



Tips to help SHJ Communities Develop and Grow

RETAINING MEMBERS FROM THE VERY BEGINNING

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A study of synagogue retention rates by Measuring Success demonstrated that when new members had even a single individual meeting with the rabbi, they were much likely to renew. This makes sense – when leadership in the community recognizes you, you feel more valued and important to the community as a whole. Have someone in leadership in your community make one-on-one contact with each new member. This person can be your rabbi or your (formal or informal) community leader. Other effective retention strategies are follow-up phone calls, taking a new member for coffee, hosting a “New Member” program, sending personal emails, connecting a new member with a “buddy,” or creating specialized mailings for new and prospect members.

You can also implement the “Six-Foot-Rule”: if an existing member sees a new attendee or member within six feet of them at an event, that existing member should go up to that new person and say, “Hi!” This strategy can be particularly effective if you assign members to be greeters ahead of time so that people know to be “on the job” at the event.

Rabbi Jerris has prepared a document with additional ideas to help you integrate and retain your members by following five distinct steps. You can access the Member Integration and Retention document [at this link](#).