rabbi. As a result, it has been no surprise that rabbinic evaluations have been often been unhelpful.

The Placement Commission believes that evaluations are inevitable, and it is the rabbi’s duty to make them positive, healthy and professional. The ability to learn from feedback and unguarded conversations with our lay leadership is a sign of a healthy relationship between a rabbi and a congregation and its leaders. A well done review of the rabbinic professional provides a continuous loop in which successes are celebrated, mistakes identified, progress noted, priorities reviewed and problems resolved, enabling the rabbi to grow and develop. The Placement Commission teaches that an annual review is a professional responsibility. At the same time, the Placement Commission expects that rabbis be respected for their work and honored for their unique role in the spiritual life of the congregation. The Placement Commission sees a process for feedback that has three parts. 1. The rabbi has an initial conversation about goals, responsibilities and priorities with the board. See **Appendix F** for a guideline. 2. The rabbi seeks self knowledge. See **Appendix G** for a guideline. 3. The rabbi receives fair and authentic feedback from the congregational leadership. See **Appendix H** for a guideline.

We have also learned that although a congregation often seeks a complete evaluation of the rabbi, the real success of the new rabbi is actually measured over 4 metrics. 1) Have expectations been discussed, established and then met? 2) Have the new rabbi and the synagogue leadership developed a relationship of trust with each other? 3) Has a change been implemented by the new rabbi with sensitivity and success? 4) Has the rabbi contributed to a sense of community?

A. MEETING EXPECTATIONS

Sometimes synagogues ask the Placement Commission for a job description for a rabbi. We do not have one because there is so much variability from synagogue to synagogues. Rabbinic tasks are important to define. For example, the rabbi will or will not read Torah regularly, the rabbi does or does not tutor the b’nai mitzvah children or be at x number of morning *minyanim*. Congregations should establish in conversation with the rabbi what specific rabbinic tasks the new rabbi must manage in the new setting

However, the Placement Commission knows that the more important conversation is about rabbinic roles. Role is different from task. Role is how people identify themselves. It is all about perception. It is not only external attributes and accomplishments; it is the inner world. A rabbi’s role is a composite of responsibilities, priorities and leadership as well as tasks. To see the rabbi as a whole religious leader, it is

helpful to articulate the particular roles inherent in a rabbinic calling. Each rabbi has an image of the role he plays in the congregation or other work setting; for any rabbi, one particular aspect of the rabbinate as a whole may be more important than all the others. Additionally, each congregation or organization as a whole, each congregant or board member as an individual, each organizational sub-group, has an expectation about the rabbi's role. Moreover, everyone has personal memories of the rabbi they grew up with in their home congregation. Assumptions about rabbinic roles are often a major source of comfort or tension between rabbis and laypeople, especially in the beginning of the relationship.

In addition to defining the tasks required, you need to compare your own rabbinic expectations with the institution's expectation of the rabbinic role. There needs to be a conversation about which rabbinic roles are to be emphasized and which should take priority. For example, some congregations require a rabbi who can be *kol bo* and do everything. Other congregations have several rabbis and scholars already present who have an abundance of synagogue skills, and the new rabbi is needed to concentrate on pastoral duties. The Pareto Principle, first suggested by the 19th century Italian economist Wildredo Pareto, claims that 20 percent of our time produces 80 percent of our results. 20 percent of our rabbinic activities will produce 80 percent of our rabbinic accomplishments. You might have a conversation with your lay leadership on which roles are a priority. Ideally, you will have this conversation at the beginning of the relationship to set up expectations, and then the rabbi and lay leadership will check in with each other at regular intervals to see if expectations have been met. **Appendix H** is checklist of rabbinic roles.

B. TRUST

Trust is a relationship based on the mutual confidence that both the rabbi and the lay leadership will both: do what they say, be predictable, communicate clearly and honestly, respect one another's knowledge and abilities, and maintain confidentiality. Trust is a state of mind. Trust is also the very core of leadership. Willing followers must trust their leaders. Without trust, no one will follow. But trust cannot be mandated; it must be earned. In this time of leadership transition, your challenge as a rabbi is to build trust. Rabbis will be evaluated more for how much their leadership trusts them than how well they get along with the congregation. One builds trust three ways with our leadership.

First, consistently do what you say you will do. Be consistent when your values and goals influence your actions and words. Do not give way to shifting tides of politics. For example, delegate appropriately. Honor agreements and keep your boundaries. Second, demonstrate respect for others people's knowledge, skills and abilities. For example, acknowledge board members' abilities to do their jobs, allow them to use their talents to accomplish mutually agreed-upon goals and help people learn new skills. Third, demonstrate unguarded interactions and honesty. For example, share information, tell the truth, and admit your mistakes. Remember, building trust is a slow process, and trust can be destroyed by a single event. Trust is destroyed by a win/lose mentality, and trust is strengthened by a win/win mentality. The Placement Commission has learned the first priority of the rabbi is to create trust with the elected synagogue leadership. Some have called this the lay-rabbinic partnership. Success means this trust has been created and nurtured with the 10 percent of the members who are the leadership of the congregation.

