

USY OFFICER PACKET:

Communications Vice President

The *USY Officer Packets* are a project of
The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism,
Department of Youth Activities

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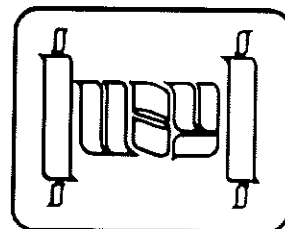


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Introduction: Editor's Note

Congratulations! If you are reading this, you are probably a chapter officer in one of the greatest and most vital Jewish organizations ever, United Synagogue Youth. Your office comes with a lot of responsibility, yet it is an experience that can be very rewarding. Like any other important officer would, you need to be **trained** in order to do a good job. And that is the purpose of this Officer Packet. Within these pages, you will find information on Leadership, on Programming, on Publicity, and on the responsibilities that come with your office. You are not expected to read the entire packet right away, but I hope that you will read the whole thing before your term is up.

You should not consider this packet as your personal property, but as the property of your chapter. When your term ends in the spring, you should pass this on to your successor so he or she can reap its benefits. Your chapter might want to include a "passing of the packets" as a part of a Final Banquet or Installation ceremony, or perhaps during a meeting of the two years' boards.

Also, this packet is expected to grow as time goes on. Your Chapter President or Regional President may give you something that they want you (or your whole Executive Board) to add to your packet. You might find some interesting material you want to be in the packet for "posterity". And last, but certainly not least, you may want to write up a report at the end of the year describing what you did in your position and what you learned, so that future USYers in your position can learn from your successes and your mistakes.

This is by no means your only resource, and by no means should it be. I have specifically refrained from including materials already in the USY Program Bank, because that information is already available to all chapters. The Program Bank, at <http://www.usy.org/yourusy/pbank/>, has many great ideas about leadership and programming, and you may want to add copies of its pages to your packet. Also, there is a great wealth of information on the International USY website, <http://www.usy.org/>. There are packets, handbooks, and other tools up there that can help you out immensely; take advantage of them.

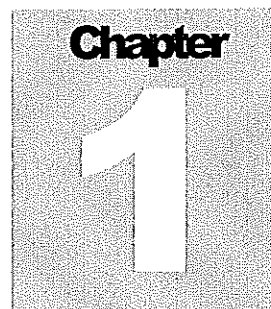
I want to thank all the regional communications vice presidents for their help in revising this packet, and sending me older packets from which to glean extra ideas, techniques, and so on, and especially Robbie Paskowitz, the 2001-2002 ECRUSY Communications VP, and Benji Bergstein, EPA's 2002-2003 Communications VP, for their help. Much of this packet is based off of previous packets, especially the one by John Davis, the 1997 International Communications Vice President, and also the 1989 packets put together by the 1989 International Board. Hirsch Fishman, the USY Publications Coordinator, was a great help in getting together a lot of material in the central office in New York as well. I also want to thank the International General Board for their help and advice in editing this packet.

Good luck with this officer packet. Learn from the information within its pages. And finally, use the knowledge you gain to help United Synagogue Youth to be the strongest organization it can be.

Good luck in your year,



Jason Lustig
2003 International USY Communications Vice President



CHAPTER 1: YOUR CHAPTER

USY starts at the chapter. Without the chapters, there would be no USY. In this section you'll read about what USY is, strengthening your chapter, leadership, and communicating with your chapter board.

What is USY?

USY is, of course, that youth group to which you have committed a good deal of your time and effort. But where does USY fit in to the larger scheme of things? The answer starts with an organization called the **United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism** (USCJ). USCJ is the umbrella organization of Conservative synagogues in the United States and Canada. It services the overall needs of its affiliated congregations. **United Synagogue Youth** (USY) and KADIMA are the official youth organizations of the Conservative Movement and are sponsored by the United Synagogue. Our connection with USCJ means that we are a Conservative Youth group, and that USY chapters exist only in USCJ congregations.

USY has grown from a handful of chapters to an international organization with thousands of high school aged members. In 1964 KADIMA was formalized as a separate entity for pre-USY age youngsters. USY was conceived as a means of meeting the social, educational, religious, and recreational needs of our young people. USY seeks to involve our youth in synagogue life and help build the Jewish community of the future. Furthermore, USY is a Zionist organization, trying to build a relationship between Israel and our members here in America and Canada. Today, USY is still working toward these same goals. One measure of our success is that we have begun to produce our own leaders, as many advisors, youth workers, Rabbis, synagogue presidents, etc. are themselves former USYers.

USY begins on the chapter level, which is where we recruit our members, train our leaders, and service our synagogues. The next level is the regional level. The regions have a variety of regional activities, to bring together members and leaders from the chapter. The third level is the international level. The international USY offices are located on the third floor of the United Synagogue building in New York City. The programs it runs include International Convention, USY Online, USY on Wheels, Israel Pilgrimage, USY High, Nativ, Tikun Olam, and the program bank.

Whose job is Communication?

There once were four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

This, if it were communication, would be a total disaster. For all of USY, and especially for your chapter, communication is the most important variable in terms of getting people involved, coming to events, and then having an awesome time. But it shouldn't even be a variable; communication should be a staple of not just your diet, and not just of everyone on your chapter's Executive Board either, but of *everyone* in your chapter.

As Communications Vice President, you should be a leader in communication. Be an example to everyone else in how people can communicate to others what's going on in your chapter and elsewhere in USY, and get

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others involved in communication. On the USY website, you can find a short packet that you can give to members of your chapter's board, and others who are interested, about how they can get involved in communication and publicize USY on their own.

Communicating with your Chapter Board

As important as it is to have good communication with your members, if you don't have good communication between your chapter board, then the entire year can turn into one misunderstanding and miscommunication after the other. As chapter communications vice president, you have a vital position in ensuring that your board keeps in touch and in understanding all the time, and then can have a fantastic year.

Minutes

A major (if unpopular) responsibility of the Communications Vice President is taking minutes at all of your board meetings. Taking minutes is not easy, especially if you've never taken them before and you are suddenly responsible for relaying what the board does at its meetings to the rest of USY, and making it so that every officer and your advisor has a copy of exactly what went on at your meeting.

The minutes should be complete and as brief as possible. The minutes should contain all of the important goings-on at the meeting, and all important business should be on record so that the board members can refer back to it if need be. Make sure to bring enough paper (and a pen that works!) to board meetings, so that you can take good notes. After the meeting, type the notes and e-mail them to your board, advisor, and youth director.

Tips on Taking Minutes

- **Focus on what's being said.** Take notes on it -- just like if you were in school.
- **Use shorthand.** "Shorthand" means abbreviations and other ways that make writing faster. Use initials for board members' names, abbreviate program names, and do anything else to make it faster to write. If you can write faster, you can get more information on paper and also won't fall behind.
- **Don't waste time** writing down too much detail. Your notes should be able to remind you what happened when you type them.
- **Make sure you can read your minutes!** If they're so messy you can't read them afterwards, then it's almost as if you didn't take them because you can't type them up and send them to your board.
- When taking minutes, **don't forget to participate** too! Don't get too caught up in writing every last detail down that you get behind and never get a chance to voice your opinion at the meeting.
- **Type the minutes** as soon as possible after the meeting. This way you won't forget what your notes mean, and people will be able to refer to the minutes quickly to know what happened (instead of calling you).
- **Leave out sarcastic or tactlessly frank comments** which, on paper, may look like insults. Do not report negative comments about individuals. "Joe was not nominated to be president" is alright; "Joe was not nominated to be president because Sue thinks he is irresponsible" could wind up hurting Joe, Sue, you, and your chapter.
- **Don't forget to include the date** and opening and adjourning times. Also make sure you sign your minutes when you submit them.

Chapter Board Listserves

Just like a chapter listserv, you can use a chapter board listserv for easy and fast communication with your fellow board members. You can create a free listserv at Yahoo!Groups, just like with chapter listserves, and then should add your board. Sometimes you should add your advisor and youth director, but this isn't always done. Either way, once you have your listserv, you can use it for all sorts of things, such as sending out your minutes to them over it, figuring out when to have the next board meeting, bringing up programming ideas, and so on. Most importantly, though, is to enjoy it!

