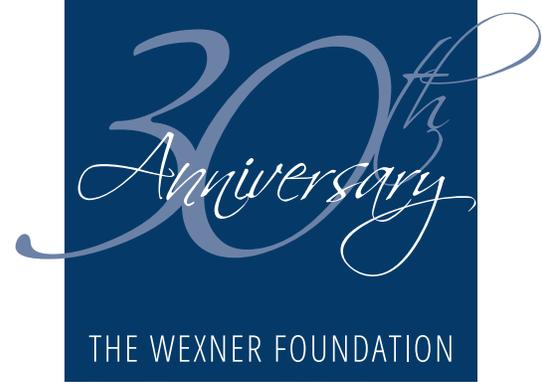


# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM AN ACCIDENTAL CHANGE MAKER: SUSTAINING OUR VISION

*NIGEL SAVAGE*



I became an American Jewish organizational leader rather by accident, with a strong vision but without – in retrospect – much of the knowledge I really needed to do my job properly. In this session I want to reflect, as honestly as I can, on 15 specific lessons, some of them hard-earned, from Hazon’s first fifteen years. Few of them were apparent to me when we started. Some may be obvious; a majority, I believe, are not. Most, if not all, should be relevant to you, your organization and your community. The session will include short chevrotas and breakouts.

## TEN THINGS WE GOT (SOMEWHAT? PARTIALLY? MOSTLY? EVENTUALLY?) RIGHT:

1. Build bridges from big vision to practical next steps, and back again;
2. The value not of longer-term planning but longer-term framing;
3. “The Torah is a commentary on the world, and the world is a commentary on the Torah:” the vital necessity of framing Jewish tradition in the 21 st century
4. The particular and the universal: why Jewish teaching should be framed for non-Jews
5. Get the right people on the bus – and then get them in the right seat. Build bridges from your staff’s vision to your own, and back again;
6. Go the extra mile in supporting one’s people; not only hiring well but also (occasionally) firing well. “Being a Jewish organization, 701”: broken shoulders, parenthood, shmita and an abusive lay-leader. (And why a transgender former Catholic didn’t join Hazon in the first place.)
7. Aseh l’cha rav : the vital importance of followership & supporting leaders
8. Sh’ma yisrael: listen...(facilitation; panels; funders and partners)
9. The usefulness of saying no to funders (and the need for funders to listen to their grantees, and for grantees to listen to funders). (A one-day bike-ride...?)
10. Framing Israel in the 21 st century.

## FIVE WE’RE STILL CHALLENGED BY:

1. The challenges of building reserves
2. The challenges of building a board
3. The challenges of partnering
4. The challenges of rigor vs openness
5. The challenges of burnout

## QUESTIONS:

- Where am I part of the solution?
- Where am I part of the problem?
- Who’s one person I choose unilaterally to support?

## CODA: 2022 VISION?



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### TWO POCKETS: RABBI SIMCHA BUNIM OF PRZYSUCHA

Our master taught: Every person should have two pockets. In one pocket should be a piece of paper saying: "I am but dust and ashes" (Genesis 18:27). In the other pocket should be a piece of paper saying: "For my sake was the world created" (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5).

### ASEH L'CHA RAV

הוֹשֵׁעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה וְנִתַּי אֵי הָאֲרָבָלִי קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה אָמַר, עֲשֵׂה לְךָ רַב, וְקִנְיָה לְךָ חֲבֵר,  
וְנַחְוֵי דָן אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם לְכַף זְכוּת.

Yehoshua ben Perachya and Nittai of Arbel received the tradition from them.

Yehoshua ben Perachya taught: Make a master-teacher for yourself;

Acquire a colleague for study;

When you assess people, tip the balance in their favor.

– Pirke Avot

**"The Torah is a commentary on the world, and the world is a commentary on the Torah"**

– Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach. Z"l

### THE STONES

Our sages taught: A man should not move stones from his ground to public ground.

A certain man was moving stones from his ground onto public ground when a pious man found him doing so and said to him, food, why do you move stones from ground which is not yours, to ground which is yours?"

The man laughed at him.

Some days later the man had to sell his field, and when he was walking on that public ground he stumbled over those stones.

He then said, "How well did that pious man say to me, 'why do you move stones from ground which is not yours to ground which is yours?'"

ת"ר לא יסקל אדם מרשותו לרה"ר מעשה באדם אחד שהיה מסקל מרשותו לרה"ר  
ומצאו חסיד אחד אמר לו ריקה מפני מה אתה מסקל מרשות שאינה שלך לרשות שלך  
לגלג עליו לימים נצרך למכור שדהו והיה מהלך באותו רה"ר ונכשל באותו אבנים אמר  
יפה אמר לי אותו חסיד מפני מה אתה מסקל מרשות שאינה שלך לרשות שלך :

*Talmud Bavli, Masekhet Bava Kama 50b*