

The JJF/BBYO Professional Development Institute Narrative Companion to Theory of Change (ToC) Graphic

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WHAT IS A NARRATIVE COMPANION?

Over the past several months, JJF/BBYO and BTW have been working jointly to define and articulate the JJF/BBYO Professional Development Institute's Theory of Change. As we bring the theory together to display visually in a single graphic presentation, we condense the language used to describe the problems, strategies, targets and outcomes. We do not, however, want to lose the common understanding and meaning behind that language. This narrative companion piece offers a place to capture and keep the more complete description and articulation of the JJF/BBYO's Professional Development Institute Theory of Change as it is conceived to date.

PURPOSE OF THE JJF/BBYO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The purpose of the JJF/BBYO Professional Development Institute (PDI) is to increase the capacity and commitment of talented, early-career Jewish professionals to build a career in Jewish communal institutions.

OVERVIEW OF THE INSTITUTE'S THEORY OF CHANGE

The JJF/BBYO Professional Development Institute combines full-time employment at BBYO, graduate education in business administration, Jewish education studies and a mentoring/coaching experience. This combination of services and supports are intended to improve the recruitment and retention of high-caliber early-career Jewish professionals in their primary place of employment (BBYO) and over the longer term within the Jewish community. The skills and knowledge participants acquire and apply in their workplace are intended to improve the quality of the programs and services for which they are responsible.

Providing post-graduate placement and social/professional networking will help deepen participants' commitment to working within Jewish communal institutions. A marketing and communications strategy to other Jewish communal employers and like-minded organizations and funders will ensure Jewish community-wide awareness and assistance in strengthening and broadening the PDI's effectiveness.

Ultimately, this cadre of talented Jewish professionals with excellent management and Judaic knowledge and skills will run and lead *quality* programs and services at Jewish communal institutions (including BBYO).

ASSUMPTIONS

There are several underlying assumptions embedded in the PDI Theory of Change and these assumptions are the driving principles for the creation of the PDI. They are:

1. A reason that the highest performing young people are not attracted to employment in Jewish communal organizations is that there are limited professional development opportunities.
2. Many early-career Jewish communal professionals lack...
 - ...the management skills necessary to lead complex Jewish communal organizations.
 - ...the necessary Judaic background knowledge to implement quality Jewish education programs in the field.
 - ...the social and professional networks needed to keep them within the sector and increase their commitment to the community.
3. Recruitment and retention of highly-qualified staff will result in improved services and programs within the organizations where those staff work.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

In addition to the underlying assumptions on which PDI rests, there is the environmental context in which it is operating. Environmental factors are beyond the scope of PDI's theory of change, but are realities that can indirectly influence the PDI. Some of the existing factors that may influence or challenge the ability of Jewish communal institutions to recruit and cultivate quality professionals include, but are not limited to:

- Growing competition for nonprofit leaders in the nonprofit sector.
- Allure of better paid opportunities for highly qualified candidates in the private sector.
- A loss of Jewish cultural commitment and identity resulting from Jewish assimilation and intermarriage.
- Low rates of teen engagement in Jewish life.

THE PROBLEMS FOR WHICH PDI IS A SOLUTION

Operating within the above environmental context, the JJF/BBYO Professional Development Institute is providing a three-year multifaceted professional development program that is intending to address the following threefold problem:

- The Jewish communal field is challenged to **recruit** talented Jewish professionals
- The Jewish communal field is challenged to **retain** talented Jewish professionals
- The challenges of recruitment and retention undermine **program and service quality**

KEY STRATEGIES

Strategy 1: Targeted Recruitment

PDI will attract high-caliber, talented Jewish college graduates to participate in the Institute. BBYO will network with partner organizations and mine the BBYO employee pool and alumni database to identify and invite potential candidates to apply first for positions within BBYO and for participation in the first cohort. The institute will provide tuition for an advanced business degree from a top-tiered university and create an attractive program design as a means to recruit the brightest candidates. An overall outreach and recruitment strategy (including criteria for selection) is to be determined.

Strategy 2: Minimum Three-Year Professional Experience

BBYO will employ PDI participants in full-time positions for a minimum period of three years, primarily in positions leading and managing teen programs. Employment adds an experiential learning component to the PDI and provides participants with a way to apply and test the skills and knowledge they are acquiring.

Strategy 3: Graduate Education in Business Administration

Participants will enhance their management and leadership skills by completing an MBA program. PDI will fully fund MBA scholarships for all participants. The MBA provider will be a top university and the teaching modality will consist of a combination of distance learning classes and intensive annual on-site seminars.

