



J Street Leadership Development Resources - October 2023 - JStreet.org/GrowingLeaders

Dear J Street Leaders:

We all know how important it is to J Street's mission to attract new leaders and to increase the engagement of the existing leaders. We recognize that each chapter has different characteristics, and we hope this tool will serve as a 'menu' of ideas that you might want to try, or may already use -- there is no single 'right' way to grow your leadership ranks.

When you think about how you got involved, most folks share that they were personally invited to an event by a trusted friend. When you think about growing the engagement of leaders in J Street, don't forget how important it is to personally invite someone to participate ... and then follow up.

Who is a J Street leader?

A J Street leader is defined as a person who one or more of these roles:

- Member of chapter's leadership team or Executive Committee or chair of a spoke
- Advocacy leader, such as District Advocacy Coordinator [DAC] or JNET [designated key contact with a personal relationship with member of congress]
- Jewish Communal Leader, such as Synagogue Liaisons or representing J Street in Jewish communal organization
- Contributor at \$1800+ level to J Street C3 or C4 operating funds

What is the best way to grow our leadership ranks?

We think a 'funnel' approach is key – here is how that works:

- Step 1 - Take inventory of your current leaders. Make a list of all your leaders, what their role is, with an indicator of their engagement [perhaps High, Medium, Low, Growing, Shrinking]. Brainstorm ways to increase their engagement, and be clear who owns the next step.
- Step 2 - Identify specific roles you need to fill - maybe your chapter needs a co-chair for Advocacy, or a liaison to a big congregation, or a DAC for a member of congress.
- Step 3 - Create a list of emerging leaders, including people who have become reliable supporters. Identify the best current leaders who have [or could develop] a relationship with these folks. If you have a long list of emerging leaders [this is a good thing!], you may want to select just three or four folks to focus on at a time. Brainstorm the right tactics to get them involved, and be clear who owns those next steps.
- Step 4 - Work the funnel. Reviewing and updating these three lists should be a recurring item every time your chapter leaders meet.

What are specific ways to increase the engagement of current leaders, or transition a reliable supporter into a leader?

- The following document is designed to give you lots of ideas to consider. Think of this as a buffet – not everything here would work in every chapter, but consider how they might help you grow the leadership in your chapter.
- We recognize that the notion of ‘one size fits all’ does not apply here - consider what you think might work best in your chapter, given your chapter’s maturity, size, geographic concentration, and political environment. You will find tactics that we think might work in many chapters. The list is organized by the spokes (how J Street is organized) - Advocacy, Political, Communal, and Development, as well as a group of tactics that cross-over all the spokes.

Send us your success stories and your ideas to make this resource more helpful. Please email Karen.L.Isaacson@gmail.com with your input.

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Leadership Development Tactics

Go to jstreet.org/GrowingLeaders for links to **tools and resources** [1:1 tips, house meeting toolkit, Synagogue Liaison resources, worksheets]. Our “best bets” are in listed in bold.

Multiple Spoke Ideas – impact multiple spokes

- **M1: Meet one-on-one with emerging leaders to determine level of interest and to increase areas of leadership participation. Create expectation that chapter leaders will each conduct certain number of one-on-ones annually**
- **M2: Ask leaders or emerging leaders to work on a specific committee/spoke**
- **M3: Ask leaders or emerging leaders to personally invite other J Street supporters to encourage participation in various activities/events**
- **M4: Ask an emerging leader to host a “house party” for a candidate, elected official, or speaker - at home, office, or synagogue.**
- **M5: Follow-up after every event. Contact personally anyone who attends an event to determine level of interest in additional types of participation. Email, phone call, then in-person as appropriate**
- **M6: Have board member call targeted leaders annually to thank them for their work and connect**
- **M7: Always collect names and email addresses and, if possible, phone numbers for everyone who attends a J Street event – in person or on-line**
- M8: Create a short questionnaire to determine interest in specific activities [e.g. IDMs, hosting house parties, committee membership] to hand out at events
- M9: Encourage leaders to attend non-J Street events [town halls of MOCs, non-J Street fundraisers, etc.] wearing J Street pins, T shirts, hats
- M10: Consider expanding the geographic reach of the chapter to include additional Congressional districts. For example, Portland has expanded to Oregon, and Boston has expanded to Massachusetts, first to include the neighboring district and then across the state
- M11: Ask leader to be co-chair or on host committee for major local event. Give welcoming speech or pitch or introduce speaker. Fill a table or invite friends.
- M12: Attract and engage more diverse demographics by asking folks to organize events or house meetings around a specific demographic or Israeli domestic topics, such as Women of the Wall update, Rights of non-Orthodox Jews in Israel, gay rights in Israel, judicial shifts in Israel for young lawyers, water access for environmentalists - Arava Institute, EcoPeace
- M13: Nominate leader for Congressional Delegation or Leader Mission, and encourage follow up and report back from participants
- M14: Identify emerging leaders to present at leadership summit or conference
- M15: Reach out to parents of J Street U board/leaders
- M16: Develop new leader assimilation module for Leadership Summits

