WEXFactor

Welcome to the WEXFactor Roundtable

MARCH 2014

Welcome to the WEXFactor Roundtable where we invite Member stories from across our network of recipients to come together for a lively conversation around a pressing topic relevant to Jewish Leadership. Our Roundtable this month is hosted by **Jonathan Lee** and **Rabbi Mike Stefansky** from **Kehilla Kadisha**.

Big and Small, Established and Nimble? A Jewish Organizational Tension

Framing the Topic

Many of the organizations in the Jewish community now has two sets of organizations with minor changes and contexts. There are analogues in some of the phenomena in the world.

For example, in health literature, the propagation, Polymerase, DTS, agencies, camps, and schools created a phenomenon of "Jewish Disneyland" where the Jewish community could be self-sufficient. In the Jewish community, there are many organizations that are nimble, small, and have a lot of impact. Some of these organizations are being absorbed into the larger institutions.

Over the past two decades, Jewish communities have responded with hundreds of "minyan", initiatives that are independent of the institutional Jewish world. Some of these initiatives have been absorbed into the larger institutional structure and operations, along with the same expectations and demands that were placed on the larger, established institutions. Some of these initiatives have been able to maintain their independence and have been able to grow and have impact. This has created a tension between the institutional Jewish world and the "upstarts" who are nimble and have impact. This has created a tension between the two worlds of Jewish life.

How do you currently experience the dynamic among small, nimble and large, established Jewish organizations? How might they be limiting us? Enriching us? Or something else entirely?

Rabbi Mike Stefansky – Kehilla Kadisha

> I depended a lot on the people leading a particular project. If the leadership was a good fit and passionate about the project, it was likely to succeed. If not, it was not. I'm not a big fan of top-down initiatives. I'm more a fan of grassroots initiatives that are led by people who are passionate. Some of the most successful initiatives I've taught.
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> – Rabbi Mike Stefansky, Senior Director of Kehilla Kadisha, a community initiative of Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, on the importance of leadership in the success of a project

Rabbi Mike Stefansky – Kehilla Kadisha

> Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) is a network of 157 federations and 300 plus communities. Kehilla Kadisha is a network of 18 communities. Kehilla Kadisha is a network within a network. We are a network of networks. We are a network of networks that are independent and interdependent. We are a network of networks that are independent and interdependent. We are a network of networks that are independent and interdependent