C. MANAGING CHANGE

One of the most difficult aspects of success to achieve is to produce meaningful change. There are different levels of change. First, there is minor change, like the color of the paper of the bulletin. Second, there is a major change, such as changing the focus of the Hugim in the afternoon from the holidays to social justice. And finally, most difficult of all is liturgical change! Changes in congregational practice need to be undertaken in a thoughtful, careful and sensitive way. Like transition, changes need to be introduced with intention. What is the relationship between change and success? In the business world, change and change

management is connected with leadership. Managers organize, administrate and imitate; leaders motivate, innovate and originate. Rabbis will be evaluated as successful leaders when there is both a perception and a reality that change is moving forward.

Organizational change is complex and meets great resistance. But it is indeed possible; it needs to be engineered carefully and thoughtfully. Management consultant Richard Beckhard devised the following formula as a conceptual starting point to plan simple organizational change.

$$\frac{\text{Dissatisfaction} \times \text{vision} \times \text{first steps}}{\text{Resistance}} = \text{SUCCESFUL CHANGE}$$

The basic change process always starts with a sense that things are not right – they could be better. If levels of satisfaction are being met for the majority of people, there is no motivation to move to a new place. A large group must share dissatisfaction – not just unhappiness or frustration, but real urgency. A sizeable group must feel this pain, not just the top leadership. As leaders, rabbis need to increase dissatisfaction to achieve a successful change!

Vision, the second step, moves the process forward. Vision is a “compelling image of the future.” For change to happen, people need to know what the future will look like. The image is not a description of current practice, but a picture of new circumstances somewhere off in the distance, and a picture of what the new situation will look like. It is compelling, inspiring and motivating to others. People do not feel pushed but rather pulled to a new place. For change to happen, people need to know where they are going. As leaders, rabbis need to paint a picture of the hoped-for reality to achieve a successful change.

The next component is to take the right first steps. Change is a planned, practical process. A vision is a dream; first steps are practical and realistic. Who will we be in touch with? What will we say? What will my role as rabbi be in this change process? Who are our allies? As leaders, rabbis need to create a road map with the first few practical steps to achieve a successful change.

In this equation, dissatisfaction is multiplied by vision multiplied by first steps. All three factors must be present for change to be successful.

The final part of the equation is “divided by resistance.” Resistance is a constant. Resistance will always be present in every change process. Resistance is present even when the proposed change is a worthy idea whose time has come and the group has expressed readiness. When you push a system to move, the system pushes back. If possible, anticipate the resistance. Who will resist? Why? Once you guess which constituencies might be unhappy about the proposed change, go out and meet with them. As leaders, rabbis need to help their allies anticipate who will resist and meet with their opponents, not to change their minds, but to ask their opponents not to veto the change.

Successful lay leaders and rabbis think strategically about how to introduce a change into their synagogue’s life. Your lay leadership will look around to see what is different or what could be different. They will ask, what did the rabbi “create, establish, innovate or motivate?” Rabbis are measured by their change initiatives. Choose well and make sure the first change is a meaningful success.

D. BUILD COMMUNITY

What is a community? A place where we feel we belong. A place where we feel safe. A place that shapes our values. A place that cares for us and sees more in us than we see in ourselves. A community is more than a small group, more than social bonding, it is a group of people working together to create something of value. When a community is successful, the group learns to transcend individual differences. The new rabbi is an outsider and the newest member of the community. While both business leaders and rabbis are evaluated on their change management skills, religious leaders alone are also evaluated for their community building skills.

These skills are especially crucial if the congregation has been in need of healing. Lay leaders define rabbinic success as a rabbi who adds to the sense of community. Successful rabbis pay attention to the needs and hurts of the people.

How do rabbis build community? Unlike change management, there is much less conversation or documented tools. Successful rabbis build community around an idea and not around their personality. Professor Howard Gardner of Harvard writes: “The community teaches. If it is healthy and coherent, the community imparts a coherent value system....It is the community and culture that hold the individual in a framework of values.” Successful rabbinic community builders build around an idea like “a learning community,” “a Torah egalitarian congregation,” or “center for social justice.” Symbolically, the rabbi acts like a compass giving direction. A good example is a sermon that puts a religious framework around a secular idea that is the current topic of conversation among the members. The rabbi is a teacher of values. Each time the rabbi teaches or preaches, it is an opportunity to build community. The power of this strategy – knowing and articulating our core values – is that the congregation can stay focused on these ideas even when the rabbi is not present. At times of national or local grief or joy, use sermons, bulletins and emails to articulate the emotions and values everyone is sharing. For example, address the pain after a public trauma or the pride a community feels upon opening a new school. The rabbi who gathers the community at these times and captures the moment builds community. Your lay leadership will ask, how is your community doing? What are you doing to foster, nurture and build their sense of community?

