

# PREPARING SHIURIM AND SOURCE SHEETS

## PART 2

מכללת מבשרת ירושלים

### THE 4 STAGES OF SHIUR PREPARATION

- 1 - CHOOSING A CONCEPT AND TOPIC
- 2 - FINDING THE SOURCES
- 3 - LEARNING THE SOURCES
- 4 - PREPARING THE SOURCE SHEET

#### 1. LEARNING THE SOURCES

- Do you have the resources/skills to learn the source and come to a correct conclusion?
- Most of your conclusions are likely to actually be those of someone else? Who is that? Are they 'kosher'?
- Do you need to be a 'mechadesh'? Is there added value in summarizing and re-presenting other people's material?

#### 2. PREPARING THE SOURCE SHEET

##### (a) Computer generated or 'Stick 'n Paste'

Pluses of Computer

- MUCH quicker, especially for similar style shiurim
- very easy to drop in digital sources - especially with double screen
- legibility
- more accessible to print - from cloud, phone etc before a shiur
- easier to send to others/post on-line
- easy to send to institutions to have printed before the shiur - ALWAYS try to do that but bring a back-up! Watch out for paper sizes - A4 or Letter? Things may get chopped off your source sheet!
- looks much more professional
- easily stored and backed up

BUT there are minuses

- too much information on the page? spoon-feeding?
- students don't get used to looking at and deciphering 'original' text
- looks too 'synthetic'? less 'authentic'
- need the technology
- always use a sefer for a Gemara/Chumash shiur

##### (b) Styles

- English or no English? - what will the crowd appreciate?

- will they 'look down' on English?
- will it make you look weak?
- assisting w/o spoon-feeding
- Uses of English
  - translation
  - commentary under source
  - guidance questions
- Giving sources
  - do your students know what references mean?
- Standardization
  - find your style and stick to it - looks professional!
  - consistent use of capitals, fonts, font-sizes, italics, underlining etc
  - marketing? email/web details
  - front pages?
- Footnotes
  - look professional
  - what style are you adopting for references etc
- Fancy stuff?
  - boxes
  - special effects? keep it professional-looking
- Personalization
  - do you included the date and place for each source sheet? Nice personal touch BUT means you can never use them again without changing

### (c) Word-Processing Packages

- Websites which help you put together source sheets - [www.sefaria.org](http://www.sefaria.org)
- 'Specialist' packages - eg Davkawriter
  - Advantages:
    - user-friendly for importing sources
    - work well with Hebrew and also using Hebrew/English together in text
  - Disadvantages:
    - cost
    - can't open documents on other PCs unless they have that program too!
    - hard to get help - poor indexing and can't look things up on line
    - on-line support?
    - primitive in some areas - eg graphics?
    - need to transfer onto new computers - licensing?
- Word - how does it deal with Hebrew?
- Convert all docs to pdf format - secure and easy to send

### (d) Importing Sources

- From Digital DBs - very easy
- From websites - sometimes need to go via Word
- Importing from pdfs is still very difficult. OCR not yet great - things come out in 'gobbledygook'

### **3. SMART SOURCE SHEETS**

- Power Point:            Advantages:
  - impresses crowd
  - people focus more
  - can be more imaginative and engaging - images, colors etc
  
- Disadvantages
  - low lights + large crowd = sleep
  - take ages to prepare - time wasters
  - technology can let you down BADLY - do you have a backup?
  
- Pre-prepared teachers packages - 'Torah Live'
- Videos? Triggers?
- Smart boards?