

Thriving Synagogue Learning Tool: Creating Buzz CHECK LIST

The purpose of “creating buzz” is to get the highest *response rate* possible to your congregation survey through informative, motivating communication to your members and participants. The survey models the values of inclusion, shared ownership, and transparency. Encouraging universal participation sends the message that the congregation is the sum total of its members and more. It says that everyone has a say and everyone has a share in the results.

Buzz is created through a PR campaign that calls upon your ingenuity, persistence, and good humor. Synagogues with a strong campaign generate member enthusiasm for and participation in the survey.

Here are 26 ideas for creating buzz. Commit to doing at least **2** of these **each week before the survey launches and 2 each week the survey is open**. Feel free to add your own ideas to the end of the list.

26 Ways (and More) to Create Buzz

- Make the Thriving Synagogue Learning Tool your own by adding a tagline. “Your Voice, Our Future,” “Everyone counts,” “Be counted!”
- Send emails to all individuals and congregation groups with creative and enticing content. Make the link to the survey easy to find.
 - Think about targeted groups and send specialized emails just for them
 - Sisterhood
 - Men’s Club
 - Religious School parents
 - Empty Nesters
 - New members
- Feature the Learning Tool prominently in your monthly bulletin with the link to the survey
 - Highlight notices using color, borders, design, neon lights, pictures, cartoons—anything that will call attention to the notice.
- Have people guess the results. Once they have the results, they can see who came the closest.
 - What percentage of our members do you think--
 - trust synagogue leadership
 - feel like outsiders
 - see the synagogue as a sacred place
 - find meaning in services
 - feel like they have a community here
 - believe the place runs smoothly
 - believe the synagogue has a strong future
- Announce the survey at Shabbat services, board meetings, committee meetings, educational programs, synagogue events.
 - Give people cards or bookmarks with the survey link to take home at the end of meeting.
- Place a clever, bright sign at the entrance or in the lobby.
- Post a thermometer (like United Way) that displays your growing response rate. Put it on the website, in the building, and in the newsletter as a reminder and motivator.
- Have different people make announcements at every meeting or event that takes place inside or outside of the building.

- Give people stickers to wear at Shabbat services that indicate they have filled out their survey.
- Have children in the religious school make posters about how everyone's voice counts (a study in grassroots democracy).
- Hold a kick-off event as you might for your capital campaign.
- Connect the survey and its purpose to the nearest holiday or build on a holiday celebration.
- Put messages out on social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.). Post the response rate each week or post a question a day from the survey.
- Have different people speak up on the importance of the survey (clergy, committee chairs, other leaders, other beloved people in the synagogue, famous members or members with a sense of humor).
- Create a one-minute video of different people, including opinion leaders, saying "please do this." Post on the website, send out links, run on the monitor in the lobby.
- Have members of the board call every congregant.
- Have your membership or engagement committee reach out to members one-on-one. Calls are more effective than emails.
- Collect and publicize testimonials from people who have filled out their survey—how easy, interesting, important it was.
- Offer an incentive for filling out the survey. Announce winners of the weekly drawing to entice people in.
- Hang a large poster on a wall in the synagogue with the title "I took the survey." Have board members prime the pump by signing and then let all other respondents sign.
- Inform leaders that if the synagogue gets over 50% response rate, your congregation will get a second free coaching session from SYNERGY.
- Design specific messages about the survey for Men's Club, Sisterhood, parents in the religious school, daily minyan or Shabbat regulars, and those involved with various synagogue committees.
- Set aside a computer in the library for survey participants. Put up signs letting people know that it is available.
- Set up laptops or tablets at the Sunday morning café.
- Have youth group members bring laptops to older members of the community and help them access and fill out the survey.
- Add a survey reminder (and link to the survey) to the signature line of professional staff and synagogue leaders' emails.
- [Your idea]
- [Your idea]
- [Your idea]
- [Your idea]

Possibilities for creating buzz are unlimited.

The ideas presented above are suggestions intended to inspire your own thinking. You do not need to do all of these and you do not need to do these in specific. But, for a successful survey, you do need to do *something*.