



**One-on-One Meetings as a Mechanism to Engage and Connect with J Street Leaders**  
*(With appreciation to the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization for the basis of this document)*

**What is a 1:1?** 1:1 meetings are face to face, two way conversations for about 30-45 mins through which two people develop a “public relationship” by sharing their stories, values, concerns, passions, self interests, and visions.

**Why do 1-1s?** Relational meetings are at the heart of organizing. We do them because:

- We want to live in a world where people relate to each other, talk to each other about what is truly important and value each other for who they are, not what they have. Making these conversations a priority, we build a community that reflects our values and visions.
- We seek to build a stronger organization by fostering stronger relationships and developing leaders who have deep relationships with a broad group.
- We want to learn people’s self interests in order to identify what people are most passionate about and what they may be willing to to work on inside and outside of the congregation.
- We can identify potential new leaders for our congregations
- The more people know each other, the more they will be committed to working together and the congregation.

**What are some rules of 1:1?**

<b>Two Way Conversation</b>	Take time to ask questions and listen. It is an exchange of stories. Ask probing questions and share your own stories. This is a conversation NOT an interview. Do not take notes during the meeting. Always meet in person.
<b>Intentional/Time Limited</b>	Schedule for 30-45 mins for the express purpose of building a public relationship by sharing stories and interests.
<b>Stories/Interests/Deep</b>	This is a 2-way exchange of stories, values, dreams, and concerns. The stories of what happened in the past that make us who we are today. The stories of what is happening now that shape our world, give us hope, worries us, anger us, move us to want to do something, to act. The stories of the future that we want to create for ourselves and the people we love. How did the experiences make you/ them feel (not just think)?
<b>Public Not Private</b>	Not prying into someone’s private business but rather understanding each other’s interests and building a public relationship. Personal but not therapy.
<b>Probing not Prying</b>	Ask “why” questions to understand who the person is, not just “what” they do/ More stories, fewer facts. More questions, fewer speeches. More about who we really are as people, less about what people say or how society works.

### 1-1s ARE...

- Face to face (not done on phone or email)
- One to one (two people, not three, or four or larger groups)
- Intentional and deliberate (not just bumping into someone)
- To create, deepen or renew a public relationship with someone you may have interacted with before or have interacted with but do not really know
- An active attempt to understand another person more deeply and his/her interests
- A way to understand the “WHY” behind the “WHAT.”

### 1-1s are NOT...

- Asking for help with tasks, a committee, or a project; selling an idea or cause
- Fundraising
- Chit-chat, a private meeting, or therapy session; time for gossip
- A search for those who agree with you or your ideas
- A fact finding mission, survey

### Before the 1:1 Meeting: Meet with yourself!

- Contact the person to ask to schedule a short meeting. If someone else suggested you meet with them, tell them who (that is your credential). Explain why you are asking for the meeting. Example frame: I am on the leadership team of members of our chapter of J Street that is working to build a stronger organization and I'd like to better understand your interest in and connection to J Street
- Before the meeting, think about some questions you have for them. What makes you curious about the person you are about to meet with?
- Think about your own story...why do you do what you do? Think of how you want to share your story in your 1-1s.

### 1:1 Meeting Shape:

- **Beginning:** Introductions, credential why you want to meet with them (e.g. I have interacted with you at Advocacy meetings and was curious to get to know you better).. Warm up with simple questions. What do you love about J Street? What drew you to J Street? Do you have a story of when you felt that?
- **Middle:** Build relationships and learn each other's self-interests. Exchange stories. Who you both are, why you do what you do, asking for stories.
  - Go in depth on a few things, not necessary to cover everything. It is not a full life story rather an insight into certain stories that make a person tick.
  - Who they/you are as a member: Where have they been involved? How does it give them meaning? Do they have stories about this?
  - Who they/you are as a human being: What are their values? Where did they come from? Who taught them/you to value what they do? Who are mentors/heros? Origin stories? Hopes and dreams? What experiences have most shaped life?
  - Community: What excites or motivates? What issues are concerning? What keeps you up at night? What is sad or angering? Where is time spent and why?
- **End:** Thank you for the meeting. If there are any next steps, maybe you both decide to meet again. Maybe not. Perhaps you want an introduction to others to do 1:1 meetings with (who else should I meet with? Why?). Hopefully you leave the meeting with a stronger understanding of one another.



### ➤ **After meeting - Evaluation and notes:**

- Do NOT take notes during the meeting. Evaluate how the meeting went immediately after meeting.
- Share highlights with staff for future follow up
- Identify specific opportunities to better engage this leader and make those introductions
- Was this truly a two way conversation? What key learnings do you take away? How did you feel in the meeting? What did you do well? What do you want to do differently next time? How could you have gotten deeper or shared more stories? Is this person someone I want to meet with again? Is the person a potential leader which is rooted in their own self-interest? What questions do you still have for this person, if any? Did I take enough risks to ask deep questions? Where did I shy away from asking a question? Do I want a second meeting to deepen our relationship?

### **Tips and What to Avoid:**

- Anytime you want to ask a “WHAT” question change it to a “WHY” question.
- Do not spend too much time in the introduction part of the 1-1. Try to get to the heart of the matter and go deep quickly. It is easy to get stuck in chit-chat.
- Take risks! Ask questions. Share stories. Try something new in each meeting. You will make mistakes and that is ok. The best meetings are when you take risks.
- Do not create expectations. This is not a survey where we are collecting information. If it is framed this way, people will expect ‘something’ to happen. This is about deepening relationships and human connection.
- Be honest and vulnerable. Share stories about personal experiences that shape who you are. Do not share private issues.
- Do not try to solve problems. Since these are public relationships, you are not a therapist. If you offer help or resources of any kind this can create expectations. The only expectation is to get to know one another better.