Communication with Your Synagogue

All too often synagogues say, "Our USY chapter doesn't do anything," or "Nothing ever happens; they're useless." Most of the time this isn't true, and it's important that your synagogue knows what's going on in your chapter. If your synagogue sees what your chapter is doing, how they are impacting the synagogue positively, and that the members are becoming active in the synagogue, then they might just increase your chapter's funding, be more positive towards having the synagogue be a part of some of your programming, and generally be more friendly. There are a number of things you can do to communicate more smoothly and more in general with your synagogue, including:

- Make sure that the synagogue president, Rabbi, the office, and the vice president in charge of the youth commission are on your mailing list, so they see everything that is coming out of your chapter.
- In many synagogues, the chapter president is invited to the temple's executive board meetings. The president should go to **all** of them, and for each meeting, prepare a report on the latest in USY happenings.
- Invite your synagogue president and Rabbi to speak at your board meetings and talk to your chapter board.
- Invite these same people to join your events every once in a while; it's also great for your members to get to know these vital people in your congregation.
- Make sure that your board goes to Synagogue at least everyone once in a while. Some chapters have religious standards like regional and international officers do, and even if you don't, it looks good to your synagogue, and also may convince other USYers to go to shul too.

Giving Divrei Torah

Every chapter meeting or event should include a D'var Torah. Traditionally, a D'var Torah is a commentary on the weekly Torah or Haftorah portion. However, for the purposes of your chapter, you can use any bit of Jewish wisdom. Some ideas for the basis of your D'var Torah include: a quote, a passage, a story/Midrash (create your own!), a poem, Jewish custom, a famous Jewish personality, a prayer, a song, a Hebrew word.

You can relate the D'var Torah to the meeting. For example, a board meeting could have a quote from Pirkei Avot about leadership. At a progressive dinner, discuss a banquet or feast. At a sports event, talk about Jacob wrestling the Angel.

When possible, use a text. If you photocopy it and hand it out, people will follow better. Visual aids are always a good idea. With a little practice, anyone can learn to give effective Divrei Torah. Remember -- it's things like this that make us a *Jewish* youth group, not just a bunch of Jewish youth. You can find tips for writing and delivering a great D'var Torah from the International Website at <http://www.usy.org/reled/>.

The Structure of USY

- **Chapters:** USY begins on the chapter level: they are the heart of USY. Every USY member joins through a chapter, which acts as the day-to-day activity of our organization. Chapters range in size from 5 to 200 members in size.
- **Sub-regions:** Some larger regions, such as METNY (Metropolitan New York) and Hanegev (Southeast), divide up their regions into smaller geographic areas called sub-regions, or divisions. They tend to function like regions, with their own programming.
- **Regions:** A region is a geographic area that encompasses many different chapters. They have their own executive and general boards. Events include weekend conventions and other activities. The 17 regions range in size from 200 to 2000 members.
- **International:** This encompasses approximately 13,000 members from 17 regions across the United States and Canada. In addition to the Central Office staff, there are 6 International Executive officers, along with approximately 20 General Board members.

The Ten Commandments of the Chapter Executive

USY chapters and members should always strive to be the best possible. It doesn't matter how bad the other guys have it or how bad you used to be, you can always improve, and constant improvement must be a major goal of USY. Your chapter can't do great things if you don't constantly strive to make each program and each activity a little bit better.

One of the most important ways your chapter can be strong is to have a solid Executive Board. As a member of the chapter Executive Board, you should know the following Ten commandments and keep them in mind at all times:

1. **Things said at meetings are confidential.** We should be open and honest at meetings without fear of having our words repeated.
2. **Attendance at all activities is assumed.** If it is *impossible* for you to attend something, the president and advisor should be contacted.
3. **Use other chapter members** in planning your programs. The more people involved, the better the program as a whole.
4. **Do not hesitate to ask for the help** of another board member. We are here to help each other.
5. **Calling must be done** for each program to keep information flowing through the group. If someone does not know about what's going on, it is the board's fault.
6. **Any problems with the Executive should remain there** and be dealt with there. If someone is not doing her job, to let everyone know about it reflects on us all. Let's get in there and help each other.
7. **We are the ones everyone is watching.** Try to set a good example of *ruach* and generally a positive attitude. If we look like we are having fun, everyone will think they are, too.
8. **Untruthfulness will not be tolerated.** If you can't get an assigned task done, ask for help... don't say you've done it when you haven't.
9. **Don't procrastinate.** Get things done ahead of time. A *complete* report of what is happening at a program should be reported upon at least one board meeting ahead of the program.
10. **A good effort** must be made to have a positive attitude about the youth group, the Temple, all program, and Judaism.

Leadership

Besides making flyers and websites and all that jazz, a major part of being a chapter officer is that you need to be a leader to your chapter. Everyone sees being a leader differently, just like everyone looks at life from a different angle.

Eight "In's" to Leadership

1. **INtelligence:** This is considered by many as being the master key to the door of leadership. This, however, is cold by itself. It also takes a warm, sensitive, enthusiastic personality.
2. **INtegrity:** A good leader is one who is dependable, whose actions are above reproach, and who stands firm once he is convinced he is right.
3. **INspiration:** This is a vital ingredient for leaders to cultivate. Thomas Edison said "Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration." He knew that without a spark, no amount of work alone can produce results that would be classed as genius.
4. **INterest:** Necessary for successful leadership, interest not only infects the leader, it can also spread contagiously to all members of the group.
5. **INitiative:** A basic and unique function of successful leadership, unless a leader sees what needs to be done and takes the initiative in carrying out regular or assigned tasks, the group he leads will lack vitality, purpose, and enthusiasm.

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6. **INterdependence:** A good leader persistently seeks to understand the group and its goals and how to encourage each member to work harmoniously and effectively for the benefit of all. This is interdependence... and should never be confused with dominance.
7. **INsight:** Self-analysis as well as the ability to see into the "tickings" of the group members... a good leader also keeps his eye on the aims and purposes of his or her group.
8. **INvention:** Simply imagination. It is the ability to add that dash of "spice" to the operations of the group.

Eight "In's" to Leadership – A Second Look

1. **Learn to Listen!** A USYer will trust you as a leader if he or she thinks you care about what he or she has to say. Don't hesitate to state back to them what they said in their own words, and let them correct you. Don't try to jump ahead of the game and prepare your reply -- let them finish their thought! Then pause, and prepare a **response**, not a reaction.
2. **Recognize leadership qualities in others!** Once you have graduated USY, someone needs to fill your shoes. Seek out those people who have potential and let them know you can help them attain leadership positions.
3. **Be organized!** Learn to organize your time, your papers, your relationships. The energy you put in to USY will go much farther, and you will find it rubbing off on your outside life as well.
4. **Be available!** Let other USYers know when they can call you or when they can reach you. Return USY phone calls right away, show up five minutes early (and never be late!) and talk to members about their feelings about the group's progress.
5. **Show your interest!** It may take little effort on your part to call a USYer to remind him about a meeting, but it might make a world of a difference to him. Human contact from a peer can go a long, long way.
6. **Live USY!** Don't hesitate to wear regalia to school or in public. Show up at services, Hebrew High, and the JCC. Don't be afraid to mention USY in casual conversation with your "outside" friends. If you're a known USYer, potential members just might approach you. And of course, keep an eye out for the new kid in town or the Jewish kid who isn't in a Youth Group, and tell them about USY.
7. **Learn effective criticism!** Don't criticize if the recipient can't handle it at that moment. Offer support and help, and let them know they can lean on you.
8. **Be a mensch!** Gain people's respect by being considerate of others, showing them that their ideas have merit as well.

The Eight Levels of Delegation

1. Look into this problem. Give me all the facts. I will decide what to do.
2. Let me know the alternatives with pros and cons. I will decide which to select.
3. Recommend a course of action for my approval.
4. Let me know what you intend to do. Delay action until I approve.
5. Let me know what you intend to do. Do it unless I say not to.
6. Take action. Let me know what you did and how it turns out.
7. Take action. Communicate with me only if your action is unsuccessful.
8. Take action. No further communication with me is necessary.