Success is hard to define and perhaps even harder to achieve. However, rabbis report high levels of satisfaction with work when there have been clear communications about goals, roles and responsibilities. The Placement Commission wishes you a world of success.

APPENDIX A: PLACEMENT RULES – JOINT PLACEMENT COMMISSION, OCTOBER 2007

A. The Placement Process

1. A rabbi may search for a congregation only through the offices of the Joint Placement Commission. Any search for employment as a pulpit rabbi (whether part-time or full-time, permanent or interim) must take place under the auspices of the JPC. This includes USCJ and non-USCJ congregations, whether they appear on the official placement list or not.
2. An RA colleague may utilize only the placement service of the Rabbinical Assembly. The rabbi must fill out the Rabbi Signature Form to acknowledge that the rabbi agrees to be bound by the placement rules. This form is returned to the New York office to eschoenberg@rabbinicalassembly.org. The form is attached to the RA website and attached to the placement list.
3. A rabbi is not permitted to forward a resume to a congregation without the knowledge of the Joint Placement Commission.
4. The Joint Placement Commission formally publishes a monthly list of all eligible congregations seeking rabbis. The list is available to RA members in the membership section of the RA website, www.rabbinicalassembly.org. Questionnaires are also found on the web site.
5. A member may NOT advertise his or her availability for placement as a rabbi in any media (including the Internet) or apply directly or indirectly to any such advertisement by a congregation. Rabbis may not utilize RAVNET, RAVLAT, RAVDIBUR (or others) or the Internet as a means to either seek a pulpit for themselves or to advertise the opportunity or availability of a pulpit or other educational positions.

B. Waivers

1. A waiver is required BEFORE a member rabbi can apply for a non-USCJ congregation. Such a waiver will only be considered after the rabbi has conducted an extensive search of USCJ congregations or for extenuating circumstances. **Non-USCJ congregations must certify that they understand that the member rabbi is still subject to the rules and standards of the Rabbinical Assembly. The rabbi serving in a non-USCJ pulpit is expected to encourage the congregation to become members of the USCJ. Further, the Commission may require service to Movement institutions as part of the waiver for serving in a USCJ congregation. Rabbis should be aware that the Commission only has authority to protect the rights of rabbis in USCJ congregations.**
2. **A waiver is also required for any exception to these rules, and must be obtained BEFORE applying for or (in the case of a congregation approaching the rabbi) having any follow-up contact with a congregation.**

C. Eligibility for Placement

1. A rabbi's resume must be on file in the RA office in electronic form. Resumes are forwarded to placement@rabbinicalassembly.org. Congregations and organizations expect a concise, two page resume.
2. The rabbi must be a member in good standing of the International Rabbinical Assembly. Dues must be current and dues declaration for the current year must be on file in the RA business office. Dues payment for members of the RA are paid to the New York office. Assistance may be obtained by being in touch with the RA's business manager, Sara Gunther (sgunther@rabbinicalassembly.org).
3. The Joint Placement Commission may recommend to the International RA that placement be denied to a rabbi because of an ethical, halakhic, or placement violation. The Executive Council determines the appropriate consequence which may include denial of placement. **Placement may also be denied to rabbis who are the subject of an inquiry of the Rabbinical Assembly's Va'ad HaKavod.**

4. The primary consideration in referring candidates shall be rabbinic seniority. Seniority is determined by years since ordination. Years worked in a congregation prior to ordination are not counted towards seniority.
5. Seniority is a prerequisite according to the chart below. The size of the congregation shall be the usual and principal criterion for the categorization of congregations. In unusual circumstances, the Placement Commission may decide to place a congregation in a different category based upon other factors. The following table explains the minimum number of years of rabbinic membership (seniority) required of a candidate for submission to congregations in respective categories.

CATEGORY	CONGREGATIONAL SIZE	MINIMUM YEARS SINCE ORDINATION/MEMBERSHIP
AA	Assistant Rabbi	Newly Ordained
A	up to 250	Newly Ordained
B	251 - 500	3
C	501 - 750	5
D	over 750	10

Explanation: For example, a colleague may look for a “C” congregation in his or her fourth year, as long as he or she will be in his or her fifth year when he or she assumes the post. One may qualify for a position only one year before it becomes available. For example, a “D” congregation announces its rabbi of 30 years will retire in two years. In the first of the two years no referrals will be made to the congregation. In the second of the two years only colleagues who have a minimum of nine years experience may qualify to have their resume forwarded so that when the pulpit is vacant, the rabbi will have at least ten years experience.

