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Masa Alumni Leadership Study

What Does Leadership Look Like Among Masa Alumni?

June 2018

Context for the Study

- Understanding where and how millennials practice leadership is a crucial contemporary issue. These individuals are being called upon to be “leaders today.” They are expected to be the “leaders of tomorrow.”
- Little research has explored millennial leadership. One of the few studies, The Hartford’s *2014 Millennial Leadership Survey* (n=785), found that 34% of millennials see themselves as leaders in the workplace and 46% see themselves as leaders in their personal interests/hobbies. These findings serve as useful but limited comparison points in understanding leadership among Masa alumni, most of whom can be classified as millennials.
- In terms of Jewish millennial leadership, there has been no prior program-specific evaluation of leadership-related outcomes.
- ***This investigation of leadership among Masa alumni, exploring how the Masa experience is related to alumni’s leadership practices, is the first of it’s kind.***

Research Methods

Alumni Survey

941 Respondents
(37% response rate)

Survey of respondents to Masa's 2015 retrospective alumni survey (n=2,531)

Exploring if and how Masa alumni demonstrate leadership in their personal and professional lives

Alumni Interviews

35 Interviews
with survey respondents

Probing which elements of the Masa experience contributed to alumni's practice and understanding of leadership

Focusing on how time on Masa shaped alumni's leadership trajectories

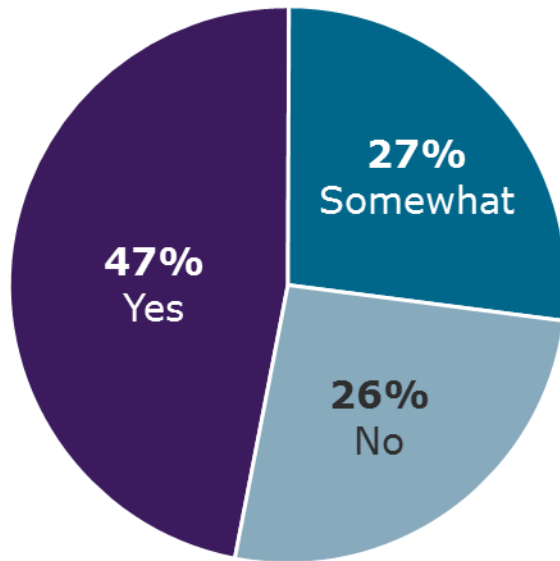
Alumni Characteristics

Program Type	Group A (Youth Movement)	18%
	Group B	69%
	Group C	13%
Program Year	2008–2010	19%
	2010–2012	33%
	2012–2014	48%
Gender	Male	40%
	Female	60%
Current Age	25 and under	33%
	26–30	46%
	31–35	21%
Prior Exposure to Jewish Educational Experiences	Lower level of exposure	34%
	Medium level of exposure	35%
	Higher level of exposure	31%
Employment Status	Working full-time or close to full-time	66%
	Working part-time	17%
	Not working	17%

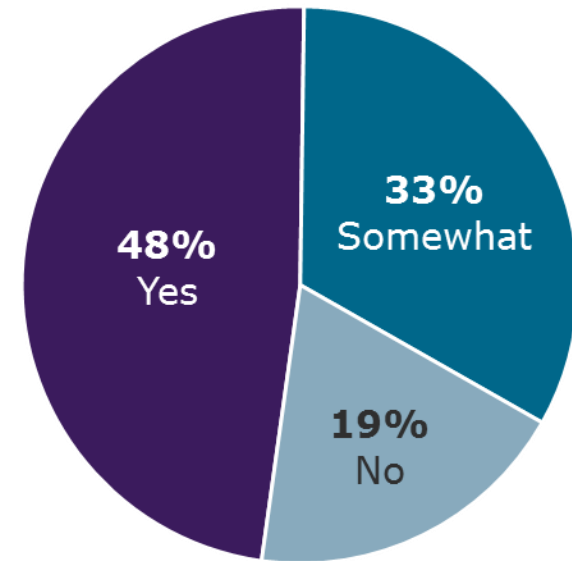
N = 941

Nearly Half of Alumni See Themselves as Leaders in the Jewish Community or at Work

