



A Guide for Shluchim

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Target audience: How to captivate your people

It goes without saying that the Kushner International Tefillin Bank project is *not* for people you meet for the first time on mitvzoim; it is *not* for “Would you like to put on tefillin every day?” Neither is it for shul use.

The program is geared for:

- People who are ready to commit to putting on tefillin *every day*;
- People with whom you have at least a minimal *personal relationship*;
- People *affiliated/in contact with Chabad* for some time;
- People who for whatever reasons can’t purchase tefillin but would like to put on tefillin every day;
- People who are committed to taking their Torah/mitzvos to the next level; and
- To a lesser, case-by-case extent, the program is for people who **CAN** afford tefillin, but who do not prioritize it and will be moved to commitment by your cost-free gesture.

Giving value to a gift

The number-one “problem” of this project is the free-of-charge feature. Many feel this cheapens the mitzvah. Here are some pointers on putting a price tag on free tefillin:

- *Stress the importance and commitment aspect of the project to the participant. It must be serious.*
- If, for some individuals, you feel you must charge something, offer a generous payment plan of something like \$10 a month, or offer them to pay what they can or what they’d like—and when they can. Remember that in kashrus’ case, the Rebbe said that people should pay half the cost—and offered to cover the second half. Something similar may apply to tefillin too: There are individuals to whom tefillin is a mitzvah important enough to warrant commitment, but not enough to warrant paying for it—and covering their costs allows them to clear that final hurdle. One variation of this may be to ask participants to help continue the Kushner International Tefillin Bank by making a monthly contribution to it (see “Local sponsorships of your tefillin campaign,” below).
- Have participants purchase a siddur and a yarmulke with the gift of tefillin, so that they’ve paid for at least something.

- Someone who's involved anyways with Chabad is someone you may be confident will take the gift seriously—you're looking for someone committed in the first place.
- Arranging a custom-embroidered tefillin bag and/or yarmulke with your recipient's name on it in Hebrew (or English) tends to add significant worth.
- When available, the complete, comprehensive and elegant packages from The Shluchim Office present a professional picture to recipients, which convey that you are taking their commitment very seriously. The velvet tefillin bag, prayerbook, and related materials show that you take this gift seriously and expect the same from the recipient.
- For some of your people, your free offer is the very motivating factor itself: "Tefillin are so important that they're actually giving me a \$400 pair of tefillin for free!"

Local sponsorships of your tefillin campaign

- The Kushner International Tefillin Bank encourages you to localize your tefillin campaign: Ask your regular donors to contribute towards the costs, explaining to them that they're helping committed Jews put on tefillin daily by paying the price. This allows them to see hands-on exactly where their donations are going, i.e., "Mr. Goldberg now puts on tefillin daily because of you."
- As the Bank's participants will be people who know the importance of tefillin, encourage them to sponsor tefillin for others, as they feel it's worthwhile.
- In either case, it is strongly suggested to ask contributors to give half their donation directly towards your local efforts, and the other half directly to the Kushner International Tefillin Bank. This way, they can be shown that they are directly supporting the Bank on both the local and international levels.

Captivating tefillin activities

Regardless of how many project participants you have, you'll want to keep their excitement up. For tefillin, here's some ways how:

- Regular minyan attendance. This may go hand-in-hand with your local expansion and development of this program, i.e. a new minyan for program participants;
- Subscribe them to The Shluchim Office regular Tefillin and Mezuzah Bank e-newsletter;
- Give them copies of sichos on tefillin;
- Organize a weekly, bi-monthly, or monthly Bagel brunch or Tefillin Club social event (which you may precede by a minyan) to help participants feel that they belong;
- Show them a video on the making of tefillin. "Let's Make a Torah" by Sholom B. Goldstein is available from Judaica World (888-2-JUDAIC) or JewishLearningGroup.com.
- Organize an annual "Tefillin Club" meeting/party, complete with food, live music, speeches, and a farbrengen.
- Smaller such events can be staged bi-annually, monthly or even bi-monthly. These events require very little time and money. They consist of informal get-togethers

with light refreshments: inexpensive crackers, some soda and you're set.

Alternatively, you can put a barbeque twist on this concept.

- Take them to the next level: regular Torah learning, shmiras Shabbos, kashrus, etc.
- This may or may not apply to you, but, depending on your local, individual situation, a “frequent-flier”-type point system for daily tefillin use, complete with rewards, may be an idea in reaching out to your local teenagers or college students.

Tefillin commitment: Reminders to participants

- *IMPORTANT NOTE: When you start off with people, and when you remind them, stress that they put on tefillin in the morning. Prioritize it! Let them know clearly that tefillin comes before anything else. Not stressing this can lead to participants “drifting” and putting tefillin on after work or in the afternoon, and then missing a day here or there, and ultimately not putting them on at all.*
- Work with your participants as you would with any other mekurav: call, visit, be in touch periodically. Stay vigilant and on top of things.
- Remember that the key here is *personal level*—friendliness and attentiveness is the key.
- Send tefillin reminder post cards or e-mails. The Tefillin Bank can send a professionally-produced newsletter to your participants.
- “I put on tefillin today” bumper stickers or decals, something one shliach has distributed to passers-bys at fairs with tefillin and mezuzah tables, may be an idea here as well.
- If you sense a participant weakening or saying things like “I don’t feel like it,” explain that the mitzvah is not just about him, but rather, about *Klal Yisroel* as well, lending protection to Jews worldwide (including himself), especially in Eretz Yisrael. You might tell them that their putting on tefillin will add security to the people of Israel—explain the posuk “*V’ra’u kol amei ha’aretz... v’yar’u mimeka.*”

Quotes and ideas for Mivtza Tefillin from shluchim

Without mentioning names, the following are tips and “tricks of the trade” harvested and edited from conversations with shluchim regarding their mivtzoim experiences.