6. New members of the Rabbinical Assembly, who have been voted into RA membership upon the recommendation of the Membership Committee and the Executive Council, shall be granted no more than two years seniority, no matter the amount of prior service.
7. The rabbi must be eligible to conclude his or her contract with his or her current congregation or other place of employment, during the current placement season.
8. The Two-Year Window: Since placement opportunities for rabbis do not always coincide with the expiration date of existing agreements, and in order to provide for himself or herself and his or her family, the rabbi may find it necessary to begin exploration of placement opportunities prior to the date of expiration of an existing agreement. The rabbi may seek or consider a change in pulpit during the 24-month period preceding the expiration of his or her current agreement or during the period of time coinciding with the last one-half of the term of the agreement, whichever period is shorter, provided that in the event that the rabbi desires to terminate an agreement prior to the last year of the term, then in that event the rabbi must remain with the employ of the congregation for a minimum of six months subsequent to his or her announcement of the congregation of his or her intention to depart and provided that it is not the initial year of an agreement between the parties. **Rabbis searching for employment under the window of opportunity should inform their congregation’s president of their search.**
9. Any rabbi eligible for a rabbinic search may not meet with, or preach for a synagogue where he or she could be a potential candidate for employment in a placement season. A member of the Rabbinical Assembly shall not accept an invitation to preach, interview, or occupy the pulpit, officiate for the High Holidays or otherwise address a congregation or any of its affiliated organizations if the pulpit of the congregation is vacant, or in the process of being vacated, without the prior approval or knowledge of the Placement

Commission of. If the incumbent rabbi still occupies the pulpit, the candidate must call to obtain his or her approval for the visit.

D. Eligible Congregations

1. The Commission shall not submit a rabbi's name for a pulpit unless the incumbent in that position, whether or not he or she is a member of the Rabbinical Assembly, has been officially informed by the congregation that, or has officially informed the congregation that his or her engagement terminates or will terminate at a definite date, and all matters of termination between the congregation and the rabbi are resolved and mutually agreed upon, or are in the process of resolution by an agency of dispute resolution recognized by the RA.
2. Names of candidates will not be forwarded by the Placement Commission to any congregation or pulpit which is engaged in a dispute with its current or former rabbi unless The Joint Placement Commission and the International Placement Office have been notified that the dispute has been submitted to an appropriate body for adjudication and/or resolution. It is the International Placement office that has final authority to decide whether the pulpit is open or not.

E. Special Placements: Assistantships, Interim Positions, and New Initiatives

1. All assistant or associate positions must be listed with the Placement Commission. Assistant and associate rabbis cannot automatically assume the pulpit of the senior rabbi. A congregation may only move an assistant rabbi to the senior position with approval from the Placement Commission.
2. Anyone wishing to serve as an interim rabbi must do so under the auspices of the JPC. The position of "interim rabbi" refers to any situation where a congregation is between rabbis and will ultimately be seeking a new rabbi. Interim positions are listed in a special section on the placement list. An interim rabbi who is serving a particular congregation cannot be a candidate for the permanent rabbinic position. **An interim position is only approved for 12 months.** A rabbi must be registered and complete the interim rabbi training program with the RA to accept an interim position. All other placement rules apply to the interim rabbi unless specifically exempted in writing by the Joint Placement Commission.
3. Any rabbi wishing to start, create or develop a congregation (defined as any community of worshippers) must receive permission from the Placement Commission, whether or not there is remuneration involved.

F. Student Placement

1. The Joint Placement Commission directs the placement process for all senior rabbinical students of JTS and the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies.
2. In their final year, and with the permission of the office of the dean, graduating students will be informed of all openings electronically and begin receiving placement materials.
3. All students expecting to graduate must have a resume on file with the RA by January 1.
4. A graduating senior must have filled out and returned a Rabbinical Assembly membership application to the New York office by January 1. Graduates are automatically accepted into membership into the RA, but students must complete and sign a membership application.
5. The student must have completed all requirements for graduation and the dean of the school must sign off that all academic courses and requirements have been satisfied and the student is eligible for placement. A note from the dean must be on file in the international office of the RA.
6. The students should have spent time meeting and discussing placement with the dean's office, Rabbi Julie Schonfeld the director of rabbinic service, and Rabbi Schoenberg.
7. All student requests for placement must be presented to and approved by the Placement Commission. Any exception or waiver to the student can only be granted by the Joint Placement Commission.

