“Think Like a Reporter to Avoid Rookie Genealogy Mistakes”
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DO:

- Follow the clues you find like the “dun-duns” on “Law and Order.” Where is the next place the information is propelling you? Go there!
- Remember Maurice Templesman – the info is out there. It’s up to you to find a path to it. If you can’t go right to the bullseye, how can you use the concentric rings? Remember: you probably have more information at the outset of your search than you realize.
- Get creative in how you search. Use wildcards. Think broadly. Adjust your strategy.
- Play “Concentration.” Remember the cards you’ve seen and turned over.
- Remember your logic grid. Do all the details match?
- Be a gatekeeper, not a vacuum, especially when it comes to importing other people’s trees.

DON’T:

- Start searching for records before you know where your family is from.
- Rely too much on hints. Remember quality over quantity.
- Assume every document you need will be online. If a search returns a record that seems like it could be the one you want, don’t assume it must be. Learn what’s out there and where.
- Forget common sense. Always remember Occam’s Razor – the most likely scenario is the least complicated.
- Overthink it. Sometimes all it takes is a simple Google search.

Some Resources

- Steve Morse’s Ellis Island Gold Search: (Expanded tools for searching arrivals) http://stevemorse.org/ellis2/ellisgold.html
- Steve Morse Federal Census ED finder tool: https://stevemorse.org/census/unified.html
- The JewishGen Community Database: https://www.jewishgen.org/Communities/Search.asp
- The JewishGen Family Finder https://www.jewishgen.org/jgff/ (}