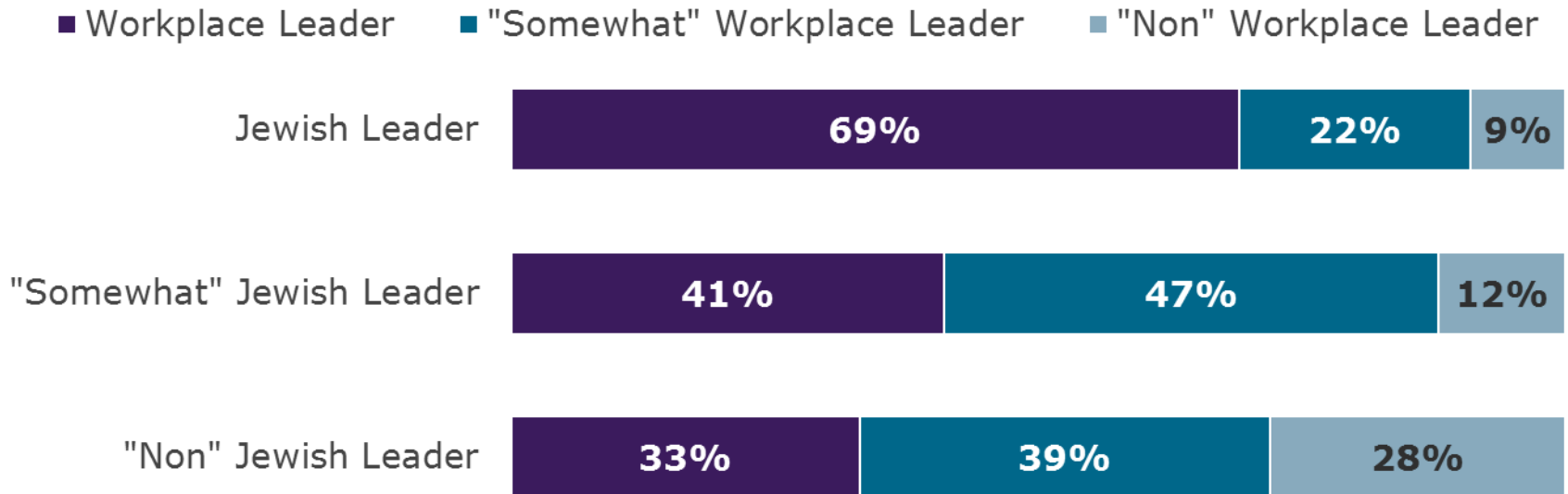
Do you see yourself as a
“Jewish leader”?



Do you see yourself as a
“leader” in your workplace?



Seeing Oneself as a “Jewish Leader” is Highly Correlated to Seeing Oneself as a “Leader” in the Workplace



More than two thirds (69%) of alumni who see themselves as “Jewish leaders” also see themselves as “leaders” in the workplace

“I think some things I take on in **how I lead** are definitely related to Masa and my experiences working with different people; how I stand by the **importance to be thrown into working with people that are different and learning how to be respectful of everyone.**”

— *Masa Participant, 2012-2013*

LEARNING LEADERSHIP ON MASA

Two Functions

Incubator

Helped participants realize that they had leadership skills, and provided an opportunity for actualizing these skills

Intensified leadership skills that participants brought from previous experiences

Accelerator

Strengthened participants' resumes and propelled them towards serving in professional leadership capacities

Connected participants to future Jewish communal leadership opportunities

Elements of the Masa Experience that Contributed to Leadership Development

Diversity of program participants; exposure to alternative perspectives

Role modeling by program staff and peers; teaching positive leadership practices

Classes and seminars focusing on communication and teamwork

Communal living; learning responsibility and accountability

Navigating a new, foreign terrain; gaining confidence and independence

Loose program structure; "sink or swim" mentality

Key Leadership-Related Skills Gained on Masa

Concepts Most Commonly Mentioned in Interviews with Alumni

Teamwork

Empathy

Maturity

Networking

Confidence

Responsibility

“When I came home, I went back to the same job I had been at for five months prior, and within six months, I worked myself into a manager position. **Someone told me that I had never showed that level of motivation, proactiveness, and dedication. I think it was because of my Masa program** – I learned how to utilize my time efficiently.”