Advocacy Spoke Ideas

- **A1: Put DACs on an Executive Committee or other leadership group that meets on a regular basis**
- **A2: Identify emerging leaders with existing strong relationships with candidates and potential candidates for national office**
- **A3: Invite leaders or emerging leaders to have speaking role with member of Congress at in-district meeting**
- **A4: Provide training to DACs, including role description, resources, ways to engage others**
- A5: Invite an emerging leader to become a DAC and/or JNet for a member of Congress
- A6: Identify high action takers and donors using 'Action Kit' database of highest volume and newest 'action takers'
- A7: Ask a leader to write/publish op-ed on critical topics, experiences in Jewish news vehicle, social media posts, podcast and amplify through J Street channels

Communal Spoke Ideas

- **C1: Invite leader or emerging leader to be Synagogue Liaison or link to synagogue's Israel Committee** (learn more about being a Synagogue Liaison [here](#))
- **C2: Invite emerging leader to create distribution list of J Street friendly folks at synagogue and communicate regularly to share articles, events, speakers**
- C3: Arrange events at synagogue (see Synagogue Liaison resources [here](#))
- C4: Create co-chairs for SL network in chapter to share best practices and build momentum
- C5: Identify emerging leader to be link to local related ally and partner organizations, such as NIF, APN, URJ, Reconstructionist Movement, Federation, JCRC, Avodah
- C6: Bring J Street presence to ally and partner organization event and vice versa, or host an event to learn more about each other
- C7: Create informal affinity groups of leaders to create community - such as Women, LGBTQ, Clergy, Israelis, Observant Jews, Past/present synagogue presidents

Development Spoke Ideas

- **D1: Create individualized stewarding plans to identify non-financial ways to increase their leadership through [1:1 with other leaders](#); Identify and follow up on key interests**
- **D2: Provide intentional training for leaders as ambassadors in conversations that [eventually] include financial commitment, how to tell your own story, engagement**
- D3: Create special access events for donors to better connect and understand their interests
- D4: Develop guidelines and training to thank major donors, first-time donors in consistent manner, including using leaders to thank other leaders
- D5: Ask leaders to be development 'ambassador' with assigned, manageable number of 'mini files' for lay leader to steward

- D6: Create chapter development committee. Identify chair or co-chairs with interest in and passion for development - including training, process, prospecting, follow up
- D7: Infuse culture of development among chapter leadership - determine/communicate goals [dollars, participation], put on every agenda with consistent tracking and recognition
- D8: Create a community of chapter development leaders - share best practices, learnings, cohort, advisors
- D9: Recognize great development leaders by asking them to role model how to tell their story in development conversations
- D10: Ask leaders to identify prospects in other cities

Political Spoke Ideas

- **P1: Invite emerging leader to participate in meeting to brief/vet candidates**
- P2: Invite emerging leaders to participate in political campaigns, representing J Street
- P3: Recruit to Finance Committee, including inviting prospects to quarterly Finance Committee call
- P4: Canvass for candidates, wearing J Street swag, and sharing pictures with candidates
- P5: Host fundraisers for J Street PAC endorsed candidates, such as in-person events, Zoom fundraisers, multi-candidate events, Majority Maker or Hometown Heroes
- P6: Invite emerging and existing leaders to be on host committee for event. Consider co-chairing with someone you are developing.
- P7: Bring emerging leaders to private lunch or breakfast meeting with member of Congress or candidatetable or invite friends.