Regional Counterparts

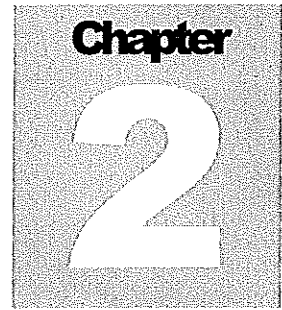
If you have problems -- which, God willing, you won't have any of -- you have many amazing people available to help you out and give you advice. This includes your Regional President, your Regional Communications Vice President, and the Regional Communications General Board. Go to them with any sorts of questions you might have about anything related to Communications, USY in general, your chapter's board, or life in general.

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They are there for you! Take advantage of their experience and knowledge, and don't hesitate to contact them. Even if you've never talked to them before, they are more than happy to help you. If you don't know their email addresses or phone numbers, you can probably find this information on your Regional website, and the Regional Presidents' and Regional Communications Vice Presidents' information is on the International USY Website at <http://www.usy.org/yourusy/communications/vps.asp>.

Other Resources

- **The Program Bank:** The USY Program bank has a variety of ideas on leadership, membership, and programming, as well as specific chapter programs and how to do them. Take some time to read the parts of the program bank that are geared towards your interests. If anything is particularly helpful, three-hole-punch it and place it in your officer packet for future reference, both by yourself and your successors. You can find the Program Bank on the USY website at <http://www.usy.org/yourusy/pbank/>.
- **The USY Website:** On the International USY website (<http://www.usy.org/>) there is a *lot* of great resources, information, and other helpful material. The communications section is at <http://www.usy.org/communications/>.
- **Your Region:** Your regional president, executive board, and youth director are experienced in dealing with the problems chapters face. Check with them -- they may have some good advice for you. Also, many regions frequently publish materials for chapter leaders and have leadership training sessions with them as well. Take advantage of these opportunities.
- **Your Regional Online Services Chairperson:** If your region has an Online Services Chairperson, you can use them for all your internet needs. If you have any questions about how to do something with websites, you can approach them for help, because they have the skills it takes to work the 'net.
- **Your Regional Website:** Your regional website probably has tons of tools and resources that you can take advantage of to help you throughout the year. Go take a look around; you might be surprised at what you find!
- **Other Chapters:** You might try to be in contact with other nearby USY chapters and their officers. Taking an idea from them is not "stealing" unless you claim you came up with it yourself; share ideas and learn from each other's mistakes.
- **Your Rabbi:** Your Rabbi should always be consulted when your chapter has to make a decision regarding Jewish Law. He or She can also be helpful in guiding your chapter in terms of Shabbat and Kashrut assistance. Finally, he or she may be willing to teach your members or occasionally speak at a meeting.



CHAPTER 2: INTERNATIONAL USY

International USY has a lot to offer to you and your chapter.

International USY Officers

Just like with your regional officers and general board, don't hesitate to contact the international officers with your questions. You can e-mail the president at president@usy.org, the communications vice president at communications@usy.org, and the other officers at israel@usy.org, reled@usy.org, sato@usy.org, and memkad@usy.org.

International Communications Programs

There are all sorts of communications programs run by International USY that you can participate in. They can be a great help for your chapter in terms of publicizing your website, getting your members more active in USY, helping your chapter president, and more. You can find much more information at <http://www.usy.org/communications/>.

Achshavi

USY's quarterly magazine, it is mailed to every paid USYer. Each issue has a theme, and writers are welcome! If someone in your chapter is interested in writing, they should contact achshav@usy.org. Back-issues can be found at <http://www.usy.org/achshav/>; they're great for printing off and putting in your youth lounge.

LaNasi

LaNasi is USY's newsletter for chapter presidents. There also is a listserv, and regular chats. Back-issues can be found at <http://www.usy.org/lanasi/>. You can contact the LaNasi editor at lanasi@usy.org.

Shalhevet

Shalhevet is our creative arts magazine, published every year at International Convention. This is another great publication to put a copy of in your youth lounge, because besides the fact that it's an awesome read, people can read about others' experiences on USY programs, and find out about them; back-issues can be found at <http://www.usy.org/shalhevet/>. You can contact the Shalhevet editor at shalhevet@usy.org.

USY Listserves

USY has a number of discussion listserves, where you can discuss important issues with other USYers all around USY. You'll also get the latest news on what's going on in USY, so you can publicize it in your chapter. You can subscribe, unsubscribe, and get more information at <http://www.usy.org/listserv/>.

Online Chat

USY runs frequent chats online at <http://chat.usy.org/>. The topics run from subjects such as being a Jew in public school to whether or not it would be nice to have a clone of yourself.

Chapter Yellowpages

See the USY Chapter Yellowpages section, under Websites, in Chapter 3 (page 17).

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USY Memories Online

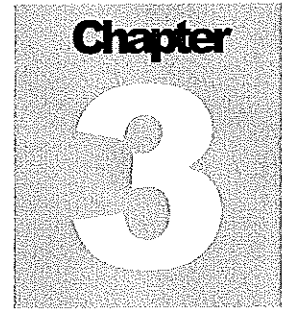
On the front page of the USY website, there is a section with over 450 rotating pictures. If you take pictures at your events, you can get your pictures on the front page of the USY website! Send them to the International Communications Vice President at communications@usy.org, and they'll go up!

Banner Ad Exchange

The Banner Ad Exchange is a program that allows chapters and regions to put a banner ad on their website that will show ads for other USY websites! You can put it on your website easily by copying code that is at <http://www.usy.org/yourusy/communications/exchange/>. You can also find there information on how to get a banner ad for your chapter website, so that USYers from all over will see it and come visit your site!

Packets and Handbooks

There are many packets and handbooks that you can find on the Communications section of the International website. You can find a copy of this packet online, as well as a manual for how to use the Chapter Yellowpages, a manual for how to use the Listserves, publishing tips, a Member-Based Publicity handbook (how individual USYers can publicize USY), phone calling packets, and more.



CHAPTER 3: PUBLICITY

What is "Publicity"? Publicity can be many different things. It can be telling your friends at school about a new program coming up, or publicity can be getting an article in the local Jewish newspaper (with pictures!) about your chapter visiting the nursing home.

Publicity is *getting the word* out about anything and everything USY. In this chapter, you'll see many different ways of publicizing your chapter, your region, and also the international level of USY, and ways to make it fun and enjoyable, and also get the rest of your chapter involved with it.

A thing to remember about publicity is that the key to it is *redundancy*. This means not just using one method of publicizing, but bombarding your members and potential members with information so that it is drilled in and they know everything by heart and then can also start to publicize to others. Combine them in crazy ways that give unexpectedly good results!

The other thing you should keep in mind with all these different methods of publicity is that the only limit is your creativity. The ways of publicizing that you read about here only scratch the surface of what can be done. If you can think of it, it can happen, and it will work!

Phone Trees and Phone Chains

A *phone tree* is not, as the phrase sounds, a tree made of phones. Rather, a Phone Tree (also commonly called a Phone Chain) is a great way to publicize, if used correctly. Transmitting messages about events through USYers serves many purposes:

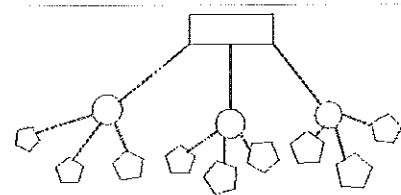
1. If someone has to repeat what you are telling them, they will listen more carefully and thus remember more.
2. USYers who want to get more active feel like they are important and needed members of the group.
3. The more people transmitting the message, the more ground can be covered.
4. Just like in casual conversation, a phone call lends itself to being more than just an impersonal voice on the other end of the line. Through listening to what the person being called wants to participate in, it becomes possible to match potential USYers with programs they will enjoy.

Phone trees require an enthusiastic chairperson -- sometimes yourself -- and routine checking up on whether the message got through or not, but, if used wisely, it can be a primary source of information for USYers. It can be a terrific way of getting the word out to your chapter as well as a recruitment mechanism to boost membership. However, it takes effort to make one really work, and with this effort comes the fruits of one's labors: tons of people coming to your programs, joining your chapter, and having a great time.

There are two basic phone tree formats, that can be combined in a number of ways: the **tree** format, and the **circle** format.

