



A Proposal to Establish:

**The Matanel Career Center for
the Ultra-Orthodox (*Haredi*) Community
at the University of Haifa**

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Executive Summary

Ultra-Orthodox families have long ranked among the poorest of all populations in Israeli society and the ongoing global economic crisis has made their precarious financial situation even more acute. In the Ultra-Orthodox community, women have traditionally been the main financial supporters to allow the men to devote themselves exclusively to *Torah* study. In recent years, a complex mix of internal and external forces has combined to the point where *Haredi* men have become increasingly interested in pursuing secular vocational and academic training. This new development has been matched by a corresponding interest in the broader Israeli society to help facilitate and support increased *Haredi* participation in the workforce. This confluence of interests has led to a growing number of vocational training centers, designed specifically to meet the needs of the *Haredi* community.

Recently, it has become increasingly clear to *Haredi* community leaders and academic researchers that these vocational training centers, while crucially important to the process of integrating greater numbers of *Haredim* into the Israeli workforce, are insufficient. Upon graduation, these newly trained workers lack the skills, habits and knowledge needed to launch an effective search process. Important information that those who were educated in the regular school/university system take for granted – for example, resume writing, work hours and business meeting conventions – are foreign to *Haredi* men. In addition to the vocational training, they require additional education and guidance to manage a job search process and successfully integrate into the workforce.

To address this pressing need, researchers from the University of Haifa, with seed funding from the Matanel Foundation, designed and completed a feasibility study. In addition to conducting a comprehensive environmental scan, the goal of the study was to clarify the curricula, services and personnel needs required to establish a special *Haredi* job placement center.

Based on the information gleaned from the environmental scan, the authors of this report conclude that establishing a special *Haredi* Job Placement Center under the auspices of the University of Haifa would make a positive contribution to Israeli society and, moreover, would be a natural fit with the university's mission and vision.

Key recommendations of the report include:

- Build a professional team to oversee the establishment of the Matanel Career Center for the Ultra-Orthodox Community, guide the multifaceted planning process, and professionally manage its day-to-day operations
- Engage in ongoing assessment of the needs of key stakeholders.
- Develop strategic relationships with potential partners – governmental, business and non-governmental – already operating in this arena.

1. Project Rationale

The Ultra-Orthodox population (hereafter referred to in the singular form as *Haredi* and in the plural form as *Haredim*) in Israel, which by various estimates numbers over 700,000 people, is characterized by low workforce participation when compared to the general Israeli population. There are also marked differences in the nature of the fields of endeavor common within the *Haredi* community, both in the scope of the positions and wages.

The high natural growth of this population, coupled with its low workforce participation, lead to high levels of poverty coupled with the social, emotional and financial stresses that are characteristically emerge in such cases. And while more *Haredim* have entering the workforce in recent years with a greater openness to consider new lines of work, the unemployment rate in this sector is still high. This is due to a lack of suitable positions, but primarily due to the difficulties they face in the process of seeking work.

There seems to be a growing awareness within the general Israeli population with respect to the value of academic and vocational studies specifically tailored to the needs of the *Haredi* community. While more work needs to be done in this area, in recent years there have been numerous initiatives, some of them now totally operational, to establish *Haredi* campuses or study tracks adapted to the *Haredi* community and its needs.

It is worth noting that the proposal to establish a *Haredi* campus at the University of Haifa has already received the support and encouragement of both the university leadership and those promoting employment in *Haredi* society. From a physical perspective the project is possible, but the issue of funding remains unresolved. Resolution of the funding issue is of great importance because of the planned cooperation between this campus, when it is finally established, and the job placement center for the *Haredi* population.

Recently, more and more public and private organizations are becoming aware of the importance of culturally sensitive placement services for *Haredim*. Nonetheless, these

are not being opened at a pace that matches the pace of the development of academic and vocational tracks, which are rapidly graduating students.

Closing this gap cannot be delayed or put off for some time in the future. If the *Haredim* who are currently filling these study programs return to their communities having failed to find meaningful work after going through an exhausting process of studying and a job search, the openness we are currently seeing in the community to this process will totally dissipate. It may be years before anyone might be able to revive the forward motion.

Conversely, there are no better "ambassadors" and peer role models for these developments than *Haredim* who have been placed in positions that relate to their studies and training and provide them and their families a respectable livelihood.

The proposed *Haredi* job placement center to be established at the University of Haifa will be guided by a dual commitment to addressing the *Haredi* candidate's needs before, during, and after his studies together with the needs and worldview of employers – both actual and potential.

The job placement center that will facilitate this encounter will be capable of improving the gathering of information with regard to *Haredi* employment, and streamline, as well as shorten, the process the *Haredi* candidate will go through, from when he first approaches the center until he is hired. It is possible that the tools accrued by the placement center will even enable it to chaperone the *Haredi* employee through his acclimation at work, and to bridge the gaps and better coordinate the expectations that the employer and employee have of one another.

2. Methodology

The following actions were taken as part of the feasibility study initiated to inform and guide the project:

1. A study and analysis of characteristics of *Haredi* society, with an emphasis on the employment field. Surveys included:

- a. Identifying different groups in *Haredi* society.
 - b. The influences of sector, gender and geographic distribution on the *Haredi* community and their associated consequences for employment.
2. A study of economic and social processes that lead to change in the *Haredi* community, dividing them into processes external to *Haredi* society and processes originating within the community.
3. From the *yeshiva* to the work world – A discussion of the obstacles and possible solutions during each phase of the transition from the *yeshiva* world to the world of employment, divided as follows:
 - a. Before studying – the decision.
 - b. During their studies – adjustment.
 - c. After studies – proper placement.
4. A survey of employment patterns and general trends among *Haredim* in the work force abroad.
5. A presentation of the *Haredi* employment situation to date.
6. Identifying *Haredi*, government and social welfare bodies that deal with advancing academic study and employment in the *Haredi* sector.
7. Identifying the main job placement centers that operate within the *Haredi* community.
 - a. *Maftai'ah*
 - b. Manpower *Bereshit*
 - c. *Vehachen Parnasateinu*
 - d. One-Stop Center
8. In-depth interviews with key people in the fields of education, academic/vocational study and job placement, who have or could potentially develop a connection to the *Haredi* population in these fields, whether they are members of the community or not. These interviews came to complete the picture that was emerging from available written material, to add real-life input and to better articulate certain issues that are not self-understood, even after closely studying the available materials and outcomes.

The entire project and the multi-faceted research activities mentioned above were supported by the "Matanel" Foundation.

3. Types of Education and Employment in the *Haredi* Population

3.1 Introduction

In recent years, an increasing number of studies are being conducted of various aspects of *Haredi* society, of which one of the primary aspects found in academic literature is the changing attitudes of *Haredim* toward work and occupations.

Ever since sociologist Menachem Friedman coined the phrase “society of learners” (Friedman, 1991) to describe *Haredi* society – a society in which the men do not work, but engage in *Torah* study while the women are the breadwinners – the *Haredi* community has undergone significant changes.

Another concept that is directly linked to the “society of learners” is that of “poverty by choice.” This label has been used to describe a society in which a conscious decision has been made for only one parent to earn and for the family to live a life of relative poverty and simplicity. This is the ideal that the society upholds, in accordance with the words of the *Mishna*: “This is the way of the *Torah*: You shall eat bread dipped in salt, sleep on the ground and toil in *Torah*.” This is reflected in societal mores of making do with little (Cohen, 2005; Hakak, 2004).