— *Masa Participant, 2010-2011*

Defining Leadership

Salient Themes that Emerged from Interviews with Alumni

Vision-driven

**Identifying
problems and
creating solutions**

**Gaining trust
from others**

**Goal-centered,
not self-centered**

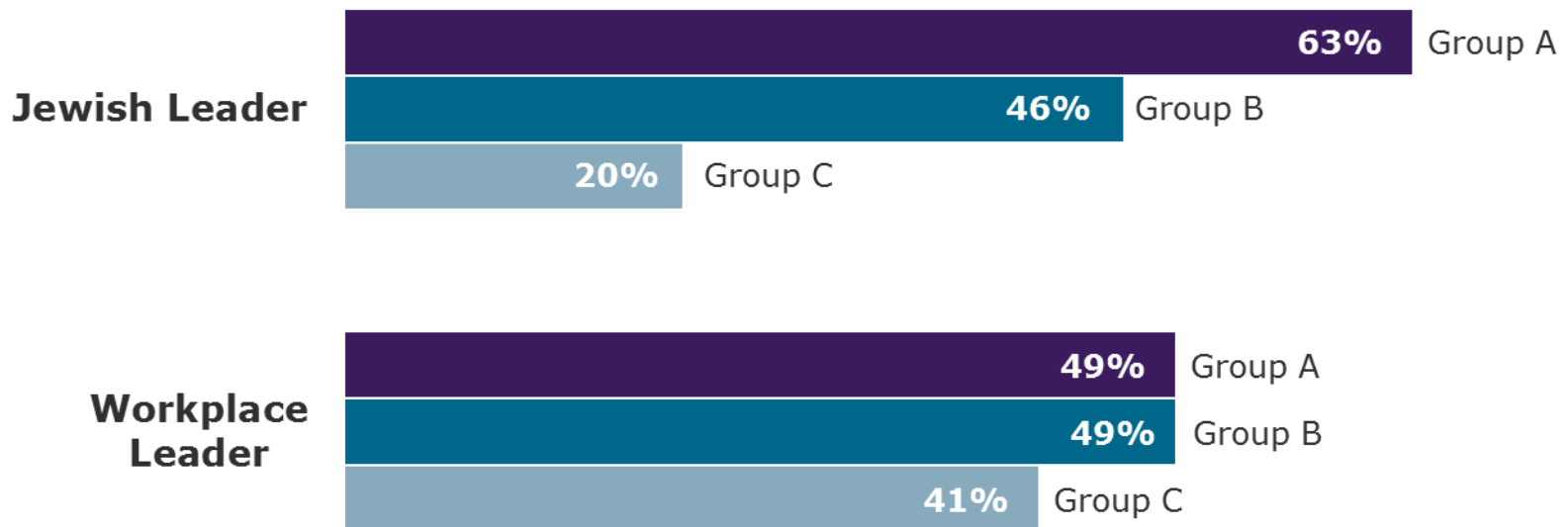
**Supporting a team
in achieving change**

CHARACTERISTICS OF ALUMNI LEADERS

Leadership and Program Type

Group A Alumni Most Likely to See Themselves as Jewish Leaders; Group C Alumni Least Likely

No Difference in Workplace Leadership with Regards to Program Type



Leadership and Program Year

Recent Alumni More Likely to See Themselves as Jewish Leaders than “Older” Alumni