G. Acceptance of a Position

1. **Rabbis will inform the Placement office when they have agreed to enter into negotiations with a congregation. While it is assumed that both parties may continue interviewing during the period of negotiations, rabbis should clarify this with the congregation. If the rabbi continues to interview, he/she must inform the other congregation(s) that negotiations have begun with another congregation.**
2. A member accepting an offer from a congregation will normally be expected to remain with the congregation for a minimum of two years. An initial contract with a congregation shall be for a minimum of two years, however three years is often recommended. At all times, a rabbi and a congregation are expected to abide by the terms of their contract.
3. Rabbis will inform the Placement office when they have completed negotiations and accepted a new position.

H. The Role and Structure of the Joint Placement Commission

1. Neither the Joint Placement Commission nor the International Placement office may be party to a contract between a congregation and a rabbi and are to be held harmless for any claims arising from such a contract. In the case of a contract dispute between the congregation and the rabbi, the Placement Commission's function is only to give guidance and counsel.
2. Rabbis and congregations participating in any matter before or with The Joint Placement Commission or the International office acknowledge by their participation that neither the Joint Placement Commission nor the international office owe ANY duty of care or fiduciary responsibility to the rabbi or the congregation.
3. The Joint Placement Commission is comprised of representatives of the USCJ, JTS, the Ziegler School, and the Rabbinical Assembly. The chair of The Joint Placement Commission will always be a member of the Rabbinical Assembly who is currently a congregational rabbi. The international director of placement will serve as ex-officio and as the chief agent and representative of The Placement Commission. The Commission will meet on a regular basis, no less than three times a year, to manage the placement process and to enforce the international placement code.
4. The Executive Council of the International Rabbinical Assembly is the final decision-making body with regard to rabbinic pulpit placement in North America, Latin America, Europe and Israel. Changes in the structure of placement may only be made by the Rabbinical Assembly at its convention.
5. The Commission will honor the general placement rules as approved by the Rabbinical Assembly Executive Council. It will have the right to revise, change or create rules that reflect special placement needs with the approval of the Executive Council. Professional staff, if any, employed by the placement office, shall report to the international director.

APPENDIX B: SIGNATURE FORM

JOINT COMMISSION ON RABBINIC PLACEMENT: RABBI REGISTRATION FORM

The Rabbinical Assembly

3080 Broadway, New York, NY 10027

(212) 280-6000 Fax: (212) 749-9166

placement@rabbinicalassembly.org

PLEASE OPEN A PLACEMENT FILE.

Please type or print clearly.

Date:

Name: (Please Print)

Email address:

Cell Phone:

Work Phone:

I was ordained at:

I was ordained (or became a member of the Rabbinical Assembly) in:

My present agreement with my congregation or other institution began: ends:

Current Employer\Position Held\How Long:

Briefly describe the preferred position sought (size, location, style, emphasis):

By signing this form I acknowledge that I am contractually eligible to look for a pulpit and am a member in good standing of the Rabbinical Assembly. I am familiar with and agree to be bound the RA Code of Conduct and by the placement rules established by the Joint Placement Commission.

Signature:

Please return this form to Rabbi Elliot Salo Schoenberg at the above address.

APPENDIX C: TOOLS TO COMMUNICATING YOUR RABBINIC VOICE

1. METAPHOR

What is your rabbinic metaphor? A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another, thus making an explicit comparison. A metaphor can be a tool to see the world. Peter Senge, in *The Fifth Discipline*, calls them mental models – internal images of how the world works. Some examples might be: Rabbi as Park Ranger (teaches within a specific environment and enforces the rules), or Rabbi as elephant (a presence that can not be missed, who nurtures the young).

MY METAPHOR FOR THE RABBINATE IS:

2. VALUES

What are you most passionate about? What are your key rabbinic values to your work? A value is a belief about which you feel strongly. You want the value to be constantly present in your work. Values are what motivate you. You choose them; they are not imposed by others. You choose them from among alternatives. You are willing and able to proclaim a cherished value publicly. A value releases your energy. A value energizes your work. Some examples might be: justice, excellence, family, wealth, democracy, egalitarianism. For a list of values, see www.phillymussar.org or *The Book of Jewish Values*, by Joseph Telushkin, or *Voices of Wisdom: Jewish Ideal and Ethics for Everyday Living*, by Francine Klagsbrun.

Name three of your values and explain why you chose them.

- a.
- b.
- c.