Indeed, the *Haredi* community can be generally characterized as “poor.” According to the Bank of Israel report for 2011, some 60% of the *Haredi* population lives beneath the poverty line. From the perspective of a community that for years has been used to living modestly, this is not a new, troubling statistic.

But what has significantly changed over the past few years is that in many cases, “poverty by choice” has turned into “poverty for lack of choice,” because of, among other things, a lack of relevant job skills or suitable positions (Cohen 2005). There are various types of obstacles standing in the way of those who want to leave the *yeshiva*

for the workforce at every stage of the process. Merely deciding to leave the *yeshiva* is a difficult move that involves great social, economic and psychological sacrifices.

It's impossible to state exactly how many *Haredim* there are, since answering the question "Who is *Haredi*?" is somewhat problematic. According to a report by the Central Bureau of Statistics that was published in 2011 (Friedman, Portnoy and others: *Methods of Measuring and Estimating the Size of Israel's Haredi Population*, 2011) there are four accepted methods of assessing the number of *Haredim* in Israel:

- a. Identification by geographic distribution.
- b. Identification according to the most recent schools attended.
- c. Identification by self-definition.
- d. Identification according to the type of supervision in the educational institutions (Independent/*Haredi* as opposed to state supervised schools).

The problem with these evaluations can be seen when the various estimates are compared. According to the above criteria, the total ranges from between 700,000 to 800,000 people, representing some 9% of the State of Israel's population (Hacohen and Cahaner, 2011). This compares to Gottlieb (Gottlieb 2007) who speaks about 11.2% of the population, while a document from the Prime Minister's Office from 2010 references an estimate of 650,000 people, constituting some 8% of the population.

3.2 Education and employment in Haredi society – sector-based, gender-based and geographic influences

3.2.1 Sector

Ariel Deri, the director of the *Haredi* College (2010), cites advertising as an issue that represents the problem of reaching the entire *Haredi* population. He notes that *Haredi* society is comprised of different groups and communities, each needing to be approached separately and in an entirely different way, all while respecting the different rules and cultural norms.

One cannot relate to *Haredi* society as monolithic. It is made up of so many streams and substreams that sometimes there is almost no common behavior, culture or worldview, other than their being lumped together under the title "*Haredi*." One must understand and differentiate between the different communities and create the

models appropriate for them regarding placement, study programs and interaction with the general population.

Haredi society is generally divided into the following main groups (Rothenberg, et al, 2011).

Hassidim – The *hassidic* community is itself divided into many different subgroups, which have different leaders, different modes of dress, and different approaches to the issues at hand. As a rule, a *hassidic* community is identified as a community surrounding a single leader, the *Admor*, or *Rebbe*, whose word is law.

The *hassidic* community ascribes greater importance to “the work of the heart,” such as prayer and the emotional aspects of serving God, and less to the intellectual aspects of *Torah* study. Thus it is more accepted in the *hassidic* community that a married man leaves the *yeshiva* after several years to seek work, with the preferred positions being within the community itself. The typical *hassid* will not reject “blue-collar work” out of hand. The *hassid* does not see anything inferior in working as a driver or in a printing press, since he does not assign much importance to the work itself in terms of self-actualization or career. He believes the ultimate self-actualization is to serve God and follow the *Torah*’s laws.

For this reason, many *hassidim* will prefer to seek jobs that will not dictate their entire daily agenda and that do not require lengthy training. Entrepreneurship, store ownership, trade and blue-collar work is widespread in the *hassidic* community, since the *hassid* does not ascribe any significance to the nature of the work, other than to the income it produces (Gonen, 2005; Hakak 2004; Cohen 2005 and Cahaner, 2011).

The “Lithuanian” Community – The community commonly referred to as “Litvishe” – which nowadays means any non-*hassidic*, Ashkenazi *Haredim* – is rooted in the strong opposition to the *Haskala* (Enlightenment) movement in 18th-century Eastern Europe. In response to the *Haskala*, the Litvishe community took extreme positions regarding anything to do with the secular world.

The Litvishe community reveres intellectual endeavor and diligence, and it was this society that made “*Torah* as a livelihood” its motto (Friedman, 1991, Lupo 2003).

The accepted ideal in this society is that a man should sit in the *beit midrash* all his life and deal primarily with *Torah* study.

The Litvishe consider themselves the “elite” of *Haredi* society, not least because of the intellectual exertion of the course of study that typifies this community’s *yeshivot*, but also because it is relatively open to interaction with the secular world.

In this community, those who choose to leave the *yeshiva* are more likely to seek work in white-collar professions, which will generally require some degree of academic or vocational training. This is rooted in the importance the Litvishe ascribe to social standing and personal learning abilities, as well as an attempt to achieve the higher standard of living that tends to characterize the Litvishe community, as opposed to the *hassidic* community (Hakak, 2004; Cohen, 2005).

Haredi Sephardim – The *Sephardi Haredi* community is highlighted by a number of interesting characteristics. On the one hand, it has been heavily influenced by the Litvishe community (Leon, 2009). Thus one finds that many Sephardic *yeshivot* have adopted the learning methods used in the Litvishe study halls, and many Sephardic *yeshiva* students have adopted the Litvishe mode of dress, which includes a dark suit, white shirt and fedora.

But there are also authentic Sephardic *yeshivot*, such as Porat Yosef in Jerusalem, which have preserved the Sephardic traditions of study. Porat Yosef itself has groomed some of the leading Sephardi rabbis, among them Rabbi Ovadia Yosef and Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu.

Still another aspect of this community are the increasing number of those who formerly lived secular lives and have returned to traditional observance (“*hozrim betshuva*”) and those who are tentatively and gradually taking on greater observances (“*mithazkim*” – those getting stronger).

Thus, there is no way to generalize about *Sephardi Haredim*, certainly when it comes to attitudes toward the world of work. Those who have been more influenced by the Litvishe *yeshivot* will tend to have the same attitude toward secular studies, *Torah* study and seeking employment, while the “authentic” *Sephardi Haredim* are far more likely to see leaving the *yeshiva* for the workplace as a legitimate option.

Because so many *Sephardi Haredim* are returnees to observance, or the children of returnees, the concept of “*Torah* as a livelihood” has yet to become firmly fixed. Many of these returnees already have a profession or a trade, and the ability to find stipends that would allow them to learn in *yeshiva* full-time are far more limited than what’s available to the typical Litvishe young man (Rothenberg, et al., 2011).

3.2.2 Gender

Men – For the Litvishe society of learners, the ideal is diligence and sacrifice for the study of *Torah*. The man, whose job it is to sit and study *Torah*, is not trained during his elementary school and teen years to do anything other than spend long hours in *kollel*. There is very little legitimacy for a young man to leave the *yeshiva* and *Haredi* society will only tolerate this in rare instances of intense economic distress.

Even in *hassidic* society, where there is more support for entering the workforce, the educational system is not built to provide any guidance or skills that will serve the *Haredi* man when he leaves the *yeshiva*.

There is almost nothing in the educational program for *Haredi* boys that prepares them for the world of work and for earning a livelihood. General studies are kept to a minimum. Even these subjects are generally studied only through eighth grade and many are taught at insufficiently high levels to allow easy entry into the workforce (Shiffer, 1998; Lupo, 2003; Hakak, 2010; the High Court of Justice petition on the core curriculum program, 2011).

As a result, a *Haredi* man reaches the age at which a secular man goes off to work lacking basic knowledge in fields relevant to the world of work. His knowledge of math, English and computers is very low, something that will make it difficult for him as he makes any effort to enter the workforce or pursue general or vocational education.