The Tree Format

The tree format (see right) relies on one central phone chain coordinator who calls the member of the phoning committee. Each of those members then, in turn, calls a certain number of USYers or Potential USYers. Each phoning committee member then calls back the phone chain coordinator with a list of the people who will be attend-

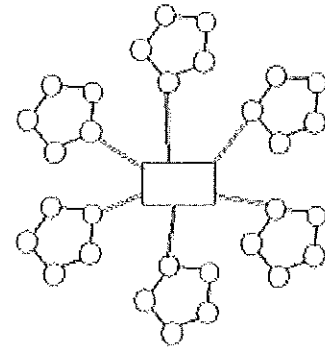


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ing the programs which were advertised. For the majority of chapters, this is the best method of executing a phone chain, as it can be used by chapters of all sizes and can be organized to include as many interested members as possible. Checking up is very necessary because if one person neglects to make his or her phone calls, numerous potential participants will not even know about the activity.

The Circle Format

This is a very effective means of executing a phone tree for many chapters. The coordinator calls the members of the phone committee, each of whom is in charge of a "phoning circle". The phoning circle is simply a group of USYers, headed by the phoning committee member, who circulates a phone message given to them by the phone chain coordinator. In other words, the committee member calls one circle member, who in turn calls another who in turn calls another and so on, until the message gets back to the committee member. If, by some chance, the message does not get back to the committee member, he or she will call everyone in the circle to verify that the message has been received, going in the opposite direction so that while doing this they can inform those who haven't heard the message yet. The circle phone tree works best in chapters with strong and dedicated members and few potentials; however, the circle can be combined with the start to help reach those potentials a chapter is attempting to draw in.



The Phoning Committee

Picking the members of the phoning committee is extremely important. In some chapters (especially in smaller chapters), it may simply be your Executive, other, larger chapters, it may range from ten to twenty people. You shouldn't give committee members too many people to call (six should usually be the limit), because the enthusiasm in the tenth or eleventh call is nowhere near the energy in the first call. Either way, it is important that they are dedicated USYers who you **know** will follow through on their calls and get other USYers excited about the upcoming events and inform them.

You should talk to each member of the phoning committee about recruitment, and how to bring in new members. At the beginning of the year, have a special meeting of the new phoning committee, a training session of sorts, where you go over important calling tips and strategies. A poor phone call is almost as bad as no phone call at all, because it can turn a person off of USY and away from your events, but an energetic, friendly phone call can do wonders. You can find a short packet on the USY website, at <http://www.usy.org/yourusy/communications/>, about making phone calls, which you can make copies of for your committee, to help them make good phone calls.

Newsletters and Newspapers

A newspaper is a great way to get publicity for your chapter, to get your members more excited, recruit new members, and let people know about what's coming up for the chapter.

It is a good idea to appoint one person in your chapter as the Editor of your newspaper. This person can be yourself, or just a member who has journalistic experience or interest and wants to get more involved. At your first meeting, make the basic decisions so that you can focus on more important things such as layout and format, the schedule for issues, and what kinds of columns you want to have throughout the year. Remember that you may need room for creative additions later in the year (which are always a good thing!).

With the advent of the modern-day computer, desktop publishing has become the norm, and you can use programs such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft Publisher, Corel, etc. to lay out your newspaper or newsletter in a way that looks professional and is also very easy for you. If you have problems using these programs, often your regional newsletter editors can help you out, because often they lay out their newsletter using these same programs.

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If even that doesn't work, you can always resort to the classic type-it-up-and-paste-it-up method that worked for years before we had computers.

Come up with a catchy and fun title! This is the first thing people see when they get your newsletter, and can make them read it if they normally would have just thrown it in the "I'll read it later" pile. Try to include your chapter/region name or mascot in the title, and toss in some Hebrew. Some chapters use names like *USY Today*, *Kol Ruach Chadash*, or *The Schmoozer!* A really neat and interesting name just might be the thing that convinces people to sit down and read your work.

Try to have something different and exciting in each edition. If each issue of your newspaper has the same kind of thing, people won't read the third or fifth or sixth issue when it comes in their mailboxes. Also e-mail your members when a new issue comes out so that they'll know it's coming. Hype it up so that they'll be excited about it, and when they see it in the mail, they'll read it instead of putting it in the I'll-read-it-later pile on their floor or in the recycling bin.

Scheduling

It is extremely important that your newsletter be published in some regular schedule, whether this be monthly (the best), quarterly (four times a year, like *Achshav!*, the International USY magazine), bimonthly, or something else. If you don't think you can handle the tight schedule of a monthly newsletter, settle for a less frequent publishing schedule, because then you know you'll be able to keep up. Then your members will know when to expect the next issue and will get excited about it. Just make sure to give people enough time to write articles, plus you need to remember that you also need time to lay out, print, and distribute the paper. Make your plan, and stick to it! Otherwise you'll fall behind.

Distribution

Send your newsletter to all paid and potential members. Mail copies to your local, regional, and international office, and you should also give copies to your synagogue's board, Rabbi, and key members of the Jewish community as a whole, because it never hurts to let other people (especially those who give you funding) know what's going on in your chapter. Also, leave issues in your synagogue, especially in the youth lounge. You might be able to get non-profit postage from your local post office, or you could get a member at your synagogue to donate money to pay for the postage of all your newsletters, because it can become expensive for your chapter to mail out a newsletter every month to all its members.

Soliciting Articles

Getting lots and lots of articles is the key to a great newsletter! The more articles you have, you can pick the very best, and have lots of stuff for your members to read every month. Try putting the theme of the next issue in the previous issue, so that they'll know what's coming up. Use your chapter's phone tree and other forms of publicity to get the word out that you need articles. You can also ask each of the members of the Executive (especially the president) to write an article. Getting new members (not necessarily first-timers though) is a great way to get them involved. Call people up and hound them for articles if they said they'd write, but aren't following through: otherwise, you'll get lots of articles pledged, but none in your newsletter or newspaper. Make sure you give them a strict deadline, and remind them as you are getting closer and closer to the deadline. Giving compensation (such as a movie night for writers after each issue at your house) is a great way to get articles from people who normally would have been hesitant as well.

One warning, though: a mistake repeated again and again is that of the editor begging for articles from the members, receiving none, and canceling an issue. Believe it or not, it is the rare USYer who responds to calls for articles from the newspaper editors (*Achshav!* even has problems with this, sometimes!) Resolve from the beginning that even if you have to write all the articles yourself to get the issue out on time, you will.

Ideas for Articles and Sections

These are some ideas for sections and articles in your newsletter. Feel free to try anything you want, but these are just some ideas to get you thinking:

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- **Reports from past events:** Describe in detail what went on at recent programs (and be positive!). This is crucial to your paper for several reasons. First, those who went to the program will remember what a good time they had and feel special for having attended (even when there were only five people there). Second, those who missed the program will feel up-to-date and not left out. And finally, your newspaper will undoubtedly go to several potential members who have never attended an event. These reports let them know what your events are like and may help ease their qualms about going to their first event.
- **Upcoming Events:** Advertise your upcoming events, maybe in a calendar form, maybe like a real ad, or maybe in the form of an article. You don't want to give *too* much information, just enough to whet their appetite (and maybe list the events chair to give her some kovid). The exception is overnight events and regional gatherings where you want to be more detailed to reassure parents and convince USYers to give up a significant amount of their time.
- **President's/Youth Director's/Editor's Message:** These can often be helpful to connect the chapter with its leadership. However, there are a few guidelines to follow. For example, they should be in article form, not letter form. If you look at past USY newspapers, you'll see that most letters say next to nothing. It's better to leave a message out there than have it say "Dear Fellow USYers... Blah Blah Blah... See you at the program... Love, Your President." If you're not sure what article form is like, check out the Director's or President's message from a recent issue of *Achshav!*, which you can find back-issues of on the International USY website.
- **Officer's Reports:** Many chapters require their officers to write a "report" to be included in the newspaper. This is to be avoided unless the articles impart new information or add to the quality of the newspaper, and when requesting articles from the officers, you should talk to them about this so that they understand what you're looking for. All too often the reports are just short letters that say nothing and take up space. It's better to have a few good articles than a lot of fluff.
- **Content Articles:** You should also try to include some items of interest to your members that may not be about your chapter. What's the latest news from Israel? What customs are associated with the upcoming Jewish holiday? Why are Jews for Jesus gaining popularity, and how can you fight off missionaries? You might even include an editorial, or two editorials with differing opinions on the same topic. Also, if USYers from your chapter have gone on USY summer programs, to a Ramah camp, or to International Convention, you can get them to write an article about their experiences.
- **USYer of the Month:** A great opportunity to honor the USYers who put in a lot of hours without much recognition, or has gotten some honor in the general community. This should rarely go to a chapter officer, rather, honor the USYer who sold the most candy bars, planned the canned food drive, or learned to read Hebrew. This encourages your USYers and makes them feel wanted and appreciated, and this encouragement also can lead them to further involvement.
- **News and Shmooz:** Pay attention to good things that happen to your members outside of the chapter, and have a column honoring their achievements and mazal. Did someone win a National Merit Scholarship? Get elected as an officer of SADD? Receive his Eagle Scout badge? Get appointed to regional general board, or elected to the regional executive? Recognize them in your newspaper, and make them feel good.
- **Regional and International news:** Talk about upcoming events, the latest info, etc. You might even get a regional officer to write an article for you.
- **Letters to the Editor:** Print them if you get them (within the bounds of taste), but don't expect them. At the same time, put a notice about writing to the editor in your newsletter so that perhaps someone will send something in!
- **Fillers:** List upcoming birthdays, include a cartoon from the funny pages (or draw your own!), put in a few jokes, quotes, pictures, and illustrations. You can include a Hebrew or Yiddish word of the month, the words to a popular chapter or regional song, or a crossword puzzle. Also: List the USYers from your chapter going on Pilgrimage, Wheels, or Ramah, and list the addresses.