3. STRENGTHS

What are your strengths? A strength is something you yearn to do, learn quickly and find satisfying. When you are not doing a strength, you miss it. A strength is something which makes you proud. See the book *Now, Discover Your Strengths*, by Marcus Buckingham and Bernard O. Clifton, or their website: <http://www.shearonfourschools.com/Now%20Discover%20Frame.htm>. Some examples might be: ideation – coming up with new ideas; analysis – you see patterns; communication – you like to speak in public and to write.

List three of your strengths and cite examples:

- a.
- b.
- c.

4. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Think about specific, concrete contributions. What did you create, invent, reinvent? What did you resolve, overcome, demonstrate? What, when and where did a colleague, member, or participant tell you how you

made a difference for them? Use the PARS Formula. Describe a Problem, the Action you took, the Results you achieved and the Skills you applied. For example – “Attendance at a Friday night service was on the decline. Took initiative to reorganize by introducing lay-led *divrei Torah*. Service attendance tripled. Applied my leadership and conflict resolution skills.”

Using strong verbs and PARS model, list three:

- a.
- b.
- c.

5. RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

When looking for employment as a rabbi, employers repeatedly tell us they are looking for “a religious leader,” “spiritual leadership” and someone “who will make a difference.” Give an example of when you interpreted ancient tradition in a modern context. How do you demonstrate/model your relationship with God? How have you made a difference in your work place? For example: “introduced the Imahot into the Amidah because I believe our liturgy must be gender neutral.” “Tikkun Olam and social justice are a driving force in my religious life, so I serve on the advisory board of the local food cooperative.”

Give three examples of how you have demonstrated religious leadership and what motivated you:

- a.
- b.
- c.

6. MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR INSTRUMENT

The MBTI is an instrument designed to validate C.G. Jung’s theory of psychological type and make it practical and useful for people. It is a self-reporting instrument. MBTI assumes that your type is inborn. It is well researched, validated, and sorts people into categories. MBTI is the most widely used psychological instrument in the world.

You may take the inventory online for a \$25 fee. Go to the website www.online.cpp.com. The user name is Rabbinical Assembly and the password is baker3080.

There is a free instrument at: <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp> and also a free modified instrument in the book *Please Understand Me*, by David Kersey.

My TYPE is _____

APPENDIX D: MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Rabbinical Assembly
3080 Broadway, New York, NY 10027
(212) 280-6000
placement@rabbinicalassembly.org

Your First Name: Middle: Last:

Your Hebrew Name:

Ordination Date:

Place of Ordination:

Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female Date of Birth: Place of Birth:

Home Address:

Home Phone: Email:

Marital Status:

Languages spoken:

Undergraduate institution and degrees awarded:

Graduate Institution:

Spouse: First Middle: Last:

Spouse's Hebrew Name:

Date of Birth: Occupation:

Names of children and dates of birth:

The undersigned agrees to abide by the policies and standards of the Rabbinical Assembly.

I am applying for admission in 20_____.

Signature: Date:

APPENDIX E: LETTER TO NON-PULPIT EMPLOYERS

Dear Lay Leader.

We are pleased and privileged that you wish to engage a member of the Rabbinical Assembly, the international professional organization of Conservative rabbis, in your institution. We offer you our help and resources.

Over 25 percent of the membership of the Rabbinical Assembly worldwide serve in positions throughout the organizational, educational, academic and Jewish institutional world. As an organization that supports, nurtures and advocates for rabbis we have learned much about what they desire and seek in employment environments. We write to share these concerns and issues with you in order that you and they may be better prepared to strengthen your relationship.

The rabbi you engage for your institution is fully committed to your institution, its mission and program. At the same time, the rabbi maintains his/her rabbinic identity. This is vital not only to the rabbi, but to your institution because it opens your institution to broader Jewish learning and knowledge. Hence, members of the Rabbinical Assembly, working in other than pulpit positions, continually stress to us their need and desire to participate in the life and activities of the Rabbinical Assembly both locally and nationally. They wish to be in touch with their Rabbinical Assembly colleagues and they wish to participate in the collegiality of the Rabbinical Assembly. For example, they stress to us their desire to participate in their regional Rabbinical Assembly meetings that may occur during part of a weekday, or to serve on a national committee which may meet several times a year. Therefore we would like to point out to you that when engaging a Rabbinical Assembly rabbi you should be aware they may ask to attend Rabbinical Assembly meetings as part of their commitment to your institution. In return, they will bring back to you insight, program ideas and renewed enthusiasm gained from these meetings. And, sometimes the very ability or inability to attend these meetings may make the difference of being able to engage a rabbi to be part of your institution's life.