Women – While the situation described above is true of the men, the women’s situation is totally different. In the “society of learners,” the burden of being the main breadwinner falls on the woman. Thus the *Haredi* women’s seminaries long ago mobilized to prepare girls for the workforce.

Core curriculum studies, which for boys end in eighth grade, continue through the girls' high school years. After they finish high school, young *Haredi* women pursue vocational or vocational training in special seminary tracks. And whereas up to a decade ago the focus was on preparing the girls to be teachers, today *Haredi* seminaries offer a variety of options such as computer programming, engineering, architecture, accounting and graphics.

As a result, Cohen and Malach (2011) stress the need to provide academic and employment solutions first and foremost for *Haredi* men, since most *Haredi* women already successfully enter the workforce and have many more tools with which they can obtain additional vocational or academic training should they choose. Moreover, their society views such activity by its women with far more legitimacy.

3.2.3 Geographic Distribution

One's place of residence has considerable influence on how one relates to the outside world. Some 80% of the *Haredi* population lives within the geographic area dubbed "the golden *Haredi* triangle" that can be drawn between Jerusalem, Ashdod and Bnei Brak (Cahaner 2009).

But outside the *Haredi* population centers, one can detect more openness toward the surrounding general society. Smaller communities, by their very nature, cannot maintain an "autarkist (self-sufficient) economy" and is more dependent on the society and institutions around them. Thus while in strictly *Haredi* areas, such services as health fund clinics, groceries and clothing stores are adjusted to meet *Haredi* norms, in smaller *Haredi* communities these do not exist and these communities have a higher level of integration within the general public (Cahaner, 2009).

Moreover, the heavy social pressure that prevails in the larger *Haredi* communities is reduced in the smaller ones, making a decision to leave the *yeshiva* and seek work much simpler. The heavier economic burden borne by smaller communities, which do not benefit from the donations, budgets and attention bestowed on the large *Haredi* population centers, carry greater weight when people in these communities make this decision. Thus, the percentage of people working is generally higher in what we would call the "*Haredi* periphery."

For these reasons, communities that are not the main focus of *Haredi* settlement are often also more open to changes. There are many processes that might specifically evolve in the *Haredi* periphery and eventually become part of the *Haredi* consensus, though we can assume this won't always be the case. Getting developments that begin at the fringes to influence the core will require careful and intelligent planning and implementation.

3.3 Developments that change perceptions of education and employment in *Haredi* society

Why is it no longer possible to make do with the current situation – with the status quo of the society of learners? Why must it change?

To understand this, we will have to examine two types of developments: The first, which we will call “external developments,” includes developments that come from outside the *Haredi* community, such as those launched by the state or surrounding society in an effort to change the status quo, while the second type, which we will call “internal developments,” includes things germinating within the *Haredi* community that cause tensions and pressures that bubble upward and result in a change to the status quo.

3.3.1 External Developments

Back in 1989, Amnon Levy, in his book *The Haredim*, noted that Israeli society would not be able to carry an entire population on its back that does not participate in economic developments; a public whose contribution to the economy was minimal and had adopted dependence on the public purse as an ideal. Up to 50% of a *Haredi* family's income comes from outside support (Dahan 2010).

And indeed, as the years go by and the *Haredi* community grows, there is a pressing need to integrate this community into the workforce, since we are talking about a population with an exceedingly high natural growth rate, over 7% a year. If this continues, then by 2030 the *Haredi* population will constitute 17% of the main working-age population (from a debate in the Prime Minister's Office, 2010).

If one relates this figure to the society of learners, in which the wife is the primary breadwinner, one can understand that a situation in which only 37% of *Haredi* men are in the workforce (as opposed to 80% of the men in the general population) and

only 48.4% of the women work compared to 57.5% of women in the general population (Prime Minister's Office, 2010; Levine, 2009) cannot be sustained.

The state has a clear interest in changing it and encouraging the *Haredi* population to enter the workforce, even as it integrates into academic frameworks. The stated goal is to achieve 63% employment in the *Haredi* sector (Prime Minister's Office, 2010).

In their work, "Fearing for Their Future," Malhi, Cohen and Kaufman (2008) state that "such a policy is of national importance, since integrating *Haredim* into fields requiring skills and academic training will over the long term improve the Israeli economy's competitive edge, since it is becoming an increasingly knowledge-based economy."

The government, which is aware of the growing importance of integrating young *Haredim* into academic and the workforce, has made great effort in recent years to encourage *Haredim* to leave the *yeshiva* for employment.

Bezalel Cohen and Gilad Malach (2011) cite four important steps taken by the government to strengthen this process:

- a. Restricting income support payments** – Restricting the amount available for this allowance irrespective of the number of *avreichim* (married *yeshiva* students) eligible, as well as limiting eligibility for these payments to five years.
- b. Reducing the age of exemption from army service** – which allows for leaving the *yeshiva* earlier in life
- c. Reducing the age at which national civilian service is permitted** – which allows *Haredim* as young as 22 to be inducted into a civilian service framework and seek work after his service is completed.
- d. Creating a "half-*avreich*" status** – Under a decision by Education Minister Gideon Sa'ar, starting in 2011 one can get half a *kollel* stipend even if one works half a day and is in *kollel* only 17 hours a week.

These developments, initiated primarily by the government but accepted by Israeli society, are a significant catalyst in moving young *Haredim* from the *yeshiva* world to the world of work.

It should be stressed that these “external” developments reflect no desire by government or economic officials to change the *Haredi* community’s worldview or interfere with its lifestyle. These changes were coordinated with rabbis and *Haredi* community leaders, who apparently understood the importance of this process.

3.3.2 Internal Developments

After explaining the state’s clear interest in integrating the *Haredi* population into the workforce, we must consider what has been leading the *Haredi* community itself to pursue this trend.

Most researchers point first and foremost to the economic issue as the impulse for going out to work (Cohen, 2005; Hakak, 2004; Gottlieb, 2007; Cohen and Malach, 2011). We can specifically cite Betzalel Cohen (2005), who points to the government retrenchment program in 2003, which sharply cut child allowances and other payments, as the start of the *Haredi* community’s economic deterioration.

Cohen continues and cites the rise in recent years in applications to charity organizations, which came at the same time as a substantial drop in donations due to the global economic crisis. He also notes several other factors, such as the drop in the number of positions within the *Haredi* community; the fact that more and more jobs require an academic degree as a prerequisite and the limited variety of options offered by *Haredi* seminaries, which has spurred women to consider study tracks elsewhere.

Despite the efforts that *Haredi* families have made to cut expenses, it appears that for many of them this is not sufficient. The average woman in the general community makes an average of NIS 5,700, while the average salary for a *Haredi* woman is NIS 3,700. The average monthly income in a *Haredi* household is about NIS 6,100 a month, compared to NIS 12,000 a month in the general community (Malhi, 2009).

The high birth rate combined with the low employment rate, and the fact that the average *Haredi* wage is far lower on average than that of a worker in the general community has made it almost impossible for *Haredi* families to support themselves through the traditional channels.

What's more, the widespread phenomenon in the *Haredi* community of buying an apartment for one's child as part of the marriage agreement with the other party is taking its toll on this, the third generation of the society of learners. To this one must add the reduction in government allowances, the exposure to the western-oriented society of plenty and the penetration of the consumer culture into even this most conservative of communities and we can understand why over the past decade *Haredi* society has developed a need to find additional sources of income (Lupo, 2003; Hakak, 2004; Shilhav, 2005; Sheleg, 2001).