Strategy 4: Judaic Learning

The Jewish study component will enhance and enrich personal Judaic knowledge and commitment to Jewish learning through a Jewish study program and Israel study experience, the details of which are to be determined. In addition, the Jewish education component will focus on improving participants' skills and ability to effectively engage teens in Jewish learning.

Strategy 5: Mentoring

Each participant will build a relationship with a mentor¹ who will provide support, guidance and networking opportunities throughout the program by offering access to prominent leaders in the local Jewish community and furthering the participant's professional development. These relationships and connections will broaden participants' view of leadership in Jewish communal institutions and work to deepen their commitment to the field. Mentor recruiting, matching and placement and training details are yet to be determined.

¹ Some mentors will be local, while others mentor-mentee matches may be topic specific and the mentor may be located in another city.

Strategy 6: Social/Professional Networking

PDI activities will focus on developing participants as a cohesive cohort of Jewish professionals who can support each other during the program and beyond. While the use of online technology (i.e., blogs, websites) will support the development of each cohort, specific activities and tactics—and the frequency and nature of face to face meetings—are yet to be determined.

Strategy 7: Post-Graduate Job Placement in the Jewish Community

Graduates of the three-year program will receive career search and job placement assistance in pursuing professional opportunities in the broader Jewish community. Organized employment support will help deepen participants' commitment to working in Jewish communal institutions. While a certain percentage will continue with BBYO, most will move to other positions within the Jewish community. Networking and mentor relationships will also play a part in post-graduate placement.

Strategy 8: Marketing and Communications Dissemination

BBYO and JJF will reach out to other like-minded organizations/funders and potential Jewish communal institution employers through convening, marketing and a communication plan to ensure Jewish community-wide awareness and assistance in strengthening the PDI's efforts and goals. In addition, JJF will be engaged in efforts to identify potential employers and adequate professional opportunities for graduates in Jewish communal institutions. Evaluation results will be disseminated as part of PDI's marketing and communication plan.

Strategy 9: Adapting PDI best practices

To achieve JJF and BBYO's long-term outcome of improved overall recruitment and retention of talented Jewish professionals at Jewish communal institutions, BBYO will identify select best-practices from the Professional Development Institute and implement them on an organization-wide level at a smaller scale. This may include bringing in certain speakers, sending staff to particular Judaic classes, etc. Details of implementation at BBYO and sharing of practices with other Jewish communal institutions are yet to be determined.

PROCESS BENCHMARKS

By September 2008, we will be able to look at some early process indicators to determine whether the PDI is on track and to inform JJF Board members on PDI progress. At this stage, participants will have been recruited and selected and the PDI's design will be complete. It is also our assumption that, by this point, participants will have completed their first summer experience that includes an orientation to the program, an academic component and a Jewish study program component. The length and substance of the summer academic component is to be determined, and expected benchmarks of this component will be defined accordingly.

Process benchmarks address program launch and implementation progress, as well as early indicators of participant satisfaction.

Milestones Activities

Several programmatic activities should have taken place by August 2008 in order for the PDI to be on track with intentions and timeline:

- **Cohort 1 participants recruited and selected.** As a result of a targeted recruitment strategy, has PDI attained the desired number of qualified applicants and selected 15-20 high-caliber participants? Was the program oversubscribed? Who was accepted and who was not accepted? What are the recruitment lessons?
- **Developed, selected and implemented PDI infrastructure, providers and curriculum.** Has BBYO developed a strong program implementation infrastructure and hired a director? Are academic and Jewish study providers selected and have curricula been developed and aligned with PDI's strategies? Is the mentoring program developed and have high-quality mentors been selected?

Participant Indicators

At the end of the first summer program, several indicators at the participant level will suggest progress towards expected longer-term outcomes.

- **A sense of connection among participants.** After spending several weeks as a cohort, are participants experiencing an increased sense of connection to one another?
- **Interest in working in the Jewish community.** At the end of the summer program, to what extent do participants feel interested in pursuing a career in the Jewish community? Do they feel an increased sense of commitment as a result of their summer experience?
- **Satisfaction with PDI activities to date.** How did the academic and Judaic summer programs meet participant expectations? How satisfied are participants with the various components of the summer program (i.e. academic, Judaic, orientation, mentoring, etc.)? To what extent are they interested and excited in continuing with the program?