The same holds true for attendance at the annual international convention of the Rabbinical Assembly. Rabbis have continually informed us that they feel the need for companionship and for ways to continually identify as a rabbi. One way they accomplish these is by attendance at this annual conference. In effect, what our rabbis are saying is that they need to attend two annual meetings in order to best serve your organization/institution, both the annual professional meeting directly related to your work and the Rabbinical Assembly convention. Therefore, it is important to set aside in your budget not only an allocation for a primary professional meeting but also additional funds to make attendance at the Rabbinical Assembly convention possible.

A rabbi serving in an institutional setting is entitled to a housing or parsonage allowance providing certain criteria are met. The rabbi you engage for your institution or organization will most likely request such a provision as part of his/her employment agreement, and in those situations the rabbi should be able to secure one since in most instances the rabbi is carrying out responsibilities commensurate within broad rabbinic mandate. We are prepared to help you or your compensation specialists understand more fully the parameters of the housing allowance for rabbis serving in other than congregational settings.

The Rabbinical Assembly is a member of the Joint Retirement Board of the Conservative movement that provides pension programs for all professionals of the movement. While your organization may have a pension plan in which your employees participate, the rabbi you engage may request participation in the retirement program of the Conservative movement because of the unique advantages of this program. For example, the pension program is, under United States pension laws, “a church plan,” enabling rabbis to benefit from a housing allowance from their pension benefits in retirement; the program contains a disability funding insurance policy which will fund the rabbi's retirement program should the rabbi become unable to work; and the program is portable should the rabbi choose to change positions. We encourage you to allow your rabbinic employee to participate in the rabbinic pension program of the Conservative movement because there are obvious advantages which will appeal to him or her. Our experience has shown that the inability to participate in the Joint Retirement Board program sometimes deters a rabbi from accepting a specific non-pulpit position.

It is important that when working with someone who is a recent graduate to understand that his or her introduction into the practical world of the rabbinate needs to be continually nurtured and supported. Over the years our young colleagues have informed us of this with greater and greater emphasis. We offer a mentorship program that involves working directly with a more senior colleague in a personal way. In both the short run and in the long term Rabbinical Assembly programs and other conferences will help our non-pulpit colleagues become confident professionals in your field.

We look forward to our colleagues having successful work relationships with their employers. We have no greater wish or hope. However, we recognize that from time to time difficulties do arise. Therefore we encourage you to learn about Rabbinical Assembly conflict resolution mechanisms and to incorporate them into documents that you may write with your new rabbinic employee. The Rabbinical Assembly staff is available to intervene and mediate disputes between rabbis and their places of employment. We have much experience in this and are willing to travel at any time to be of help to you and to a member of the Rabbinical Assembly. If need be, we have a formal dispute resolution network overseen by the “Committee on Congregational Standards of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.” A dispute may be taken there for either mediation or arbitration.

We wish this letter to serve as the beginning of a process. You seek to engage a rabbi for your institution. You may have had one employed previously for many years, or this may be the first time you are choosing to do so. Our rabbinic colleagues often discuss with us their expectations and desires from places of employment. We write this letter, therefore, to help you in your discussions and negotiations with your rabbinic candidates. Please feel free to contact us at the Rabbinical Assembly if we can be of any help. It is often easiest to e-mail us at eschoenberg@rabbinicalassembly.org, or you may certainly call 212-280-6000.

With wishes for much success.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Joel H. Meyers
Executive Vice President

Rabbi Elliot Salo Schoenberg
International Director of Placement

APPENDIX F: THE ROLE OF THE RABBI

RABBI AS PASTOR

The rabbi sees her major role as visiting the sick and comforting the bereaved. Many people come visit this rabbi for pastoral counseling. This rabbi is a counselor, healer and a caretaker. The rabbi is known for his ability to listen and to care. The rabbi may be a spiritual guide. The rabbi is a teacher of values. The rabbi pays close attention to those on a religious journey. This rabbi may take an extra degree in counseling.

RABBI AS TEACHER

This rabbi loves to teach. This rabbi acts as an educator in every possible setting. This synagogue has a great adult education program. This rabbi sees his own study as an important element of the rabbinate. This rabbi's sermons are model lessons. The rabbi is well known for being conversant with text.

RABBI AS ADMINISTRATOR

This rabbi organizes, administrates, and manages a productive and effective organization. She supervises a staff that might include other rabbis, cantors, school principals and other professionals. She is a resolver of disputes.

RABBI AS SOCIAL ACTIVIST

This rabbi is an agent for change in society. The social action committee is very active and the rabbi takes a leadership role. In the 1960s, this rabbi marched in Selma and in the 1980s demonstrated in front of the Soviet Embassy.

RABBI AS SOCIAL EXEMPLAR/ROLE MODEL

The rabbi lives his rabbinate every moment. She understands that where she shops and how she raises her children is carefully observed by her community. She walks her talk. The rabbi is a role model who communicates authenticity. She understands and uses her power as a "symbolic exemplar."