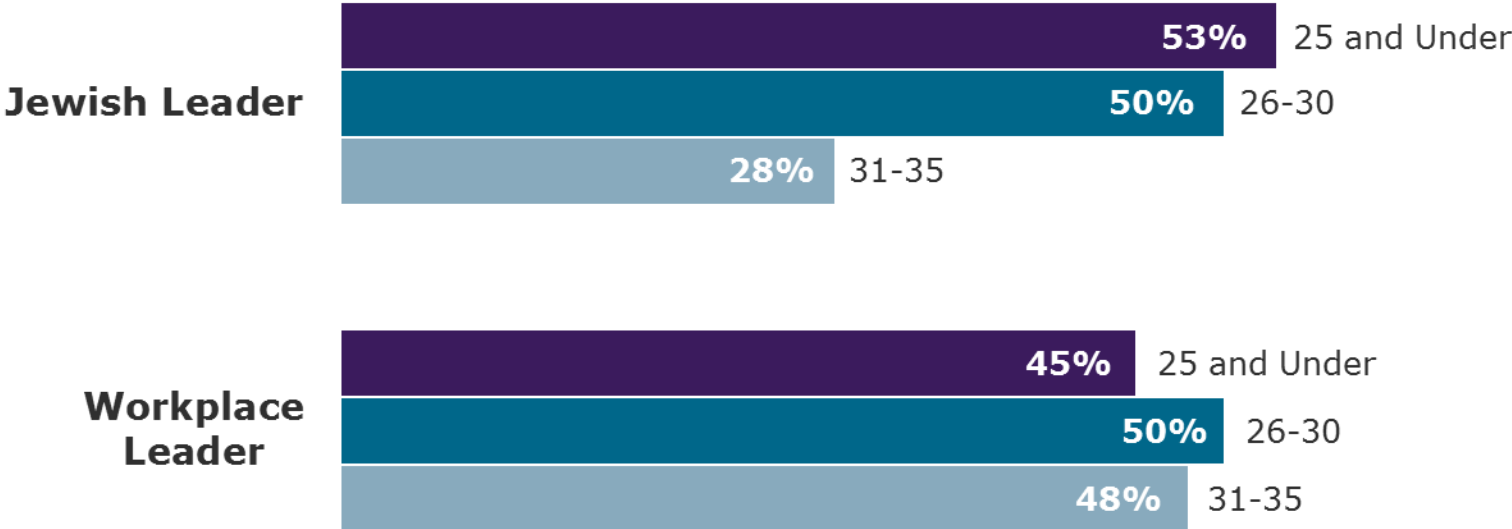
No Difference in Workplace Leadership with Regards to When Someone Participated in Masa

	Jewish Leader		Workplace Leader	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
2008–2010	42%	36%	52%	18%
2010–2012	42%	25%	50%	20%
2012–2014	51%	23%	44%	20%

Leadership and Age

Younger Alumni More Likely to See Themselves as Jewish Leaders

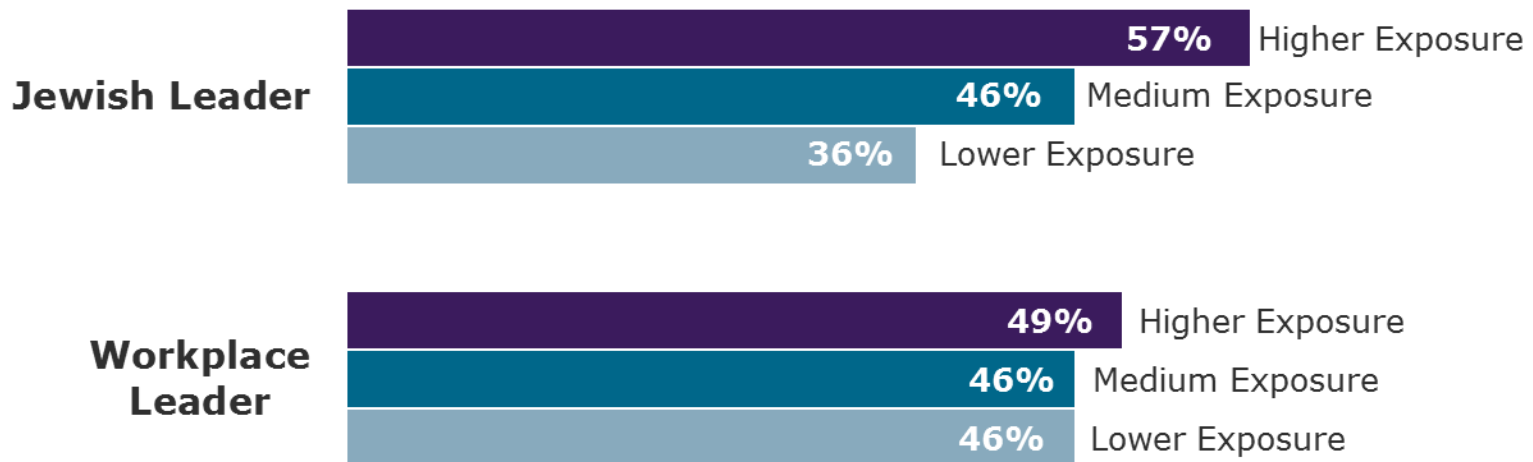
No Difference in Workplace Leadership with Regards to Age



