LEADERS ASSEMBLY 2018: THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE
March 18-20, 2018 in Baltimore, MD

Measuring Jewish Identity: Proposed Methods of Bringing Qualitative Data Into Camp Work
Monday, March 19 from 5:00PM-6:30PM

SESSION PRESENTER(S):
Dan Hazony, NCSY

SESSION DESCRIPTION:
Data is a very overwhelming topic for many nonprofits, especially in informal and experiential educational settings. It is very easy to hide behind the adage, "there is no way to quantify what we do for our teens." There is no industry-wide agreed upon standard to measuring Jewish identity, but it is important to setup proper systems and conversations that measure Jewish growth as to how you define it. In this session you will learn the basics of measuring Jewish identity, as we share our method for bringing qualitative data to camp.

BIG IDEAS FROM THIS SESSION:
Identifying What You Are Trying to Understand With Data:
- What are your camp's Jewish educational values?
- What are some of the struggles that your camp (or specific age group) are going through that you are trying to improve?
- If any, what are the Jewish educational goals of the parents sending their children to your camp?
- What do your donors and community supporters care about knowing in terms of your campers' Jewish educational experience?

Communicating Your Observational Goals:
- Who are the stakeholders that you want involved in this process?
- What communications do you send out to relevant staff in which you can start strategically messaging about the goals and this process?
- What opportunities do you have to train the staff and counselors responsible for implementing the system? How do you want to use that time together?
- Who is implementing this system initially? Is there anyone else that you want to keep informed along the way so that they can get more comfortable with the systems and processes?

Setting Up Systems to Track Observations:
- You do not need to spend a lot of money on a fancy system. Camper care software might be a solution. Otherwise, proper setup of a spreadsheet can go a long way.
- Whatever system you implement needs to be easy to manage for all those who need to interact with it.
- Your system is only as strong as how comfortable the people who need to populate it feel with it.

Dedicating Time to Analyzing Data as a Group:
- What opportunity to give your counselors to reflect and record data?
- Once the data is recorded, how often is there a small group conversation about facts seen in the observed data?
- Who are the best people that should be present to help foster such a conversation?
- How are action items recorded and followed up on to make sure that insights from the data turn into meaningful action?

Fostering a Culture of Data-Informed Change:
- Data is scary, especially for the educators and volunteers.
- Who is owning the process of becoming a data-informed organization?
- Which key leaders and stakeholders need to be strong ambassadors for the proposed change in order for it to work in a helpful manner?
- What guarantees are being made to your well-intentioned staff roster to make sure that this system is not intended to be a punitive system.
- What other existing data can be used to help soften the transition?

There are two excellent books about culture and proper use of data. I highly recommend reading these two books in order to understand what it means to build a healthy, data-informed organizational culture.

- "Competing on Analytics: The New Science of Winning" by Thomas Davenport (Harvard Business Review Press, 2017)
- "The Tyranny of Metrics" by Jerry Muller (Princeton University Press, 2018)

Additionally, anyone who wants to further discuss how to implement solutions in their organization can reach out to me at dan@ncsy.org