RABBI AS VISIONARY LEADER

This rabbi is always one step ahead of his community. He sees beyond the moment. The rabbi can articulate a compelling vision for the future. The rabbi strives to lead the community to a new place and a new purpose. The rabbi is at the forefront of the change ethic.

RABBI AS COMMUNITY PERSONAGE

This rabbi is the community's first citizen, active in community and Jewish organizations. This rabbi represents the religious community to first responders, on the city's interfaith council, perhaps on government boards. She thrives on politics. She teaches the community the values of her synagogue community.

RABBI AS WORSHIP LEADER

The rabbi is at home leading the congregation in religious services. The congregation feels comfortable as the rabbi conducts services. He loves ritual and ceremony. This rabbi is very knowledgeable about synagogue practice and practical halakhah. This rabbi takes preaching very seriously.

RABBI AS SPIRITUAL GUIDE

This rabbi is very concerned about the inner spiritual journey of congregants. Individual religious experience is more important than the communal worship. The rabbi might have trained as a spiritual mentor.

RABBI AS FUNDRAISER

This rabbi is comfortable discussing finances and sees her role as marshalling people to fund important synagogue activities. She is an effective solicitor. This rabbi sees that the relationship between sacred means and sacred ends is a responsibility of the rabbi.

RABBI AS EMPLOYEE

Every rabbi works for an institution. He needs to know and understand governance and how a board works. He needs to be comfortable with the lay-professional dynamic. Above all, the rabbi needs to accept direction from others, accept supervision and acknowledge evaluation. The rabbi meets regularly with the lay leadership to discuss expectations.

RABBI AS WORKING SCHOLAR

The presence and the respect a rabbi generates through her work is grounded in the knowledge that the rabbi is conversant with classic Jewish texts and uses them in her teachings, conversations, and writings, etc. The rabbi must maintain scholarship through personal continuing Jewish studies.

RABBI AS COMMUNITY BUILDER

This rabbi is a symbolic leader who emphasizes selected attention and signals to others what is of importance and of value. This rabbi creates a space where people can gather safely to share common purposes and common symbols to foster a group identity. Individuals are encouraged to share their personal narratives in respect and supportive environments often through text study. As a result, these participants feel understood by and connected with other members of the community.

RABBI AS *MARA D'ATRA*

This rabbi is the ultimate religious authority. She makes binding religious decisions for the congregants. The rabbi's role is to be the halakhic decisor for individuals and for the community as a whole.

Based on the work of Margaret Fletch Clark, "Ten Models of Ordained Ministry," as quoted in *Pastoral Stress*, by Anthony G. Pappas; Rabbi Matthew Simon wrote an initial draft; created by Rabbi Elliot Salo Schoenberg for work with congregations. Revised September 2007.

APPENDIX G: SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE

- 1) What three accomplishments stand out in your mind from your professional experience of the last year, in the context of the synagogue's goals and mission? Use examples of where you met the expectations of your leadership.
- 2) What three things do you appreciate about your synagogue and its accomplishments?
- 3) What are the three most important things that you learned about yourself and your work in the last year? What insights have been gained?
- 4) What three of your professional roles are most important to you? How and when did you communicate these expectations to your leadership?
- 5) Are there areas where you need to improve and what will you do about them?
- 6) What are your organizational and/or personal goals for the coming year and how do they fit with the synagogue's current goals and objectives?
- 7) What are your priorities for the coming year?
- 8) What external factors (outside of yourself), if any, interfere with your abilities to achieve your personal goals? Your organization's goals?
- 9) What specific decisions and actions are necessary to strengthen your professional role? What additional resources are needed to make you more effective in your work?

APPENDIX H: ASSESSEMENT GUIDE FOR LAY LEADERSHIP

- 1) What three accomplishments stand out in your mind about the rabbi?
- 2) What three skills, talents and types of knowledge do the rabbi demonstrate that fit in with your synagogue?
- 3) What are the most important things that the rabbi learned this year?
- 4) What three professional roles of the rabbinic position are most important to the board and the synagogue?
- 5) What three areas does this professional need to improve in? How will the congregation help the professional move in this direction?
- 6) What will the board and synagogue do to help the rabbi grow, learn and improve?
- 7) How well did the synagogue's mission and goals fit in with the rabbi's accomplishments? What are the synagogue's overall mission and goals for the coming year that the rabbi needs to be aware of?
- 8) What should the rabbi's priorities be for the next year?
- 9) What synagogue actions, policies or factors interfere with the rabbi's abilities to achieve his/her professional and synagogue priorities?
- 10) What can the synagogue do to strengthen the rabbi's work and role? What additional resources are needed to support the professional?