Gottlieb [2007] warns of problems that often occur when reporting on income in the *Haredi* sector, because of the widespread phenomenon of "under the table" dealing and frequent unreliable reporting to the income tax authorities. Within the *Haredi* community there is an internal economy that is not visible to an onlooker, which includes various unreported trade and services.

Not all the reasons for the change are economic. As the community grows, there are an increasing number of young men who are simply not capable of sitting in *yeshiva* and learning the entire day; finding a job would help many of these young people, who are currently considered fringe youth, to remain and find their place in their communities. At the same time, there are other young men who, while successful in *yeshiva*, do not believe their destiny is to remain in the *beit midrash* their entire lives (Cohen, 2005; Hakak, 2004).

Ariel Deri, the director of the *Haredi* College in Jerusalem, noted in an address he delivered to a conference of the Israel Democracy Institute in 2010, that there is another major reason why *Haredim* are seeking to enter the workforce: the understanding that there is a need for *Haredi* professionals to serve the community.

Over the past several years, *Haredim* have come to understand that to receive services that are appropriate to the character and needs of a *Haredi* individual, professionals in various fields must be "homegrown," since only such professionals truly understand the *Haredi* way of life.

Too often, service providers from the general community do not understand the impact of, for example, the need to adhere to Jewish law in areas of modesty and family life or the importance of rabbinic consultation. Other aspects of *Haredi* life,

such as the high birth rate, the preference for Torah study, and the relationships between the different *Haredi* communities can leave non-*Haredi* professionals mystified. As a result, lawyers, accountants, medical and social service professionals and other service providers encounter difficulties working with clients from this sector.

3.4 From the *Yeshiva* World to the Workplace – Challenges and Solutions

Whether he chooses to pursue an academic degree or other vocational training; whether he wants to be a wage-earner or open his own business, the path a young *Haredi* man must traverse until he makes his way from the *yeshiva* world to the job market is not a simple one. He will need several years of academic or vocational education, and even then there is no guarantee he will find work; while this is true for everyone, there are many specific obstacles, described below, that stand between him and his livelihood.

3.4.1 Before pursuing vocational studies – the decision

For starters, the young *Haredi* man must make a difficult decision that is fraught with uncertainty. As we've already noted, this young man must first and foremost overcome the fact that much of the *Haredi* population still regards leaving the *yeshiva* as an illegitimate course of action. Often there is also familial pressure from parents who want to see their son continue the tradition of the learning society. Confronting the loss status, which one may have worked diligently during one's *yeshiva* years to maintain, is not easy.

Even after he has determined that the time has come to learn a trade or find a job, it's still not easy. A lack of information on the options open to him in the "outside world," is often combined with misinformation about his earning capabilities and the skills he needs, resulting in undesirable outcomes.

The young man may have heard stories that paint the world of higher education and employment as far rosier than it really is, or rumors of high salaries and social status, and far less about the effort and investment he will have to make to achieve this. This often causes him to be deeply disappointed with what he finds at school or at work, to the extent that he may drop out and return to *yeshiva*.

Sometimes the opposite is true. There are instances when the “outside world” has been portrayed to him as far darker than it really is, giving him the feeling he has no chance of succeeding due to his lack of general knowledge and information on opportunities. Many simply pass on the effort to integrate into Israeli society even though they might have been happy to find work, and they remain stuck in the cycle of poverty.

These, along with other obstacles, make the initial decision to leave the *yeshiva* for the outside world especially difficult and complicated.

The primary obstacles confronting a young *Haredi* man as he makes this decision are as follows, along with suggested solutions:

1. **A loss of status within the community:** A working man has a lower status in the *Haredi* community and this can have practical ramifications. It may influence whether his children are accepted to school, the prospective marriage partners suggested for his children and the positions he will be allowed to fill in the community (Lupo 2003, Hakak 2004, Cohen 2005, Malhi, Cohen and Kaufmann 2008, Hacoheh and Cahaner, 2011).

Suggested solutions: Cohen and Malach (2011) argue that establishing a wider stratum of “working class” *Haredim* will eventually raise their status in the community. To this end they cite the need for training in respected fields that require high-level education; this will help those working in these fields develop a sense of self-importance and eventually boost their position in the community.

This is not a complete solution, however, because if the status of the working man ever threatens to eclipse that of the *yeshiva* student as the *Haredi* elite, there will be a public counter-reaction from the rabbis and other *Haredi* community leaders (Cohen, 2005).

2. **Financial obstacles:** Ironically, note Malhi, Cohen and Kaufmann (2008) in their work “Fearing for Their Future,” economic distress creates greater dependence on the internal *Haredi* establishment, which brokers the distribution of certain allowances, stipends and donations. A decision to leave the *yeshiva* to study a trade or profession often means the person will have to give up what little is coming to him.

Suggested solutions: All the researchers agree on the need for aid in financing the vocational or academic studies, as well as incentives for those who would rather pursue entrepreneurial initiatives. This comes in addition to the steps already taken by the government, such as reducing allowances, allowing the option of learning only half a day in *kollel* and other steps that cut the dependency on communal funds.

3. Lack of access to information: While the information that is “trickling” out of the *yeshivas* regarding professional or vocational training is currently taking place with the quiet assent of many rabbis, there isn’t enough publicity regarding vocational guidance and the various study options available. Lerner (2010), for example, raises the problems faced when offering vocational counseling in *Haredi* society. Many men are simply unfamiliar with the qualities and skills a person needs to consider when choosing one profession over another.

As a result, most *Haredim* entering educational institutions have gotten their information by word-of-mouth and it is often inaccurate. They thus might choose professions considered lucrative and “clean,” such as law or computer programming, even though they are not suited for them, which often leads to disappointment and a high dropout rate.

Suggested solutions: Ariel Deri spoke at an Israel Democracy Institute conference in 2010 about the huge sums he must spend to advertise the *Haredi* College of Jerusalem that he heads, but stressed the need for massive publicity and advertising within the community. Lerner (2010) described the options developing in the realm of employment counseling for the *Haredi* population, but said it was necessary to assure that the average *Haredi* person knows how to pursue such counseling.

Cohen (2004) cites the importance of having education information and guidance centers in all cities with large *Haredi* communities so that they will be easily accessible. He suggested computerized centers (that are not connected to the Internet) and the distribution of informational pamphlets that have been through rabbinic scrutiny.

4. Military service: The obligation for anyone who leaves the *yeshiva* to serve in the army is a significant obstacle to training for and pursuing a respectable

livelihood. For decades this requirement has led many to forgo the option of learning a trade and to prefer taking side jobs that are not reported to the authorities.

Suggested solutions: As was noted above, the state has taken many legislative steps in an effort to resolve this problem. These efforts have led to recommendations of the Tal Committee addressing lowering the age for getting a draft exemption and the leveraging of civilian service.

3.4.2 While studying – adjustments

Even after taking the plunge and entering a course of study, the *Haredi* student doesn't have it easy. One must remember that many of the students are already married with children, which makes it even harder to persevere.