Leadership and Exposure to Prior Jewish Educational Experiences

Alumni with a Higher Level of Prior Jewish Educational Experiences Most Likely to See Themselves as Jewish Leaders

No Difference in Workplace Leadership with Regards to Prior Jewish Educational Experiences



Leadership and Aliyah

No Differences in Jewish or Workplace Leadership Between Olim and Non-Olim

Jewish Leader



Workplace Leader



Leadership and Gender

Males More Likely to See Themselves as Leaders;
Females More "On the Fence"

Jewish Leader



Workplace Leader



LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNAL INVOLVEMENT

Half of Masa Alumni Involved in Jewish Community; One-Third Involved with Israel

Which of the following types of communities or organizations are you involved in?

Jewish (e.g. JCC, Hillel, Moishe House, Repair the World, OneTable, Synagogue)	53%
Fitness (e.g. CrossFit, SoulCycle, sports team)	34%
Israel (Jewish National Fund, Masa, AIPAC, JStreet, Israeli Film Festival)	30%
Spiritual Wellbeing (e.g. yoga, mindfulness)	20%
Social Justice (e.g. CTZNWELL, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America)	15%
Business/Tech (Bitcoin, Stock Market, Real Estate)	15%
Arts (e.g. Burning Man, StoryCorps)	14%
Political Activism (e.g. Black Lives Matter, political clubs)	12%

Alumni “Leaders” Exhibit a Higher Level of Communal Involvement than “Non-Leaders”

	Jewish Leader		Workplace Leader	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Jewish community	90%	78%	57%	38%
Israel-related community	55%	45%	36%	22%
Social justice community	22%	13%	20%	8%

More than half (55%) of those who see themselves as “Jewish leaders” plan and organize events in the Jewish community, compared to only 10% of “non-leaders”

Alumni's Relationships with Israel and Jewish Identity are Deepened Due to their Masa Experience

Based on Interviews with Alumni

Israel

Increased knowledge about Israeli society and politics

Greater sense of belonging and connection to Israel

More able to facilitate and initiate more-informed conversations about Israel at work and in personal life

Jewish Identity

Discovering new perspectives on Judaism and alternative ways of practice

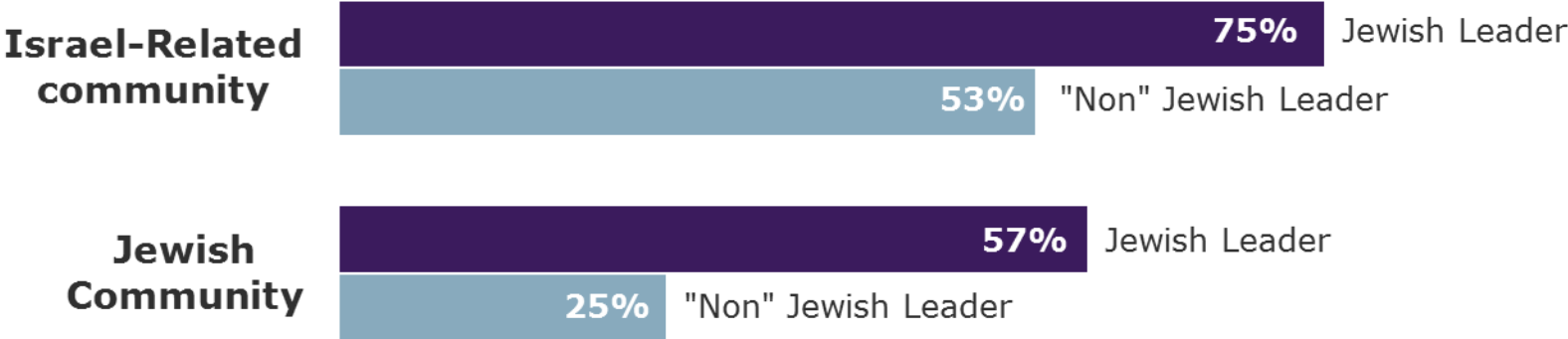
Feeling more comfortable in Jewish settings and conversations

