

Setting up a program like B'nai Israel's Shamash Award is a very simple process.

First, you need a chair. We chose the person who brought the idea to the Men's Club board.

Then you need a committee. We initially asked veteran Men's Club members, including past presidents, to serve. This time, we used the committee to reach out to younger, newer members, as a way to get them active in the club and hopefully take up leadership posts in the near future.

You also need to set guidelines. We purposely made the criteria as broad as possible. In both years, there were congregants who stood out as deserving of the award. Had we required specific checklists, they might not have qualified.

And you need some board oversight, to make sure the winners are current on their dues and don't have scandals or skeletons in their past.