More than 6,000 *Haredim* are enrolled in various institutions, with nearly all of them pursuing their studies in institutions adapted for the *Haredi* population. Prominent among them are the *Haredi* Campus at the Ono Academic College (1,620 students) and the Jerusalem College of Technology (Machon Lev), which has 1,350 *Haredi* students. Among the non-*Haredi* institutions, the Open University has 500 *Haredi* students, while other colleges and universities have 380 *Haredi* students enrolled, as can be seen in the following table:

***Haredi* Students in Academic Institutions**

Institution	Total	Men	Women	Comments
Ono Academic College <i>Haredi</i> Campus	1620	1030	590	
Jerusalem College of Technology	1350	400	950	
<i>Haredi</i> College of Jerusalem	730	130	600	
<i>Haredi</i> College of Bnei Brak (Mivhar)	635	225	410	Most of the students at the Mivhar campus are students at the University of Haifa

Jerusalem College for Women (Bayit Vagan)	520	40	480	
Open University	500	300	200	
Bar-Ilan University	100	70	30	
Hebrew University	30	20	10	
Carmel Academic Center <i>Haredi</i> Campus	100	60	40	On the eve of the 2011/12 academic year, the <i>Haredi</i> campus was closed, and steps are being taken to have the University of Haifa admit all the <i>Haredi</i> students
Lander Institute <i>Haredi</i> Campus	95	60	35	
Safed College <i>Haredi</i> Extension	30	30		
Other Colleges	300	100	200	
Other Universities	80	55	25	
Total	6275	2640	3635	

(Cohen and Malach, 2011)

The institutions targeted specifically at *Haredim* operate in accordance with the values and norms of *Haredi* society and try to create a “*yeshiva*-like” atmosphere on-site (Hakak, 2004) that will make the *Haredi* student feel comfortable.

Thus, for example, there is total gender separation, with women’s classes usually taking place in the morning and men’s in the evening. Holding classes in the evening allows the male students to spend the morning learning *Torah*, and there are colleges that even make such a commitment an entrance requirement (Deri, 2010). Naturally, a synagogue on premises and food with strict kashrut supervision are part of the effort to accommodate the *Haredi* student.

But a supportive atmosphere is not enough to assure success, thus the *Haredi* institutions report a high drop-out rate. We will now examine a number of obstacles to the *Haredi* student’s success on campus, along with some solutions suggested in the literature:

1. Gaps in knowledge and mentality, and a lack of appropriate study skills –

There are almost no general studies for *Haredi* men beyond primary school, and thus the typical *Haredi* leaves the *yeshiva* without computer skills and lacking sufficient knowledge of math or English (Shiffer, 1998; Lupo, 2003; Hakak, 2004; Levin, 2009; Hacoheh and Cahaner, 2011). Thus, in addition to his professional or vocational studies, the *Haredi* student must make up years' worth of material, which imposes an additional barrier to integration in academia.

Moreover, the typical *Haredi* student must confront an approach to learning that is very different from the one he was accustomed to in *yeshiva*; this manifests itself in an inability to manage his time properly, misunderstanding the academic schedule and difficulties writing academic reports and taking tests, due to a lack of relevant study skills (Hakak, 2004; Cohen, 2005).

Suggested solutions: Cohen and Malach (2011) suggest two solutions. The first is the creation of a pre-academic program for making up matriculation requirements, to be administered by non-university institutions. The second speaks of establishing a pan-university pre-academic program tailored specifically for the *Haredi* community, which in addition to helping them make up the material will help the *Haredi* student acclimate himself to academic work by giving him the relevant study skills and practice dealing with exams and research reports, as well as other skills and information as necessary.

Such a year-long program could also be a “test year,” during which the *Haredi* student can decide if an academic program is for him or not; if yes, he will be better equipped to choose the study track that is best for him, based on his experience during this year.

The certification issued upon successfully completing this program would be recognized by all Israeli academic institutions. It should be noted that while there are some pre-academic programs currently operating, they are only recognized by the institutions running them.

In addition, institutions of higher education should be asked to weigh giving academic credit for previous studies in *yeshiva* or women's seminary in place of some elective course requirements (Herzliya Conference, Bachar, 2011).

2. Gaps in worldview: Cohen (2005) cites problems that stem from the material studied at universities and academic institutions, since *Haredim* have religious and philosophical objections to the content of many courses.

Deri (2010) cites the issue of evolution as an example of a problematic subject, which cannot be taught in a study program aimed at *Haredim*. There are also problems with conflicts between state values and Jewish law. In general, there is a widespread fear in *Haredi* society of the bad influences that could result from exposure to the secular world and its ideas (Levin 2009).

Suggested solutions: To solve this problem, Ariel Deri suggests the college he runs as a model. There, a rabbi oversees the curricula, and in instances where it is impossible to remove a problematic subject from the course material, the rabbi comes to the class and explains the *Haredi* perspective on that particular topic.

Another solution is simply to focus on fields of study that do not present any value or worldview conflicts, i.e., fields such as engineering, rather than fields in the social sciences or the humanities. (Malhi, Cohen and Kaufmann, 2008).

3. Financing: Like every student, the *Haredi* student faces problems paying for academic studies; the high tuition and the need to (in many cases) support one's family at the same time pose serious difficulties for the *Haredi* student, who in many cases will choose to forgo such a long-term commitment of time and money and instead pursue odd jobs or work that pays "under the table."

Moreover, as noted above, leaving the *yeshiva* means giving up the right to receive certain types of allowances and community support, including the *kollel* stipend.

The fact that *Haredi* students often have their own children and parents who cannot help financially, make the vocational/academic study period especially difficult. Not only is paying tuition a struggle, many will not be able to survive this period without significant help with their expenses in the form of living stipends and subsidies for their children's day care or school tuition.

Suggested solutions: There are various programs that offer scholarships to *Haredi* students. The government in 2010 launched a program that gave scholarships to 550

students. There are also private initiatives, like the Joint and the Kemach Foundation, that give tuition scholarships and living stipends to students who meet their criteria.

On its website, (www.keren-kemach.org) the Kemach Foundation states that:

“To date [December 2010], we have received applications from more than 8,100 *avreichim* [married *yeshiva* students], of whom 3,500 were approved for tuition scholarships, with some also receiving living stipends. In 2009 it was decided to also give tuition scholarships to *Haredi* women interested in academic studies, and to date we have approved the requests of more than 500 women who need such support.”

Another solution would be to obtain help from placement agencies in finding part-time jobs or paid internships for students in their chosen fields, which would help them both support themselves and gain valuable experience.

3.4.3 After graduation – proper placement

Of course, even once a degree or certificate is earned, nothing is guaranteed, which is of course true for any young adult first venturing into the job market. But the prejudices against and preconceived notions about the *Haredi* population make the effort much more complicated from the start.

Only 8.3% of Israeli businesses employ *Haredim* (Malhi 2008). One can attribute this somewhat to the relatively small number of *Haredim* in the workforce compared to the general public, but this is still a low figure.

The ramifications of *Haredi* graduates not finding work are broad, and could affect the entire attitude of the *Haredi* community toward higher education.

The motivation for leaving the “safe” communal world and going out to find work is primarily economic distress; if a situation emerges in which even those who took the emotional and financial risks to pursue higher education do not find work, the motivation in the community to support this process will drop. This is why great efforts must be expended to find appropriate jobs for those finishing these academic and vocational courses of study.

An example of the potential inherent in special placement centers for *Haredim* is brought by Sofer (2008), who studied a group that was part of the Joint-sponsored

Maftai'ah project. She cites a sharp rise in the percentage of *Haredim* placed, from 24.5% to 61.8%, within six to nine months.

Those seeking work confront the difficulties and obstacles presented below, along with suggested solutions:

1. Knowledge, advice and guidance: Things that are obvious to a young secular person looking for work are not at all clear to his or her *Haredi* counterpart. For example, the concept of marketing oneself is incongruent with the *Haredi* worldview.

There is also a lack of access to job ads. According to Sofer (Sofer, 2008), as part of her study of the Joint-sponsored *Maftai'ah* project, only 19.9% used the Internet in their job search. *Haredim*, following strict rabbinic dictates, do not have Internet or only have strictly filtered Internet at home.