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Remember, this is just the beginning! You can put tons of other kinds of things in your newspaper, from current events, upcoming programs at the synagogue, and coupons for future events (*Bring a friend and get two dollars off the price of an event!*), to trivia questions. Let your imagination run free -- the only limit is your creativity!

Laying Out Your Newspaper

Once you have your articles, what you need to do before sending it out is to lay it out. Keep the layout basic, uncluttered, and consistent. If you have features that will appear in every issue, such as messages, calendars, regular columns, etc. put them in the same place in each issue. For instance, the calendar may always appear on the bottom right of page two and the Tikun Olam column on the top left on page three. Select easy-to-read fonts for articles and headlines and make sure that your colors are easy to read (print black on very light colored paper, avoid loud colors that are hard on the eyes -- because remember, ultimately you want your USYers to read your newspaper, and if it is uncomfortable to read it, less people will read the finished product of your hard work). You can put a table of contents on the front page so that your USYers can see what's inside at a glance, and also contact information for your officers so that your members know how to get in touch with them if they have any questions. You can also find publishing tips and other information related to layout on USY website.

Flyers

Flyers are an invaluable tool used to publicize specific programs or events. Ideally flyers should go out about every program. Flyers should contain all the vital information about the program such as time, date, cost, and what the program is about. You can do them on the computer in the same way that you lay out your chapter newsletter, or draw them by hand. You can also use the copying facilities at your synagogue for making the copies to send out.

When they should go out

Flyers should go out at least two or three weeks before the program itself, to give the postal service time to get them to the USYers, and also still have enough time before the date of the program so that your members' schedules won't be all filled up yet. You should also follow up your flyers with phone calls through your phone tree so that there is a human voice on the other end of the line as well.

What they should have in them

Flyers should have all the vital info (and more!) about the program they are advertising. This includes:

- **Who?** Well you, of course.
- **What?** An amazing activity -- describe it for them.
- **When?** Date and time.
- **Where?** At the synagogue or somewhere else? If it is somewhere else, give directions or a number to call for directions. If you are meeting somewhere and departing for somewhere else, you should make sure this information is in there.
- **Why?** To get psyched up for Encampment, or to vote as a chapter on an important issue, etc. The key is to get them to want to come to the event, and if your flyer doesn't communicate the excitement of the event, they won't get so excited that they can't afford **not** to come.
- **Cost?** If any, let them know beforehand so they bring it.
- **RSVP?** Is it needed? If so, who should they contact; what's their e-mail address, phone number, and where else can they be reached.
- **What to bring?** Nobody should be unprepared for whatever the activity is, so let them know what they should have with them (besides a friend, of course!). Depending on your event it might be some food, a bathing suit, money for Tikun Olam, or anything else.

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- **Who can I contact for more information?** Give name and number of chapter officers, advisors, or activity chairpersons. If people have questions, just like Radioshack, you should have answers. You can also put cool graphics and pictures that spice it up and make it more interesting to the eye.

Ten Tips and Hints for Making a Great Flyer

1. **Don't rely only on a monthly calendar.** Some people might get confused about events without specific individual information.
2. **Avoid leaving out information** and making people call, because odds are they won't.
3. Put the most **important information in the center**, in big, bold lettering.
4. **Don't make the other writing as bright** or big, but make sure it can still be easily seen.
5. Leave at least a **one-half inch border** around the entire page.
6. Print the flyer on **bright paper** so it catches attention.
7. **Put an attention-grabbing picture on the page** that tells a little bit about the activity, but make sure the pictures reproduce clearly when you copy. If they don't, it'll look bad and may turn some members off of your program.
8. As a general rule, **don't use a famous character** to promote your activity (*ex: Garfield wants you to come to the cookout!*). It can violate copyright laws and will do more harm than good. Instead, you may want to come up with your own mascot of sorts.
9. **Don't exclude people** by including inside jokes; make all programs sound open to new people.
10. **For extra-special programs**, can you use colored ink? Can you send postcards sometimes, too? Can you fold the paper in a different way? What if you hand-deliver a batch of flyers for a new members' party? What about mailing out a tape-recorded message about the next program?

Posters and Signs

Hang USY signs and posters all around your synagogues, especially in the youth lounge. Also, post signs and posters in your local Jewish Community Center and Schechter day school, along with USY pamphlets and other promotional materials. Just make sure to check with the people in charge to make sure it's ok to put up your posters. Posters are available from the Regional and International offices, but feel free to make your own! Make them eye-catching and easy to read from far away, with good information about your chapter, USY in general, and the kinds of things we offer.

Bulletin Boards

If space is available in your synagogue, put up a USY bulletin board. Hang photos of activities and membership forms. Get chapter officers, or at least your President, to write a letter encouraging synagogue teenagers to join USY. Put up promotions for USY programs such as Wheels and Pilgrimage. Make the bulletin board bright and neat. Update it regularly with information about upcoming events.

You may want to put up a sign-in sheet up for people who have stopped by to look at it. (Make sure that no signing takes place on Shabbat or Yom Tov!) Also, keep flyers up there for people to see what is coming up, and copies of your newspaper or newsletter nearby that people can take.

Websites

A website is a place on the internet where people can point their browsers, and see hyper-linked pages with information on anything that their authors want to put up there. Every chapter should have a website, and if you don't, your chapter is missing out! The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism offers free web space for every USY chapter; for more information contact your Regional Communications Vice President, or the Interna-

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tional Communications Vice President at communications@usy.org. You can also contact the International Online Services chairperson for help with any problems that you run into.

You should put the address of your website on everything you send out, so that people will go visit it. Write an article about your new website for the Temple Bulletin, or get a flyer in, so that people will come check it out! Keep it updated so that people will come back again and again; if it is rarely updated, people will even more rarely visit it and will miss any updates you do.

How to Make Websites

If you already know how to make a website, you're in luck! But you can always learn new ways of doing things, new technologies, and cool things to spice up your website. And if you don't know a thing about making a website, don't worry -- it's easier than typing up a flyer! And if you don't want to learn, there might be someone else in your chapter who can make websites, and would love to volunteer and help out.

There are generally two ways of making a website: you can code it in a program such as Notepad, or a programmer's text-editor, or you can use a "What You See is What You Get" (WYSIWYG) editor such as Macromedia's Dreamweaver, Microsoft Frontpage, or even Microsoft Word.

In 2002 USY created an Online Services resource CD, which has all sorts of resources, helpful programs, and links to great websites about making websites. If you would like a copy of this, contact your regional communications vice president, or the International Communications Vice President at communications@usy.org.

