Facilitators’ Guide for the Pay Equity Study Programs: Symposium on Pay Equity

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Symposium on Pay Equity

Compiled by Rabbi Helaine Ettinger

Found in the

CCAR Journal: The Reform Jewish Quarterly Fall 2018
**General Introduction**

These adult study sessions are designed for either professional or lay leaders to be the facilitators. All of the study material is found in the CCAR Journal: The Reform Jewish Quarterly, Fall 2018, Symposium on Pay Equity. Participants should read selected articles in advance for the study session to be successful. Encourage all participants to bring the articles with them to the study session.

There are three main goals of these study sessions:

1. To raise awareness of the ongoing problem of Pay Inequity in our society in general, and in the institutions of the Reform Movement in particular.
2. To clarify values with regard to Jewish social justice teachings on fairness and the treatment of laborers.
3. To reflect on the actual employment policies within the participants’ Reform Jewish institution in light of ancient Jewish teachings and current US law. (This last goal is specifically for the institution’s board.)

**Suggestions**

Set up your study space in a manner that invites connection and conversation. Avoid rows of chairs or desks. Participants will share more if they are seated face to face. As facilitator you should sit within the group, not apart from it.

Be patient and give people time to think before they speak. Don’t be afraid of silence and feel you must rush in to fill it. It is okay for participants to disagree as long as they do so respectfully.

Establish class norms right at the beginning. Bring up the issue of creating a safe space, of listening without judgement, of speaking in the first person and taking responsibility for one’s own statements. Model constructive feedback by using three key phrases: I notice, I wonder, and I appreciate.

We encourage you, as facilitator, to begin each class by reciting blessings together for Torah Study and/or Social Justice with the students. The blessings are included in the study guides and also on a separate text sheet that may be shared with the participants.

**Leading the Study Sessions**

Each session opens with a broad question to serve as a conversation starter. These questions invite participants to share their opinions and experiences. Encourage each person to share his or her answer by going around the room. Encourage participants to be specific and brief to keep the conversation moving and to leave enough time for the study texts. Make it clear that anyone who does not want to respond is welcome to pass. In a group that is larger than 15 participants, it may be impossible for everyone to speak. In that case, invite a few people to share their
responses. Whatever the size of the group, this question is not one for debate or rebuttal. The goal is to share views and to listen.

**Discussing the Articles That Are Specific to Each Session**

There are discussion questions accompanying each article. The first question for each article is often intended to make sure that everyone understands the main points of the selected article. Subsequent questions are designed to explore the challenges raised in the article and finally, where possible, to apply the issues raised in the article to real situations. Questions proceed in sequence from understanding of the content to interpretation to application.

Articles vary in length. Some articles will need 20–30 minutes of discussion; some will need only 10 minutes. It is the facilitator’s role to move the discussion forward. One way to do so is by briefly emphasizing or restating the points that others have made to draw that particular question to a close and then inviting the group to move on to the next question or next article.

The last question to the final article is one that opens the discussion up to real-life application. Remind the participants that such questions are meant to be aspirational since only the board is empowered to make policy within the organization. (Of course, if the session is with the board, then remind them that they are the ones empowered to review and change policy.) Aspirations, however, are how we move forward with our goals and effect change within organizations. Articulating aspirations is an important step in charting the future.

**Handouts**

Each study session has handouts to accompany the discussions. These may include:

- Blessings before beginning a study session
- Charts or tables of research data
- Lists of benefits
- Scenarios for exploration
- Jewish texts

Please make the handouts available for the participants. Hyperlinks have been included in the Study Guides so that handouts can be shared digitally with participants.

For additional information and resources for the study sessions and beyond, visit the Reform Pay Equity Initiative website [https://reformpayequity.org/](https://reformpayequity.org/)