The lack of access to the Internet and to secular newspapers, which they do not buy on principle, as well as a lack of personal connections with working people, hampers their ability to network and significantly restrict their ability to search for work. The fact that a *Haredi* person comes to his first job interview at a relatively advanced age, or is asked to submit a resume without knowing what exactly is expected of him, also is a significant obstacle along the path to the job market (Hakak, 2004; Cohen, 2005).

Lacking knowledge and understanding of the Israeli job market, many find themselves searching for work in inappropriate places or harboring inaccurate salary expectations. These are liable to cause them to "throw in the towel" and seclude themselves in the *Haredi* world.

Suggested solutions: Cohen (2005) suggests an entire program for providing accessibility and guidance. Among other things, he suggests placement centers that will include: employment counseling, courses that prepare candidates for interviews and help them write resumes, and computer stations with Internet connections to facilitate job searches. Sofer (2008) notes that the group she studied in the *Maftai'ah* program received the following services to help in their job searches: Counseling on how to look for work (69.3% of participants used this service); help with writing a resume (64.2%); use of computers to prepare and send their resumes (56.1%); help

with using the computers at the center (27.9%) and searching for jobs on the Internet (16.5%).

Among those who took advantage of the services offered, says Sofer, nearly 70% got at least one job offer.

2. Religious and social obstacles: Among *Haredi* workers, some 55% work for *Haredi* or religious employers (35.9% for *Haredi* employers and 19.1% for religious employers). There is a clear preference among *Haredim* for working for someone who is familiar with and understands their way of life.

The work environment is also significant: 28.4% of the *Haredim* surveyed said that they would only agree to work in a place where the work environment was mostly *Haredi* (Malhi 2008).

Another religion-related aspect is the separation of men and women in the workplace. According to data submitted by the Industry, Trade and Labor Ministry during a debate on *Haredi* employment held at the Prime Minister's Office (The Prime Minister's Office, 2010), 65% of Haredim would not agree to work in a place where there was no organized separation of men and women.

In addition, it was noted that among employers who were asked why they didn't hire *Haredi* workers, 95% of them mentioned the need for gender separation as a something that would prevent them from hiring Haredim. Other religious issues perceived as obstacles to employers were kosher food, working on weekends and prayer times.

Suggested solutions: Malhi (2008) calls for changes and cultural adjustments at workplaces in the form of informational sessions and explanations that would reduce the misconceptions employers have of *Haredim*.

He notes that the gap between employers who refuse to hire *Haredim* because they fear dealing with gender separation (95%) and the percentage of *Haredim* for whom this is an issue (65%) is huge and leaves a large group of potential workers who would have no problem with a mixed-gender workplace off employers' radar screens

Another possible solution is group placement, under which workplaces would take on groups of *Haredi* workers, which would make it much easier for the *Haredi* employees to adjust.

Also suggested is further development of industrial zones and workplaces specifically for *Haredim* that would be situated in *Haredi* population centers and maintain gender separation (Prime Minister's Office, 2010). Several such workplaces already exist, but Malhi, Cohen and Kaufmann (2008) point out that to date, these have primarily targeted women, with few such options available for men.

3. Placement and Incentives: Sofer (2008) notes that among those who were not working from among the group she studied, 70% of them got no job offers at all. On the other hand, 95% of employers surveyed reported that they had not seen any *Haredi* job applicants in recent years, while 88.4% of them would not presume there was any problem with a *Haredi* applicant's professional skills just because he was *Haredi*, but would believe his skills would be appropriate to the level of his education and training.

Thus there seems to be a substantial problem making connections between employers who are not *Haredi* and *Haredi* job candidates.

Moreover, although employers report that they would presume no problem with a *Haredi* applicant's job skills, they still have no incentive to favor a *Haredi* candidate over one from a different population group, who is perceived as being someone for whom no special religious or cultural accommodations must be made.

In addition to the difficulties cited above, many *Haredi* women continue to prefer to work part-time, with some even preferring to stay home with their small children because child-care costs are so high that it doesn't pay for them to work full-time.

Suggested solutions: There is a real need for placement institutions for *Haredim* that will bridge the gaps between employers and the *Haredi* community. Among other things, *Haredi* job-seekers must be helped to cast a wider net by linking him directly to potential employers and by giving him more exposure to Internet job boards and want ads in secular newspapers (Cohen, 2005; Sofer, 2008), since, as noted above, 95% of employers say they had never gotten a *Haredi* applicant applying for a job they had advertised.

In addition, there must be incentives for employers to prefer to hire *Haredi* workers (as are already being implemented today), such as the state covering 15%-35% of a new *Haredi* worker's salary for the first five years of employment (Prime Minister's Office 2010).

Also to be weighed are subsidies and stipends to *Haredi* workers who are employed at first at low wages, which could cause them to leave their jobs thinking it isn't financially worthwhile. As part of this, there should be subsidies for day-care centers and kindergartens so that *Haredi* women can return to the job market full time.

There must also be an effort to expand the number of positions specifically for *Haredim*; affirmative action programs to hire them in the public sector; and informational/marketing sessions for secular employers explaining the advantages of hiring *Haredim*.

The following table sums up the obstacles and possible solutions for the various stages:

	Obstacles	Solutions
Before studying	Loss of status in the community	Training in professions perceived as "respectable" and creating an elite strata of a working society
	Financial obstacles	Financial aid for studies, breaking the link between the "Torah as a livelihood" status and various government allowances
	Lack of access to information	Setting up information centers in <i>Haredi</i> neighborhoods, counseling and advertising
	Army service	Reducing the age for draft exemptions and leveraging civilian service
During their studies	Gaps in knowledge and mentality; lack of study skills	Creating a program to complete matriculation exams, preparatory academic programs that will be recognized by all universities/colleges and recognition of previous religious studies
	Gaps in worldview	A focus on "technical" professions, having a rabbi accompany the educational process
	Finances	Government and private scholarships, help with finding jobs during their studies

After studies	Knowledge, counseling and guidance	Counseling and guidance institutes, special courses to help students write resumes and prepare for job interviews, computer stations and information centers to facilitate the job search
	Religious and sector-linked obstacles	Creating jobs specifically for <i>Haredim</i> , bridging culture and values gaps between employers and employees
	Placement and incentives	Establishing placement centers that will connect potential employers to the <i>Haredi</i> community, and broadening the circle of such employers. Incentives to employers, affirmative action in the public service sector, and subsidies for day care and kindergartens.

3.5 *Haredim* in the workforce today

As noted, only 37% of *Haredi* men are in the workforce today, compared to 80% of the men in the general population, while 48.4% of *Haredi* women work, compared to 57.5% in the general population (Prime Minister's Office, 2010; Levin, 2009). *Haredi* employment today can be generally divided between fields of employment within the *Haredi* community and fields of employment in society at large.

Within the *Haredi* community, it appears that education and community work are the preferred fields, particularly among *Haredi* women, but also among the men. There are many reasons for this, but they begin with the fact that in most cases this work is done in *Haredi* educational and communal institutions, in which the worker needn't worry about such issues as gender separation, *kashrut* and working on *Shabbat* and Jewish holidays.

Haredi women find in such workplaces an understanding and accommodation of their lifestyle, which manifests itself in hours and vacation periods that correlate with childcare needs, and tolerance for frequent maternity leaves. Men who work in education or community institutions, meanwhile, often feel they have the best of both worlds. On the one hand, working in teaching or administration positions are not perceived as having left the *Haredi* world, since there is admiration and appreciation for educators and community workers dedicated to the community's welfare. On the other hand, a teacher or administrator is earning a livelihood and is part of the work world.