If you're looking for some websites to help you out, there are a lot of great places to learn how to make web pages. These include:

- Webmonkey -- <http://www.webmonkey.com/>
- Evolt -- <http://www.evolt.org/>
- A List Apart -- <http://www.alistapart.com/>
- The World Wide Web Consortium (the people who invented HTML) -- <http://www.w3.org/>
- You can also find a directory of website-making-related websites on Google at http://directory.google.com/Top/Computers/Data_Formats/Markup_Languages/HTML/Resources/

There is also lots of information and resources about building websites, especially USY-related websites, on the International USY website at <http://www.usy.org/yourusy/communications/webinfo/>.

The USY Chapter Yellowpages

The USY Chapter Yellowpages is a tool for your chapter accessible at <http://www.usy.org/chapters/>. A listing of all the chapters in USY, what is really great for chapters is the ability to use the Chapter Yellowpages as a website for your chapter, without knowing anything about HTML or that other technological mumbo-jumbo! All you need to know how to do is click your mouse.

When one browses the Chapter Yellowpages, they can click on a chapter's name, and be taken to their website on the Chapter Yellowpages, their "Chapter Yellowpage." On your Yellowpage, you can put all sorts of things, including Upcoming Events, News, Pictures, and your members can even post comments about past programs on your Chapter Yellowpage!

Also on your Chapter Yellowpage are links to various Israeli news sources such as the Jerusalem Post, Ha'aretz Daily, and more; links to other chapters, regions, and programs around USY so that your members can stay informed about what's going on in other places than just their home town; and Divrei Torah straight from the International USY website.

If you don't have your username and password, you should contact your regional communications vice president. A comprehensive manual talking about the Chapter Yellowpages, how it can benefit your chapter, and how to use it can be found at <http://www.usy.org/chapters/cyphandbook.pdf>.

What to put on a USY Chapter Website

You can put lots of different stuff on your website, from pictures from events, information about your chapter officers, flyers, and more. The more information on your website, the better resource it will be for your chapter. Some ideas include:

- **Membership E-mail Directory:** Post a list of your current members with e-mail along with their email addresses. You even include an alumni directory!
- **Flyers and Mailings:** You can easily adapt your flyer into a section on the web page. Be sure to include the vital information such as time, date, location, cost, what the program is about, and who to contact for more information. Add a printable application form! Be careful about putting information like phone numbers and addresses on the web, though. It is extremely public and many people don't want their personal information available world-wide, so it might make sense to check with the person before putting their information on your website.

There are other mailings besides flyers that your chapter might be producing, including newspapers and calendars. These are very important and can also be easily formatted for the web. At a glance, a calendar can provide upcoming chapter events for forgetful USYers. Newspapers make incredible additions to a chapter web page. In Microsoft Word, you can choose to **Save as Web Page** (from the File menu) to save your documents as HTML files, and also Adobe offers a free service to change documents to Adobe Acrobat format at <http://createpdf.adobe.com/>. Make sure to put it up in multiple formats, so that more people will be able to access it -- if they can't read one type of document (say, an Acrobat document), they might be able to read another (for example, Word)!

- **Membership Forms:** Make sure that these are very visible! If people want to join, they should be able to get the forms easily.
- **Announcements:** A regularly updated web page that is packed with information relevant to its audience is sure to become a popular site. Announcements are a great way to accomplish this. Offer kudos to USYers who have achieved accomplishments outside of USY. List upcoming birthdays on the web page, including a few jokes or "thank yous" to people who have contributed lately. You can include a Hebrew word of the month or a new chapter or regional Ruach song.
- **Photos from programs:** It's said that a picture is worth a thousand words, and, well, it's worth a thousand new members too! If people see USYers having lots of fun, they might decide to come to an event. It's also always a great way to get people to come to your website. If you don't have access to a digital camera, you can get your pictures on a CD, or scan in your pictures at a local Kinkos.
- **Links to other chapters:** Link to other chapters in your region, so that people can see what's going on in other places too! Also, add links to USY summer programs, group/bus websites of trips your members went on, and to your regional website and the International USY website. Connect them to the rest of the USY world!
- **Minutes and Other Stuff:** You may want to include the latest minutes on the website as well. They should be complete with all of the important goings-on in the meetings and as brief as possible.

Your chapter/region might have its own logo, mascot, or banner. It's possible to create a graphic of this to include on the web page. A USYer might be a budding artist, so why not ask him or her to draw a cartoon for the site? If your chapter has poets or writers, invite them to put some of their work on the web page. If a USYer delivered a D'var Torah at services last week (or you can get your Religion/Education VP to write one!), stick it on the web page.

Tips and Secret Tricks For Making The Best Website On Earth

1. Remember KISS -- Keep It Super-Simple! Just like your newspaper, keep it simple enough that people can find their way around, and also try to keep the number of bells-and-whistles to a low number. While they may be cool, if less people can view your website, then less people will get the information you post up on your website.

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2. **Send your Regional Communications VP a link to your new website!** You should have a link to your site from your regional website so that people can find it.
3. After your term is over, make sure to **hand down the password** for the website to the next communications vice president! Your advisor and youth director should have the password too. They can't keep updating it without the password. If you don't have the password, talk to your advisor, youth director, or regional communications vice president.
4. Make sure that **all the content is viewable** for a wide audience, and that it is representative of USY (i.e., appropriate). What would someone's reaction be to USY if your website was their first impression?
5. **Be careful of copyrighted materials**, especially music. If you're not sure if something is copyrighted, talk to your youth director or advisor.
6. **Keep it updated!** You should try to add new things all the time, at least once a week. If your website stays the same for too long, people won't come back to see what's new after they look at it the first time. Also, **e-mail your chapter when it's updated** so they know to go check it out. Also, outdated and incorrect information can be aggravating and makes your chapter look bad.
7. **Take advantage of International programs** such as the *Banner Ad Exchange*, which gives you the ability to add banner ads which link your USYers to other USY websites, and add a banner ad to bring USYers who are browsing other USY websites to your chapter website.

E-mail Listserves and Newsletters

E-mail is a fast and easy way to get information out to your members. As opposed to traditional mailings, it doesn't cost anything (versus the cost of stamps), and goes out immediately (rather than taking a couple of days to get to members' houses). An e-mail listserv can be a very easy way for your chapter officers to get in touch with the USYers.

You can easily create a listserv for your chapter with *Yahoo!Groups* (<http://www.yahogroups.com/>), and then add the e-mail addresses of your members. It helps to have a list of email addresses of your members, so you might want to make sure that there is a spot on your membership forms asking for their e-mail. You should also put your Rabbi, synagogue president, and lots of potential members on your listserv. With Yahoo!Groups, you can configure your listserv in a multitude of ways so that it fits your chapter's needs. Also, if your synagogue has a listserv, you can use that to publicize as well.

What kinds of things can we send out over our listserv?

You can send out tons of stuff over your listserv. Think about it like your normal mailing list, except with e-mails. Your Religion/Education VP can send out a D'var Torah each week, your chapter president can write articles about recent events, and you can even run contests where USYers who RVSP over the listserv get a prize so that people read the e-mails.

You may choose to "moderate" your listserv; this means that you need to approve messages that go out to your chapter. This is a good setup for many chapters, because all too often people reply to everything they get, sending their mail to the whole listserv, not realizing it, when it is only meant for one person. Moderating your listserv can make it so that you can be sure that messages aren't being accidentally sent over your listserv.

Tips for making E-mails interesting and fun!

- The key for getting someone to open an e-mail is a catchy subject line. Just like the colors of a flyer stand out, a funny, catchy subject line for an email could be the one thing that makes a person decide to open an email rather than delete it.
- Make sure that people can read it! While it may be tempting to use crazy fonts, if someone can't read it, then they won't get the information.
- Make sure that you don't save all the information until the end of the email. People don't like to read long emails, and if they don't see the information right away, they might just close the email without finding it.

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- Don't make your e-mails too long! Long emails take a long time to download for people with dial-up connections, and also take time and patience to read which some USYers might not have.

Using Your Listserv For a Newsletter

You can use your listserv for a newsletter as well! Format it for e-mail, and send it out to your members over e-mail as well as in the mail. Include all the news of the week, and summarize the other emails you've been sending out so that if people didn't read them before, they'll get the information now. You can find some sample e-newsletters on the International USY website at <http://www.usy.org/yourusy/communications/>.

