



Thriving Communities'
Favorite Tips for New(ish)
Presidents - 5782 edition



#1: You Are Not Alone

Parashat Yitro, Exodus 18:

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

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

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

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וַיֹּאמֶר חֲתָן מֹשֶׁה אֶת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־הוּא עֹשֶׂה לְעַם וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה־הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹשֶׂה לְעַם מִדּוּעַ אַתָּה יוֹשֵׁב לְבַדְּךָ וְכָל־הָעָם נֹצֵב עָלֶיךָ מִן־
וַיֹּאמֶר חֲתָן מֹשֶׁה אֵלָיו לֹא־טוֹב הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹשֶׂה:
נָבֵל תִּבְלַגְּמֵאֲתָה גַם־הָעָם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר עִמָּךְ כִּי־כִבַּד מִמֶּךָ הַדְּבָר לֹא־תוּכַל עֲשֹׂהוּ לְבַדְּךָ:

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

Pirkei Avot 1:6

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

וּקְנִי לְךָ חֵבֵר

mweiss@reconstructingjudaism.org

jland@reconstructingjudaism.org

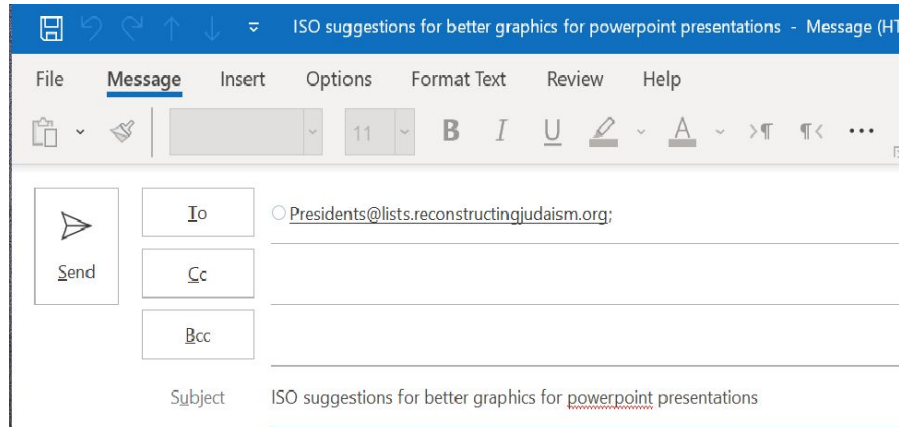
tgrauer@reconstructingjudaism.org

mharris@reconstructingjudaism.org

*Don't know who your Liaison is? Ask Jacob in the chat!



#3 The Presidents Listserv is Your Friend



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

Pronouns: he/him/his

MWeiss@ReconstructingJudaism.org | 215.576.0800 x 155

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

Pirkei Avot 1:6

Make for yourself [a relationship with] a teacher

עֲשֵׂה לְךָ רַב



#5 - Use your committees

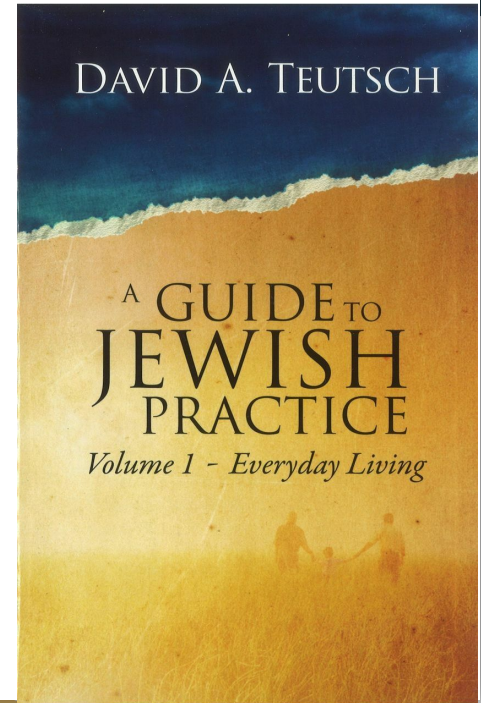
“Decisions should be made at the lowest level at which there is sufficient competency and trust and diversity and commitment.”

-Rabbi David Teutsch (and Tresa Grauer)



#6 - Study up on Jewish Speech Ethics

“Gossip that involves repeating unflattering facts has the capacity to do irreparable harm to the individuals discussed. Exchanging information about our lives, building relationships, and networking are not forms of gossip, though they are sometimes unfairly and incorrectly categorized that way. Gossip involves statements that are damaging. When those damaging statements are true, they are usually known as *l’shon hara*, bad speech,. Such gossip need not be done with ill intent in order to be damaging. The original speaker cannot know its effect on the hearer or on anyone else who hears it later. A person who listens to *l’shon hara* without a morally significant reason to do so is a partner in an immoral act. After all, gossip requires both a speaker and a listener. The preferable response is asking the speaker to stop or simply walking away.” -pg. 123



#7 - Set an intentional culture of your board meetings

-You can start with some Torah!
We've published four volumes of text studies for board meetings. Don't forget- it's Jewish!

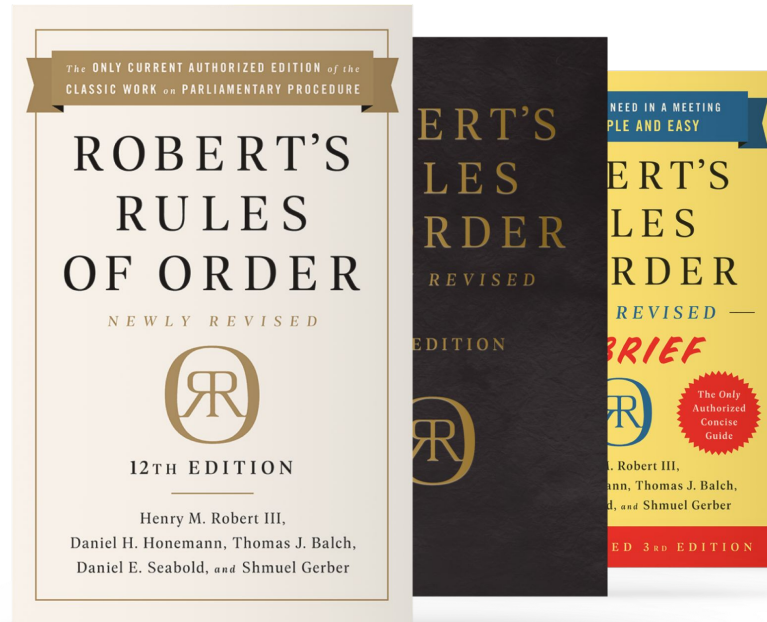
-Establish Community Norms

-Do meetings start on time? Is there shmoozing before and after?

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

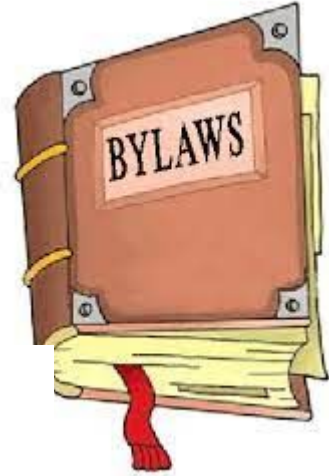


#9 - Study and Teach the Torah of Your Community

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

-Mission Statement

-Community Values



#10 - Learn from Past Presidents

“The Past Has a Vote, Not a Veto”

- Reconstructionist maxim from Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan.



#11 Hybrid and Meetings on Zoom

meetings no longer need to be all in person or all on Zoom - consider varied and different programs in varied venues.