

**Seven Things a Cantor Can Do to Help a Congregation Get People in the Door,
And to Keep Them Coming Back!
Cantor Jeff Warschauer**

1) Form choruses and synagogue bands that welcome everyone

These groups can be intergenerational, or there can be separate kids and adults groups. The advantage of an intergenerational group is that it builds bridges among the generations. All would be welcome, regardless of musical level, background or experience (there are ways to make the same music accessible to participants of varying levels).

And how about a Jewish Rock Band for teens that performs at Purim, Hanukkah, and other special events?

2) Create opportunities each week for musical involvement by congregants in the Shabbat services

The cantor can meet with congregants early in the week to rehearse duos and trios for the following Shabbat. Not only does this increase engagement on the part of the congregants, but friends and family will come to hear the congregants sing!

3) Organize and lead “The Big Jewish Music Jam”

This event would be open to the entire community: Singers, instrumentalists, listeners, kids, adults, seniors, Jews, non-Jews, all backgrounds, all levels. This would be a great Sunday activity, ideally after religious school, meeting perhaps once-a-month. It’s a fantastic way to get people in the door, and to create word-of-mouth.

4) Teach in the Religious School and tutor Bar and Bat Mitzvah students

Subjects: Torah portion of the week, prayer and trope skills, Hebrew, songs, etc.

In collaboration with the rabbi and the Religious School staff, the cantor can help kids to find their unique Jewish identity in a fun, active learning environment, teaching through acting, singing, creative writing and movement.

5) Classes and individual sessions for adults

Prayer skills, trope skills, and for newcomers, how to feel comfortable and engaged in a synagogue service

Also adult education lectures and courses on musical topics (i.e. "Jewish Music Across the Globe") and non-musical topics (i.e. "Jewish Life in Poland: Then and Now")

6) Pastoral and lifecycle activities under the direction of the rabbi

Hospital visits, shiva minyanim, weddings and funerals

Guiding, comforting, helping and celebrating through all of life's transitions

7) Outreach to other faith communities through music

Music is a powerful bridge between cultures and faiths. The cantor can organize concerts and lectures, and help organize interfaith services.