Instant Messaging

Instant Messaging, or IM, is an even newer kind of communication than e-mail is. USYers use it a lot (some would say way too much), and your chapter can take advantage of this! Make up a list of Instant Messenger names for your chapter, and give it to your officers so that in the same kind of a way as a phone tree, make sure that your chapter officers talk to members in your chapter a lot online. That way, they can become friends with more members, and reach out to new people. They can also then casually mention upcoming events, news, etc. to keep the members informed, and can also ask them on-the-spot about their plans, if they're coming, if they have any questions, and so on.

What follows is a sample Instant Messenger conversation between an officer (**USYPrez24**) and a member (**StuMan1248**).

```
USYPrez24: Hey! How's it going?
StuMan1248: Hey! Things are good. Yourself?
(the they discuss life, the universe, and everything for a couple of minutes)
USYPrez24: So, have you heard about our new event that's coming up?
StuMan1248: Yeah! I got a flyer about it, but I think I lost it. When is it again?
USYPrez24: It's this Thursday, the 22nd! Are you going to be able to come?
StuMan1248: I don't know... I've got a project due Monday. It sucks!
USYPrez24: You should come, it'll be fun! And I'm sure that there'll be someone there who can help you out with your project.
StuMan1248: I'll see what I can do, hopefully I'll be there. Thanks for the info!
```

Instant Messaging can be used in the same way as a phone call, except that it's over a computer. Encourage your officers to talk to your members often online, and put their Instant Messenger screen-names along with their e-mail addresses when you list their contact information in places such as your newsletter and flyers, so that people have another way to get in touch with them.

In the same way as using an answering machine, you can also create a special screen name, to leave on one of your officer's computers who has cable internet (i.e. it can be left on all the time), with the name of your chapter. You can craft a special away message and profile with information on upcoming programs, so your members can **ChapterUSY's** profile for the latest news. They can also leave messages with RSVP's and questions over Instant Messenger with the special screen name, and then you can get back to them.

Regalia

Newsletters, flyers, and other printed publicity aren't the only way you can publicize your chapter and USY in general. Sometimes regalia falls under the control of the Communications Vice President, and even if it doesn't, it is a great publicity tool. People at school and around town will see the letters U, S, and Y, and even if

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they don't know anything about it, will be interested in exactly what they stand for. **Don't be hesitant about wearing USY regalia (of any kind) around and about!**

However, making and selling chapter regalia, which includes sweatshirts, jackets, and anything else representative of USY, is probably the most risky committee work of all. One must be very careful from whom he or she buys, how much they buy, how much they spend, and how much they plan to charge, and where to sell. A single mistake could cost \$500.00 of valuable chapter funds, which unfortunately don't grow on trees, but good regalia can make your chapter a great amount of money for Tikun Olam as well as help publicize USY.

Once your chapter decides to sell regalia, and a regalia chairperson has been chosen (or if you decide to do it yourself), the chapter must vote on any regalia ideas that come from the regalia committee. **Nothing** should be ordered and no committees should be made until the chapter president, advisors, and the general membership have approved the type, cost, and amount of regalia to be ordered. The chapter must back your regalia and be willing to buy and sell it, or the sale will not be profitable. A grant from the chapter treasury must be obtained so that the items may be ordered.

If regalia is to be sold only in the chapter, the best method is to take orders in advance, ordering only a few extra pieces of regalia for later sales. When regalia is to be sold at regional functions as well as in the chapter, safe estimates must be made of the amount that you will probably be able to sell. It is better to order too little than too much -- you can always re-order, but if you have extra regalia that you just can't sell, there's not much you can do with it.

The color and design of regalia may be worked on by the regalia committee, with the final approval of the membership. The manufacturer must inform the committee of what can and cannot be made. Designs should be original, attractive, and suitable and appropriate to represent USY. Make sure that it would be the kind of thing that you want to be someone's first impression of USY. It might be a good idea to check around among the members to see if any know manufacturers who could give you a better deal on the regalia. Use any connections you have!

The most important part of regalia is, of course, the sale, and the key to every sale is publicity. One should begin by sending out release listing the item to be sold and prices, and pictures of what it'll look like. At regional and chapter functions, get as many people as possible to wear their new regalia to publicize it. In the region, get every delegate to a regional function from your chapter to sell it. Be sure you have an orderly system in which you hold your salesmen responsible for their regalia. It's easy to lose regalia and money unless you're careful.

If you are selling chapter regalia at regional functions, it should be checked with the regional office before it is ordered to prevent duplication.

Of course, **never** sell on Shabbat, no matter where you are.

A good idea for unresellable leftovers (though hopefully you'll sell out and there won't be any of those!), such as dated regalia, is to donate them to a worthwhile organization (Salvation Army, Hadassah, and orphanage, etc.). Also, old regalia is a hot item at SA/TO auctions.

Announcements on the Bimah

At many synagogues, they make announcements every Friday evening and Saturday morning about the general goings and comings at your temple from the Bimah, or pulpit. Sometimes it's the Rabbi who read them, or a member of the synagogue's Board, or just a member. No matter who is reading them, they are a great way to get the word out about what's going on in your USY chapter, show the adults that things are actually happening with the chapter, and get adults to come to USY-sponsored fundraising events. Also any USYers or potential USYers who are at services will hear about them. And if a USYer isn't at services, their parents who are there will hear about it and let them know.

Generally you should get the announcements in by the beginning of the week to the synagogue's board or publicity committee, to make sure they're in the announcements, and see that they are in the announcements every week until the program itself. Go to the services to make sure they're making your announcements, and check over the announcements sheet before services to make sure they're in there. If they aren't, make sure to tell the person

who will be reading them to talk about your upcoming events. You might even want to get some USYers reading the announcements every once in a while, because they can elaborate a little bit, show a face for USY to the congregation, and also, of course, come to services.

Local Media and Press Releases

Your local Jewish newspaper, or the local paper, can be great ways to get publicity out in the general community. If people see a press release or read an article about a social action project your chapter did visiting the nursing home or an Israel rally, they will want to learn more about USY, and parents will encourage their kids to join. Many local papers have a "religion" section on Sundays, and you might be able to get an article in there. Jewish newspapers love to get articles about what the young people in their community are doing, so submit articles to them with pictures. You can also talk to them about getting a spot in the newspaper where you can put the latest news and upcoming events, in the same way as your synagogue may have a spot. If you can't get that, use your synagogue's spot to put notices of what's up and coming. If you have access to video technology, you can also videotape your events for local television.

Press Releases

Press Releases are a great way to increase publicity for USY to non-USYers through the local media. For any large event (Regional Convention or the results of chapter elections), or a great human-interest project, submit a press release to your synagogue bulletin, community Jewish newspaper, and local newspapers. Make your press releases read like a newspaper article, and type them double-spaced. If it's simple for a newspaper to edit, it's more likely to be used. Press releases should always be approved by your Youth Director, because they represent USY to the greater community. Don't forget to include the standard USY tagline at the bottom of the press release (see the **Sample Press Release** below).

Sample Press Release

DATE and CONTACT NAME

The (*chapter or region name*) of United Synagogue Youth is happy to announce the (*name of the event*).

(*Include specific details about current program/event*)

United Synagogue Youth (USY) is the high school age youth movement of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. USY offers a full range of trips, speakers, films, discussions, games, dances, inter-chapter meetings and overnight weekends.

Founded in 1913 by Dr. Solomon Schechter as the association of Conservative synagogues in North America, the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism serves as a resource to its affiliated congregations and works to formulate a Conservative Jewish response to pressing social and religious issues.

Answering Machines

Answering machines allow for a unique form of communication to chapter members. If you have access to a dedicated phone line, leave an answering machine with USY announcements on it and put the number on everything you send out. You can try to see if an extra line is available at the synagogue office, or if funds are available to obtain one, and set up a machine with a message that will inform chapter members of upcoming events.

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In order for this to succeed, the message must be updated frequently, both to keep all the members informed of new activities, and to keep them interested. It must be publicized, perhaps with a bright flyer hung in the synagogue and put in the newsletter. Give it a slogan and a jazzy name, it can be anything from *The Amazing Answering Machine* to *You've got questions -- we've got an answering machine!*

Having this system does not mean that you will no longer need phone chains, flyers and newspapers. As wonderful and awesome as USYers are, you cannot depend on them to take the initiative and find out all the information for themselves. Set up a contest where the person who calls the most is rewarded. Encourage them to call anytime and leave messages on the machine. They will be able to clarify details about upcoming events even if they don't feel comfortable calling the officers or advisor directly.