According to Malhi (2009), of those *Haredim* who work, 45.1% of the men and 72.1% of the women in the *Haredi* community engage in public administration, education, health care and community services. This compares to 20% of the men and 43.5% of the women in society at large.

Over the past decade, however, there has been a drop in the rate of *Haredi* women's employment in education and a slow move to other fields. This stems from, among other things, cuts in government funding to private schools, a glut of teachers and the new, diverse course offerings in the girls' seminaries. Levin (2009) cites increasing the percentage of women engaged in professions other than teaching as one that the government should strive for as it seeks to change the *Haredi* labor market.

Among those *Haredim* who are working outside the community there is a clear preference for work that will provide "compensation" for the social and familial sacrifices they have made by taking this step, work that will also justify the move financially. Those who decide to embark on a lengthy course of study prefer to do so knowing that at the end of the road there will be work that is lucrative and will confer on them a high socio-economic status.

Indeed, employment data on *Haredim* who work in the general market clearly demonstrate this trend. The percentage of such *Haredim* who are employed in "business services" (real estate, among others) is double that of the number of people who work in such businesses in the wider market, a statistic pointing to a definite preference among *Haredi* workers for these trades.

A high percentage of *Haredi* workers are also to be found employed in trade and industry, which are also fields considered to confer a high social status and pay enough to justify leaving the *yeshiva* and undergoing a lengthy course of vocational or academic study.

There aren't many blue-collar workers among *Haredim*, however, not least because these jobs are perceived as not demanding much thought or education, but menial work that is low-paying and low on the social-status scale (Malhi 2008).

It is interesting to compare the Israeli *Haredi* employment picture to that of *Haredim* abroad. Among *Haredim* abroad, the number of men who remain in *kollel* after age 25

is no more than 20%, and this figure drops consistently as the age rises until it reaches single-digit percentages (Gonen, 2000; Gonen, 2005).

There are many similarities between the *Haredi* population abroad and the *Haredi* population in Israel, among them the much larger than average families, schools that are separate from the government-sponsored systems and limited general studies curricula (Gonen 2005). But the lack of integration of the workforce by the *Haredi* community in Israel is a glaring difference, one that does not seem to stem from any intrinsic *Haredi* ideology.

The main obstacles to *Haredi* employment that exist in Israel and do not exist in *Haredi* communities abroad are:

- a. The way a *Haredi* man who goes out to work is perceived, and the social ramifications of this.
- b. Lower financial justification for seeking work
- c. The difficulty finding suitable jobs.
- d. A lack of qualified human capital
- e. The military service obligation

Among all these, the studies by Levin (2009) and Gonen (2005) stress that any process of finding solutions that will spur *Haredim* to enter the job market must take special account of these differences, to make it clear that what is being sought is not “to undermine *Haredi* principles,” and damage the Torah world, but a process that will lead to the proper equilibrium between Torah study and integration into the job market.

This understanding will help the young *Haredi* man who seeks employment recognize that there is a reality out there of integrating work with Torah study, and that such a lifestyle is totally legitimate.

4. Organizations that Promote *Haredi* higher education and employment

As we've seen, the process of leaving the *yeshiva* and making one's way into the world of academia and employment is long and hard for many reasons. There already exist several organizations that help the *Haredi* man or woman traverse this route more easily and successfully.

These offices provide a partial response to the process that has been gaining strength over the years, as the number of *Haredim* seeking higher education and employment grows. As we will see, these offices work in different areas: placement and professional counseling, academic studies, scholarships and proper integration in the army and civilian service.

A list of all the *Haredi*, government and social organizations that deal with promoting academic education and employment in the *Haredi* sector appear in the tables in Appendix A (Mapping Out the *Haredi*, Government and Social Organizations That Deal With Promoting Academic Education and Employment in the *Haredi* Sector), which divides them into academic institutions; study and scholarship options; employment and job placement centers, and army and civilian service bodies. Each one of them would have a place and a need to work in cooperation with the center for *Haredi* job placement at the University of Haifa when it is established.

Below are details of the primary placement centers that deal with the *Haredi* sector, which are important because understanding the way they operate will have significant bearing on the discussions regarding setting up the center in Haifa.

A. *Maftai'ah* – The Center for Developing *Haredi* Employment

Maftai'ah (the acronym of the center's Hebrew name, which is also the Hebrew word for "key") was set up by the Joint Israel's Push to Employment program, in an effort to help integrate the *Haredi* community into the workforce. There are eight *Maftai'ah* centers throughout the country: in Jerusalem, Betar Illit, Ashdod, Safed, Elad, Bnei Brak, Haifa and Beit Shemesh. The centers place some 1,000 people a year.

The Maftai'ah centers are tailored to a *Haredi* clientele: There are separate reception hours for men and women and *Haredi* professionals staff the offices. At the center, the *Haredi* jobseeker can get help preparing and sending a resume, preparation for job interviews, employment counseling and of course, placement assistance, in the form of jobs Maftai'ah will offer after making contact with potential employers, access to employment ads, and Internet-enabled computers to search for jobs.

The Maftai'ah centers also approach potential employers and explain the advantages there are in hiring *Haredi* workers. They also advise employers on adapting their work environments to *Haredi* employees.

One of the main problems with the Maftai'ah centers is that they have found it difficult to serve *Haredim* with academic degrees who want higher level, white collar jobs, focusing instead on placing *Haredim* in clerical and blue-collar positions.

Another problem is an over-eagerness to place everyone who walks through the door, which sometimes leads to the referral of candidates to jobs that are totally unsuited to them. This is liable to disappoint employers, who will come to believe that Maftai'ah doesn't understand the needs of their businesses and as a result will drop Maftai'ah as a potential source of new employees.

B. Manpower Bereshit

Manpower *Bereshit* is a division of the Manpower employment agency, which runs job sites and placement centers aimed at the general public. The Bereshit program, which is directed at and tailored to the *Haredi* population, was launched in 2005, and operates job boards and job banks specifically for the *Haredi* community. It has offices in Jerusalem, Bnei Brak, Haifa and Tel Aviv.

This project also has a problem placing *Haredi* academics, since it works mainly to place *Haredim* in jobs within the *Haredi* community, connecting *Haredi* employers with *Haredi* workers, and less with placing *Haredim* in the general job market. As a result, candidates with degrees in fields such as accounting, engineering and law probably will have difficulty finding work through Manpower Bereshit.

C. *Vehachen Parnasateinu*, the *Haredi* Center for Entrepreneurship

The *Vehachen Parnasateinu* organization is different than the two previously mentioned in a few ways, the first being that it is an intra-*Haredi* organization. This fact, which it considers a major selling point, means that the professionals that run it are all *Haredi* and that it is more targeted to the *Haredi* individual than to the “*Haredi* community” as a collective.

Second, *Vehachen Parnasateinu* is more focused on the opening of new businesses, rather than merely placing workers at already existing jobs. This means that the counseling and guidance offered is tailored to the individual and the business he or she wants to open, and is far less weighted toward classic job placement.

It is clear, then, that *Vehachen Parnasateinu* is meant for a specific subset of the *Haredi* population that has an entrepreneurial bent, and cannot provide much of a solution for *Haredi* academics or help in integrating professionals into the general job market.

D. One-Stop Center

This is an employment center that has yet to open, but whose founders plan to offer a *comprehensive* service to the *Haredi* population, which will start from choosing a field of study through placement in an appropriate position. The center plans to engage in screening, recruiting, placement, employment and management counseling, among other fields.