POST-GRADUATE OUTCOMES

At the end of three years, when a cohort completes the program and graduates, a series of outcomes are expected for individual participants as well as more broadly for BBYO and the JJF/BBYO Professional Development Institute.

JJF and BBYO Outcomes

- **80% of PDI participants successfully complete program.** By the end of the three year period, 80% of participants will have earned their MBA, completed their Jewish study program requirements and still be working at BBYO. Exact meaning of “successfully completed” is yet to be determined.
- **Improvement in quality of BBYO programs led by PDI participants.** Program quality is highly dependent on staff knowledge, skills, leadership ability and retention. As a result of a comprehensive professional development program that combines training in business administration with Judaic knowledge as well as with supported employment experience, the quality of programs and services provided by participants is expected to increase. **One of the most significant indicators to assess program quality would be to track and measure the impact experienced by teen program recipients.** Indicators for impact on teens could include:
 - ◆ Increased participation of teens in BBYO programs
 - ◆ Increased satisfaction of BBYO experience among cohorts of teens led by PDI participants
 - ◆ Enhanced engagement and commitment within the Jewish community among cohorts of teens led by PDI participants
- **Expressed interest from additional talented, early-career Jewish professionals to participate in PDI.** As a result of PDI awareness building through convening, marketing and a communication plan, the institute will have built a strong reputation. Other qualified talented, early-career Jewish professionals will seek out professional development training with BBYO. Indicators of this may include an increase in the number of applicants for future cohorts and an increase in the quality of those applicants.
- **Increased awareness and understanding within the Jewish community of PDI's efforts and added value.** As a result of PDI awareness building through convening, marketing and a communication plan, there will be recognizable awareness and support for this institute to continue.

Participant Outcomes

- **Improved participant skills in management and Jewish teachings.** As a result of their BBYO employment experience, MBA and Jewish study program participants will have increased their business skills, leadership capacity, knowledge of Jewish traditions, text, heritage and values.
- **Increased participant commitment to working in the Jewish community.** The culmination of intended and unintended PDI activities will develop participants' commitment to working in the Jewish community. Participants will have acquired the training, experience and exposure to professional opportunities in Jewish communal institutions and will want to continue working in the Jewish community as a result. Participants' relationship with mentors and general networking will feed this desire.
- **Increased sense of connection and community among participants.** After three years, participants will have created lasting bonds with individuals within their cohort that will serve to keep them connected after graduation.
- **Successful placement of 80% of graduates in professional positions in Jewish communal institutions.** As a result of JJF/BBYO's marketing and communications dissemination in the Jewish community and post-graduate job placement efforts, 80% of graduates are expected to continue to assume professional positions in Jewish communal institutions. Approximately 25% of participants are expected to stay on with BBYO post-graduation.
- **Increased satisfaction with BBYO professional work experience.** How has participants' attitude towards their BBYO job changed? Are they more satisfied than before starting the program?

LONGER-TERM OUTCOMES

JJF and BBYO Outcomes

- **BBYO and other Jewish communal institutions have improved recruitment and retention of talented Jewish professionals.** The problems that were the basis for the initial creation of this institute will be in the process of being ameliorated. The pool of trained and qualified Jewish leaders will have increased, and BBYO will no longer consider recruitment and retention of talented Jewish professionals to be a challenge. To ensure ongoing effective recruitment and retention at an organization-wide level, BBYO will apply best practices and successful components of the PDI to the rest of the staff. Other Jewish communal institutions that have employed PDI graduates will have improved their recruitment and retention as well.
- **Jewish communal institution program and service quality is enhanced.** Over time, impacts on service recipients will serve as indicators for improved quality.
 - ◆ BBYO will continue to serve more teens who are more satisfied with their BBYO experience and are more engaged with the Jewish community.

- ◆ Jewish communal organizations that hire and retain PDI graduates will improve the quality of the programs and services they provide and their clients/recipients will be more satisfied.

Participant Outcomes

- **Majority (70%) of graduates are working in Jewish institutions.** Five to ten years after participating in the PDI, an overwhelming number of graduates will still be committed to and working in jobs at Jewish institutions, including BBYO.
- **Significant numbers of participants have advanced to higher level positions within the Jewish community.** Participants will assume leadership positions (e.g., executive director) after having worked in the Jewish community for many years. They will advance and use their knowledge, skills and networks acquired during the program to do so.
- **Graduates continue to network with each other both professionally and socially.** The bonds and connections that cohort members formed during their PDI experience will endure and serve graduates in a tangible way as a continuing means of Jewish support and networking on both a professional and social level.