- “Success in mivtza tefillin is all in the attitude of the shliach. The greatest shluchim never went anywhere without tefillin. Reb Mendel Futerfas, for example, barely knew three words in English: ‘I Jew? You Jew! I tefillin? You tefillin!’ You don’t have to be *cultured, polished...* baloney! A big smile and warmth is all you need.”
- “I had a tefillin booth at a Maccabia. I had to do ‘mass production,’ and do the minimum: just the brachah, Shema, Baruch Sheim, the first posuk, and that’s all. If you have an Israeli or someone who can read Hebrew, do more with him, or use one of those tefillin cards [with the parshiyos transliterated on them].”
- **“Don’t leave home without tefillin! Every shliach must always have a pair of tefillin ON HAND wherever he goes.** My question to my fellow shluchim is, ‘Why

didn't you have your tefillin with you?' If not yours, than use a 'mivtzoim pair.' If you really believe that *mitzvah achas* can be *machria* the whole world, then why don't you have them with you? You're making a Yid a non-*karkafta*—look at what the gemara says about what you're doing for him. When you go to a summer wedding, don't hang around the smorgasbord—make a tefillin activity! It's daylight! There were 10 lubavitcher shluchim at a wedding [I was at], and there was only one pair of tefillin!! Keep them in your hand at all times."

- "Don't be pushy! One fellow who came aboard my Mitzvah Tank was very angry about being pushed into Mivtza Tefillin by the Kotel in Israel, but once I talked to him and established a personal relationship, he calmed down and agreed."
- "For college students, organize a once-a-month Tefillin Club minyan, complete with Sunday brunch and/or a shiur. Have a few pairs of Tefillin on hand, and it will eventually lead them to put on tefillin daily. Say either Shema or all or part of davening with them."
- "In working with Israelis, one gets a lot of people by word-of-mouth: People tell their friends, etc. Personal connection with people is crucial: I'm on a first-name basis with people; that may work for you too."
- "Another very effective thing is to explain that "G-d gave us two powerful tools: Our mind and our heart. September 11 and other attacks show us how powerful these are if used for the wrong reasons. Tefillin is the daily acknowledgement of coming to terms with harnessing our emotions and mind for the right reasons. People appreciate that very much. Tefillin is a way to grab hold of a *yid's* neshamah, to 'conquer' them, and tefillin must be involved in every program, such as Lunch 'n' Learns."
- "Don't forget about visiting your baalei batim at their workplaces to put on tefillin!"
- "Explain that Tefillin is a self-contained mitzvah package that doesn't threaten or change a Jew's lifestyle, like Shabbos or Kashrus. All it entails is welcoming G-d into your life every day for three minutes. Explain to your people: 'We spend a lot of time trying to *connect*—shrinks, books, counselors, etc. Now, if you have a lock on your door, it will keep people out—but if there are people who want to break into your house, they will, even if you have a lock. But G-d is not a burglar. He will not break into your life if you don't want Him there. But if you want to connect to all Jews who came before you, it's not going to happen unless you open up and let G-d into your life. This is Tefillin. With the letters Daled and Shin, you draw G-d's name onto you, and welcome G-d into your life. If you don't make an active endeavor to let G-d in, nothing will happen.' "

- “Organize a minyan and eventually, as it builds up and gets strong, your chevrah will one-by-one come to purchase their own sets of tefillin of their own volition. Nothing reinforces hanochas tefillin like a regular minyan.”
- “Remember that with tefillin, our ‘product’ is very different: you’re not selling hair conditioner—you’re selling neshamah. So you have to talk neshamah to neshamah. If you want to advertise, be very careful before commercializing something very personal, spiritual and “religious.” Focus on the mitzvah. With tefillin, you’re tapping into a part of the person that no one else taps into. Although you want to clothe the idea in colorful expressions, beware that the core concept remains intact.” (The Shluchim Office tefillin brochure offers an excellent example of this.)
- “Set up a booth/table at Federation and pro-Israel events.”
- “ ‘Tying the knot’ is a good line or slogan you can use as you see fit in conveying the concept that tefillin connects one with other Jews. Another one-liner is ‘Do you want to take [or: ‘Can I take’] your Jewish blood pressure?’ ”
- “A rewards system for putting on tefillin is not a good idea—but may work if you’re dealing with teenagers. The catch is to catch people’s attention: the rest is standard.”
- “Tefillin can be an integral part of drawing someone closer who is already somewhat involved, as in the case of the Rebbe buying and presenting David Chase with a pair of tefillin for his personal use, as well as for a New Jersey senator at yechidus.”
- “Organizing and implementing a regular (i.e. annual) tefillin checking event may be a good idea, such as setting up a booth or table at your center and having a professional sofer do tefillin demonstrations as well as checking your ba’alei batims’ tefillin.”

Miscellaneous ideas and tips

- Shluchim in Brazil have a yearly two-week Safrus Week event with sofrim, classes at several levels, and classes and activities for kids, It’s a great way of getting every one excited as well as the children.

Media and Publicity

The Kushner International Mezuzah Bank will be offering **press releases** for your local media use. **Ads** are available as well.

Additionally, a list of **talking points** for media interviews or appearances is available. These can also be used for speaking with baalei batim or Jewish crowds, as well as for talks, letters, articles, press releases, and even essays.