Increased knowledge of Jewish history and Jewish rituals

More than Half of Alumni who See Themselves as “Jewish Leaders” Attribute their Involvement with Israel and the Jewish Community to their Time on Masa

To what extent is your involvement in each of the following communities tied to your previous experiences on a Masa program?

Percentage of respondents who selected “a lot” or “very much”

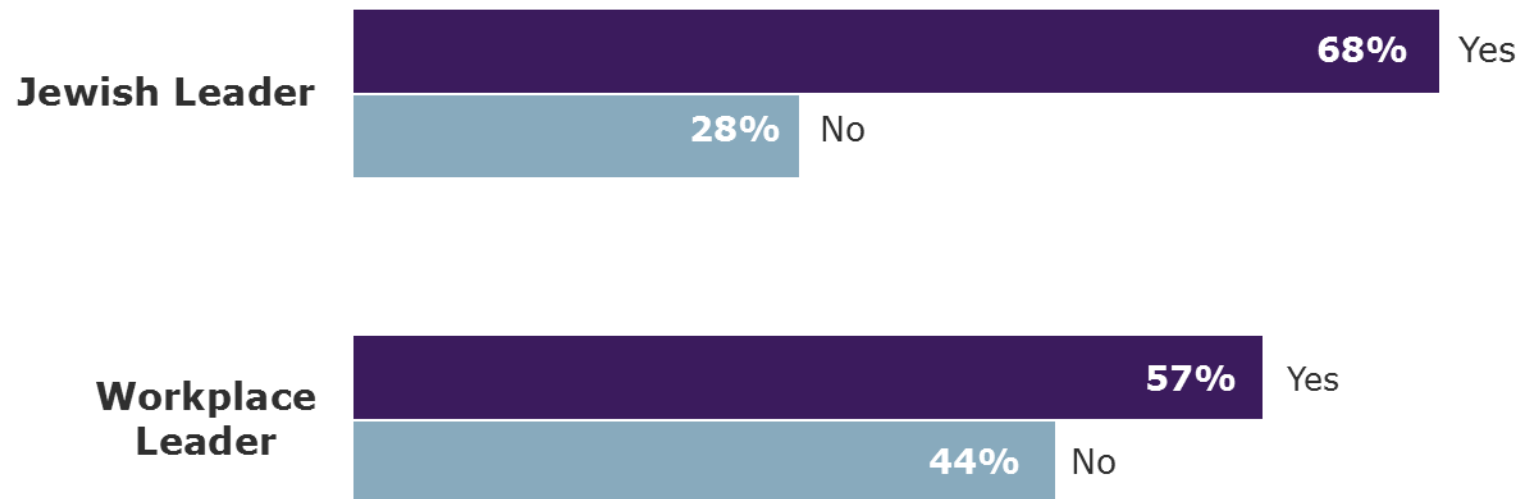


“The program taught me how to be ideological, which enabled me to be involved in leadership roles. Without an ideological basis, I might have been more happy to sit and attend events, **and now I feel like I need to take ownership of them.**

— *Masa Participant, 2012-2013*

Alumni “Leaders” Demonstrate a Higher Level of Executive Leadership in Jewish Organizations, Compared to “Non-Leaders”

Percentage of respondents who served on a board or leadership group of a Jewish organization in the last two years