The center will offer a unique package of services for the *Haredi* sector, such as testing, *simulations*, insight into the screening and placement processes and more, all tailored to the *Haredi* community, and will also offer support to clients taking their first steps in the job market.

This future center will be set up by Pilat and the Kemach Foundation, a leader in *facilitating* the entrance of *Haredim* into the job market through guidance and counseling and financial aid to those seeking vocational or academic training as a basis for entering the workforce.

5. Guidelines for Operating a Job Placement Center for the *Haredi* Population

As we formulate the principles for operating a special job placement center for the *Haredi* population, we must keep the following guidelines in mind:

- The *Haredi* job placement candidate comes from a different society, which uses aloofness and separation as a defense mechanism against the “negative” influence of the larger society. This aloofness– with a stress on the physical aspects – must be respected during the placement process.
- For the *Haredi* job placement candidate, the job placement center is practically the only means of finding work (other than for jobs within the sector he might hear about through word-of-mouth). He is not exposed to and has no access to other job-search tools widely used by others, such as the Internet and classified ads in the general press.
- Entering the workforce is not yet at the heart of the *Haredi* consensus. The process of finding a job places an emotional burden on the *Haredi* candidate that does not exist for his secular counterpart. For this reason, the process of training and placement must be as short as possible and involve interaction with as few as possible elements during the process. The ideal situation is to have one contact point that provides a full and comprehensive solution.

Basing ourselves on these guidelines, the following principles must be taken into account in the development and launch of the job-placement center.

- 1) The target population: Men and women from the *Haredi* community who are interested in pursuing higher education and entering the workforce.
- 2) Location: The location of the job-placement center must be such so that the *Haredi* candidate is not forced to come into contact with the general population. Thus, the center should be located within or near a *Haredi* population center, or at the very least, at the fringe of a secular area, so as to assure that such contact will be avoided.

- 3) *Haredi* atmosphere: The candidates will prefer to come to a place where a religious atmosphere prevails. This will be achieved via separate offices or separate hours for men and women; the type of pictures that are hung on the wall; the newspapers/magazines found in the waiting room, ads and brochures worded in a way familiar to this population, etc., — nuances that may not be understood by or familiar to a secular person.
- 4) The *management* staff: The center's management staff will be based on the staff of the secular job-placement center that already operates in the university, who will work closely with employment experts from the *Haredi* community, who will be able to respond to and offer guidance in all those issues that will differentiate this center from any other job-placement center.
- 5) Placement staff: The staff members with whom the candidates come in contact *with* must be *Haredi*. These staffers will know the lingo of the target population, understand and identify with their needs and will not generate any resistance or feelings of inferiority, but will make the candidates feel as though they are partners in seeking to meet the candidates' requirements.
- 6) Variety: Even though we earlier outlined the general trends of *Haredi* job searches, the placement center must have available a wide variety of jobs available, from simple work through senior executive positions, in accordance with the diverse clientele.
- 7) Training and development: The job placement center will develop and train professionals who will promote employment in the *Haredi* sector, including advisors, guidance and placement counselors, liaisons with employers and more.
- 8) Community relations mechanisms: It's important to maintain an open line to the various *Haredi* communities and their leaders and to provide updated information to the relevant municipal officials and spiritual mentors.
- 9) Accessibility of knowledge and information: Operating job listings and a job bank dedicated to the *Haredi* community, as well as an advertising campaign aimed both at consumers and employers. In addition, an information system that provides details about academic and vocational study tracks in general, and about programs aimed at the *Haredi* community in particular.

10) Working with Employers:

- a. Marketing efforts aimed at employers, which will stress that the *Haredi* employee is a person just like other people, and even offers some advantages over other job candidates.
- b. Advising the employer on how to successfully intake a *Haredi* employee, and accompanying the first stages of his or her employment
- c. Informing the employer of any benefits/incentives available to him when he hires *Haredim* and helping the employer apply for them.
- d. Building and maintaining lasting connections with companies that prove successful in absorbing *Haredi* employees.

11) Working with *Haredi* candidates who have not yet started the job-search process:

- a. Reducing expectations: A *Haredi* individual who applies to the job-placement center thinking that just because he has shown up he will get a job is in for an unpleasant surprise, because these things take time. He must be prepared for some financial stress, since whether he has begun studying or is nearly finished, he is likely to be under financial stress.
- b. Evaluation services must be provided so that candidates can get speedy professional guidance.
- c. Help must be given to write a resume for the *Haredi* candidate that will profile him as a “working person.”

12) Work to be done with a *Haredi* candidate who has received a job offer or who is already working at a previous job.

- a. Evaluation days and internal testing that are tailored to *Haredi* culture. For *Haredi* candidates it is important to raise, to the degree possible, the percentage of people who are successfully placed on the first try, since the ramifications of failure will be much broader and deeper than for their secular counterparts.
- b. *Workshops* to prepare candidates for the work world – information about salaries, work ethic, and other basic workplace issues.

- c. *Preparation* for job interviews.
 - d. *Workshops* on finding work on one's own (without placement assistance)
 - e. *Collating* detailed information on courses and long-term academic programs, as well as immediate job assistance to those who have been dismissed from previous jobs and have relevant experience.
- 13) Building interactive job-search stations, with training on how to use them, and a teaching hall in which evaluations, workshops and occupational diagnostics will be conducted.

Developing relationships with potential partners – including local authorities in the north, the Council for Higher Education, the Industry, Trade and Labor Ministry, the Treasury, the National Insurance Institute, philanthropic organizations, employers in the north, Joint Israel, *Haredi* campuses in the north and more.

6. Main Recommendations

In light of all the principles enumerated above, my recommendation is to take the following steps immediately upon commencing the process (budgets for these activities are detailed in Appendix B):

1. **Building a leadership team that will accompany the process of developing and launching the placement center, as well as its operations once it opens:** This team will outline the plan for establishing the placement center for the *Haredi* population with regard to its location, structure, activities and goals. Academic field work will be an integral part of the team's activities. In addition, the group will be charged with the responsibility of identifying the most appropriate location for the career placement center – be it on-campus or off-campus. Beyond that, this team will also be charged with selecting the leadership and therapists teams, determining marketing plan guidelines, providing detailed implementation plans, and assessing the center's activities. This team will be integrated, and will include experts from both the secular and *Haredi* communities who have an interest or experience in this field. Recommendations regarding the make-up of this team can be found in Appendix C.
2. **Conducting surveys that will provide a detailed analysis of the needs that must be met by the placement center:** These surveys, in numbers acceptable from a statistical perspective, will be conducted in different versions for employers, employees, students and those who have not yet begun studying. Questionnaires for these surveys appear in Appendix D.
3. In the event that a branch of the One-Stop Center opens in Haifa (see the chapter “Organizations that promote *Haredi* higher education and employment”) it would be appropriate to **join forces** with it so that the advantages of each side – the university on the one hand and the Kemach Foundation and Pilat on the other – can enhance the efficiency of the process and the results.

The establishment of a job-placement center for the *Haredi* population at the University of Haifa is not anyone's personal agenda, nor is it motivated by the personal opinion of one visionary or another. Raising the employment percentages in the *Haredi* community is a national objective, and as such it has already received substantial government funding, garnered significant publicity and has been made a priority by the authorities who deal with this area.

The job-placement center for the *Haredi* population, whether it is established in conjunction with a *Haredi* academic campus or not, is a basic prerequisite for successfully bringing *Haredim* into the workforce, reducing tensions and prejudicial attitudes, and improving the living conditions both for this population and those around them, who carry the burden of their support.

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