USYers can also leave RSVPs on the answering machine as messages, and any questions they might have. Because of this, you should check the answering machine often for messages that people have left, so that you can get in touch with USYers to let them know you got their RSVP, and answer any questions they might have.

A final option if your chapter doesn't have the funds or the resources to have an entire line to themselves, is to leave a brief message on the answering machine of one of the chapter officers or chair-people. It would be best in this case to use the same person for the entire year, so people will know where to call.

Temple Bulletins

Many USY chapters ignore the Temple Bulletin as a means of communication. The rationale often given for this omission is that "the kids don't read the Bulletin." This is debatable, but even assuming it is true, the Bulletin should not be overlooked, because it may be one of the most important means of communication with the adult congregation. Whether your Temple Bulletin appears weekly, bi-weekly or monthly, it should carry a notice or an important article about the youth group in each issue. It is important that USY doesn't see like an impersonal collection of teenagers. Honor your members and personalize USY by naming those who are in charge, responsible, participating, etc. If you make yourselves credible in the Congregation's eyes, they will want to support USY.

Publicity Programming

Sending people things in the mail sometimes just isn't enough. You can embed publicity programming into your chapter's regular programming; and easily let your members know all about different things that are going on in your chapter and elsewhere in USY. Have USYers who went on summer programs show off their pictures; show the International Convention video; have people show around yearbooks with pictures from regional events. The key to making a publicity program work is to decide what it is you want people to find out about, and someone who has done it who can publicize it. People will pay far more attention to a friend of theirs who is telling them about a program they participated in, rather than a video (though a video can work if someone introduces it).

You can get many free publicity materials on the USY website at <http://www.usy.org/connect/publications/freebies.asp>.

MAKING EFFECTIVE PHONE CALLS

A GUIDE FOR PHONE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

So you're on the phone committee (or phone tree committee, or whatever your chapter calls it) -- congratulations for stepping up to the task! Being on a phoning committee is one of the most important jobs in your chapter's communication. These are some tips on making phone calls that work:

- **Be Personal!** Remember, the most important thing is to become friends with your current members, and with potential members before recruiting them. One can always have more friends, right? And your first phone call to someone should never be about USY, but rather one where you get to know them, and for them to become comfortable with you. When you care calling them about USY, always start by really talking to them first, not getting right to business. Ask them how their day was, how any extra-curriculars are going; get involved in their life! This will increase your chances of getting them involved in your life, a.k.a. USY.
- **Never start with USY!** Don't start by saying, "I'm so and so from USY." This tells them that you are calling because you have to, not because you are their friend and you would enjoy them being there. You can say later in the call that there is a USY event, and you would like them to come. This is a better way for them to find out what organization is like planning the event.
- **Avoid dominating the conversation** and talking down about other organizations such as BBYO or NFTY. This gives your potential members and current members a bad feeling for you, and if they are also members of those other groups, they might get mad and not come to USY events.
- **Be enthusiastic!** Your ruach about USY is contagious, even over a phone line, so always be enthusiastic and full of ruach!
- Also, make sure to **end the call on an upbeat!** You don't want to make people depressed; you want to leave the call knowing that the USYer is psyched about the upcoming programs!
- **Ahead of time, write down the info** you need to give and receive. That way you don't mess up in the call, or give people the wrong information. Also, you may want to say the information out-loud a few times so that it's memorized in your head. Be prepared to give directions to get to wherever the program is taking place, whether it's at Temple, or at someone's house.
- **Introduce yourself** and fully explain why you're calling, but don't let USY be the only thing you talk about. A twenty-minute phone call that gets your chapter a new member, or at least gets someone to come a program, is far better than a two-minute call where you just recite the info.
- **Be persistent, but not annoying.** Don't expect returned calls, so don't leave a message with all your information. Rather, call *them* back later, when you have time to have a real conversation with them. Also, if they say they'll call you back when they find out if they can come, call *them* back a couple of days later, rather than waiting for them, because odds are they won't get back to you.
- Be prepared to **offer solutions to objections** (such as a ride for people who say they don't have one).

PUBLICIZING USY

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

So you want to help publicize USY? That's great! There are lots of ways you can do it, in addition to getting involved in your chapter's communications programs such as a phoning committee, newsletter, etc. (though those are great ways to help out too!). You can do lots of things in your everyday life that help to get information out to your friends, prospective USYers, the general community, and anyone who is interested in USY and Judaism.

- **Live USY!** Everything else you're going to read about on this page falls under this. If you live USY, then people will notice it. People will find out about USY through the way you carry yourself, through the way that you mention USY in daily conversation, and more.
- **Learn about USY programs!** If you don't know all the different programs USY offers, you can't tell people about them. Talk to your Chapter officers, Regional officers, and the International officers if you have any questions; you can also find out lots of information about the opportunities that USY has to offer to Jewish teens on our website at <http://www.usy.org/>.
- **Wear your regalia!** Don't be afraid to wear that bright yellow "10-10-USY" shirt that you got at the convention last weekend when you get to school dead tired on Monday. People will see the letters U, S, and Y, and want to know what it's all about. If you already do this, you know that this happens. However, don't be hesitant to talk about USY when people ask, instead of just saying, "Oh, it was an awesome time." Tell them what things you did, whether it's visiting the elderly, hearing someone speak about living on a Kibbutz, or anything else.
- **Tell your friends about upcoming programs!** If there are Jews at your school who are in USY, remind them about a program that's coming up (and even if they aren't, tell them too, it's always great to have new people coming!) and ask them if they're coming.
- **Talk about your experiences!** Tell people about the incredible times you've had with USY. If people hear what a great time you had, they might think of coming too. Also, hearing about how you had such a good time might get them to go find out more, so remember to tell them where they can get more information (in places such as the USY website, and flyers/brochures they might be able to find at the Synagogue).
- **Take the first step today!** If, today, every single person in USY told someone about a program that they participated in, whether it be Pilgrimage, Wheels, or even just helping out at their synagogue's Purim carnival, there would be a lot more knowledge out there about what USY is. So why don't you start today?

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Publishing Tips

Helpful hints for USY publications

In USY, we have a lot of publications. There are newsletters, packets, brochures, flyers, posters, and a slew of other things that we send out to our members. If your publications are easier to read, more people will read them (as opposed to if they are harder to read). This list of publishing tips is here to give you some hints on laying out your publications, and on publishing in general.

- Choose a typeface that best conveys the feeling of your publication.
- Use body text between 10 and 12 points. Use the same typeface and size for all of your body text.
- Make paragraph beginnings clear. Use either an indent or block-style for paragraphs, not both.
- Don't crowd items on a page. If you need to use more paper, use more paper.
- Don't box text so that the border is really close to the text. Make sure to leave white space between the text and the border.
- Use only one space after a period, except in mono-spaced fonts such as Courier.
- Try not to mix fonts or sizes in body text. One may be all you need; two is usually enough.
- Avoid setting headlines and subheadings in all capitals, and avoid ALL CAPS in general.
- Don't set long blocks of text in italics, bold, or all caps, because they're harder to read. Also, don't use too many "special effects" fonts or drop caps.
- Don't underline anything, whether it's the name of a publication or text you want to emphasize. Use italics, bold, or quotes instead.
- Have more white space below a headline than above it.
- Don't make your headlines too short or too long. Stay between 30 and 70 characters.
- Headlines are best set "left aligned", not centered, and don't put lines under headlines.
- Avoid using justified text unless your lines are long enough to get away with it or you auto-hyphenate. If your columns are very narrow, like in a brochure, justify will result in large gaps between words making the type look strange.
- If your publication is going to be copied in black and white, make sure any pictures you put in are high-contrast so that it is easy to tell what is in the picture when it's in black and white.
- When using pictures, try to find a big picture and make it smaller, rather than take a small picture and make it bigger.
- When you're copying scanned pictures, use the maximum coarseness in the halftone screen of your photo. A good laser printer might print a photo that looks good with very tiny halftone dots, but the photo will look bad when copied.
- Use your resources! If you have a desktop publishing program such as Microsoft Publisher, it will have a great number of templates and clipart that can make your publication look more professional. Also take advantage of free stock image websites such as Image*After (<http://www.imageafter.com/>).