Alumni “Leaders” Participate in More Jewish and Israel-Related Leadership Activities, Compared to “Non-Leaders”

Percentage of respondents who participated in activities in the last year

	Jewish Leader		Workplace Leader	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Organizing volunteering in the Jewish community	53%	14%	30%	8%
Helping design or implement an initiative with a Jewish focus	47%	8%	22%	9%
Helping design or implement an initiative with an Israel focus	38%	9%	20%	11%
Starting an advocacy and/or fundraising campaign on behalf of a Jewish or Israel-related cause	22%	3%	12%	3%

Alumni “Leaders” Display Stronger Jewish and Israel-Related Outcomes, Compared to “Non-Leaders”

Percentage of respondents who selected “agree” or “strongly agree”

	Jewish Leader		Workplace Leader	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
I can articulate to others what being Jewish means to me	92%	67%	76%	65%
I can articulate to others what Israel means to me	89%	67%	81%	66%
I feel a strong connection to Israel and Israelis	89%	66%	77%	68%
I feel a special responsibility to help Jews in need around the world	80%	46%	63%	43%
I feel connected to the global Jewish community	74%	44%	57%	47%

LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL WORK

The Most Popular Professional Fields Among Masa Alumni are Business and Engineering

Which of the following best describes your current professional field, or desired professional field (for those not working)?

Business/Finance	17%
Engineering/High-Tech	16%
Physical Health/Medicine	11%
Arts	11%
General Education/Higher Education	10%
Jewish Communal Work	9%
Social Work/Mental Health	7%
Public Service	6%
Jewish Education	4%
Law	4%

Alumni “Leaders” Occupy More Senior of Management Positions in the Workplace, Compared to “Non-Leaders”

		Overall	Jewish Leader		Workplace Leader	
			Yes	No	Yes	No
Workplace Position (Hierarchical Organizations)	Senior member in an organization	8%	12%	8%	14%	3%
	Middle management	35%	43%	26%	46%	12%
	Employee with no direct reports	57%	45%	66%	40%	85%
Serve as Supervisors	Yes	41%	52%	36%	61%	9%
	No	59%	48%	64%	39%	91%

Alumni who See Themselves as Workplace “Leaders” are More Involved at Work in an Impactful Way, Compared to “Non-Leaders”

Percentage of respondents who selected each statement

■ Workplace Leaders ■ "Non" Leaders



Workplace “Leaders” Have Stronger Professional and Personal Skills, Compared to “Non-Leaders”

Percentage of respondents who rated their skill-set as “very good” or “excellent”

	Leaders	“Somewhat” Leaders	“Non” Leaders
Working independently	87%	79%	70%
Collaborating with others	86%	80%	70%
Problem-solving	86%	76%	62%
Actively listening	81%	79%	67%
Decision-making	78%	57%	46%
Identifying your strengths/weaknesses	74%	60%	55%
Establishing clear goals	72%	54%	48%
Building effective teams	66%	53%	40%
Delegating tasks effectively	61%	41%	31%
Having difficult conversations	58%	44%	40%
Receiving negative feedback	46%	37%	27%
Giving negative feedback	37%	19%	22%

LOW

HIGH

“Masa really taught me about people, how to interact with different personality types and those who learn differently from me... I grew up in the Midwest where everyone is quiet and indirect and doesn’t like conflict, whereas in Israel everyone is direct and likes conflict, so I spent time figuring out how to negotiate with conflict, and learned that it’s okay to be direct and clear with what I need.”

— Masa Participant, 2012-2013

Masa Plays a Key Role in Alumni's Personal and Professional Trajectories

"I definitely look back on my 20's and the Masa experience split them up: before I lived in Israel and after were different times.

It shaped who I was as an adult, because of all the introspection I was doing. I was thinking about who am I as a Jew, an adult, a professional, an American...all these identity pieces were being questioned."

"It really taught me about myself and impacted how I walk through the world and interact with others. **It helped me turn inward and ask myself: Where do you want to be? What kind of work do you want to do? With whom do you want to interact with in the community?** I am constantly grateful for it, that I took time to workshop on myself from all angles."