



Milestone 4

Village Campaign:

To connect with more people local to Villages,
especially those needing support or encouragement to attend.

The purpose of a Gathering: We gather as a Village to foster and deepen connections, discuss important ideas, and get more involved in our community.

Milestone 4 Checklist

- ☐ Identify Members who have attended regularly and could help with the Campaign
- ☐ Bring up the idea of a Campaign during Open Space or as a Community Connection prompt
 - ☐ Take notes on what is shared to use later
- ☐ Setup a Campaign Engagement focused on creating a Campaign Plan
 - ☐ Read the Role Practice for Engagement Lead & Engagement Guide
 - ☐ Plan the Engagement, announce it at gatherings, invite people
 - ☐ For this Campaign Engagement
 - ☐ Identify the materials you'll need
 - ☐ Include ways Members can support the campaign
 - ☐ Determine best timing and availability for you and other members who want to help with the campaign
 - ☐ Capture notes from the Campaign Engagement
- ☐ Run the campaign!

What's a Village Campaign?

Villages grow organically as members invite people. When the timing feels right, a Campaign is a one-time event geared towards bringing in more people..

It's critical to the experience of Villages that growth be managed – growing too fast can make the gatherings feel more like networking events. And with no growth, Villages will slowly fade away.

What's The Best Timing?

You may feel it's a good time to run a Village Campaign when the following behaviors are observed;

- **Village Gatherings are consistent.** When gatherings have been running consistently for a time, and the size of the gathering feels consistent.
- **Core Members are transitioning.** When members who have been filling key roles on a regular basis change their involvement or step away.
- **A large friend group has formed.** When a majority of members attending are in friendship-like relationships, there is a risk of visitors feeling like outsiders.

There is no single moment that triggers a Campaign, however using the observations above, a Village Builder may decide that it's time to start a campaign.

Who We Are Reaching

The Vision of VillageCo is “a locally connected world”. In honor of this vision, Village growth should prioritize people local to the Village, focusing on those who are not attending.

It's a common mistake to assume the reasons that people do or don't attend. Often, people need time to consider attending events, and especially when considering joining civic groups like Village.

Thus, the “target audience” for a Campaign will mainly include the following;

1. **Past Visitors.** People who have attended in the past but not returned.
2. **Lapsed Members.** People who have signed up as a Member, but stopped attending.
3. **Connections of Members.** People who are connected to existing members in any way.
4. **People looking for community and are local to your Village.** Finally, there are likely new connections to be made within a defined area around your Village.

The list above is intended to guide your thinking in the kinds of messages and methods you use in your campaign. Ideally, your Campaign will directly engage Members, giving them tools to reach out to the people around them.

How Do You Introduce the Idea?

You don't want to run a Campaign alone. For a number of reasons, it's important to engage with Village Members early in the process, before you give too much thought to the details of your campaign.

Why You Introduce the Idea, Not a Plan

For some, creating a plan of action for the Village to enact can be entertaining and empowering. This is a common behavior in traditional workplaces, where "bosses" come up with ideas, and "staff" carry them out.

The truth is, it's fun to come up with the ideas, but the real work is in carrying them out. Most people can't find the energy and time to work on their own ideas, much less on other people's ideas.

If you show up to a gathering or a meeting with a bunch of ideas already written down, you run the risk of people feeling you are "the boss", and they are "the staff."

If you want help doing the work of a campaign plan, include everyone in the process of generating ideas.

Working together is better when each member sees evidence of their participation, their time invested, and their ideas in the plan being used.

Using Village Structures

When making changes to your Village you can lean on using the Village structures already in place. These built-in parts of the Village Model, much like the Village practices, serve to encourage reflection, co-creation and engagement

Using Village Structures to make changes to your Village may look like;

- Delivering an **Acknowledgement** related to the issue behind the change
- Offering a **Community Connection Prompt** on the topic to generate discussion
- Creating an **Open Space Conversation** around the topic

- Creating an **Engagement** to invite those who want to go deeper into the process

By capturing notes and ideas from the activities above, you will have a great start to a campaign plan.

Here are some examples of how to use Village Structures to start a campaign process;

As a Participant	<p>Community Connection prompts:</p> <p>“Who is missing in our Village Membership?”</p> <p>“How have you talked about Village with others?”</p> <p>“What do you think we could do to bring in more visitors?”</p> <p>“What would it be like if our Village was larger?”</p>
As an Acknowledgement Lead	<p>Organic Growth – talk about the unhealthy ways we see businesses grow, and the problems they create. Contrast with healthy growth, and the trust and strength it creates.</p> <p>Community Opportunities – talk about the benefits and opportunities that could come from bringing in new members from the community. For example, a gardener could inspire an interest in plants during spring. Or someone who works with a nonprofit could lead a volunteering activity.</p>
As an Open Space Convener	<p>Open Space Prompts;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you invite people into our Village? • What are some activities we could do to bring in more visitors? • What help or encouragement may people need to visit our Village?
As Engagement Lead	<p>Here is where you plan a “Village Growth Campaign” engagement and invite anyone who wants to participate to use the ideas generated in the actions above to form a plan.</p>

	<i>Read the Role Practice - Engagement Lead for more about this Village Structure.</i>
--	--

Creating a Campaign Plan

Once you have done the work of prompting conversations, taking notes on those conversations, and identifying who is most interested in helping with the campaign, you are ready to make a plan.

Village Engagements

An Engagement is a Village Structure. It refers to any events that happen outside of gatherings, and are open to Members.

Any Member may lead an engagement. Examples include hikes, book discussions, volunteering opportunities, movie nights, or project meetings.

For more about the practice of leading and participating with engagements, refer to the Role Practice: Engagement Lead document in the Milestone 4 Folder.

Hold a Campaign Engagement

To leverage the wisdom and energy of the group, organize an Engagement to create the Campaign Plan.

The “Campaign Engagement” is a special event you will organize and invite members to attend. Ideally, you’ll organize this after a gathering so you can make an announcement about it, and have time to individually invite people who expressed interest.

There are three key aspects to a Village Campaign Plan; timing, materials, and engagement.

What's the Timing?

Start with the question of timing as it creates a constraint on the kinds of ideas and scope of effort. A longer campaign may involve TV interviews and billboard ads, while a shorter campaign may focus more on social media posts and street posters.

There are two aspects to the timing of a campaign – the length of the actual campaign and the time spent in preparation.

For an effective campaign, it's best to allow for 10 or 20 times the lead time as the length of the campaign. For example;

- A 1-day campaign will need three weeks to prepare
- A 3-day campaign will need 2 months to prepare
- A 1-week campaign will need 5 months to prepare

It's best to start small for your first campaign.

How Will You Engage Members With the Campaign?

This critical question grounds the ideas and activities that form your Campaign Plan.

Below are some examples of how to engage Members;

- **Place Posters** – ask members to put a Village Gathering poster up in a favorite coffee shop, store, or telephone pole.
- **Attend a Farmers Market** – buy a table, or setup informally at a farmers market to distribute fliers and talk about Village
- **Plan a Special Gathering** – it can be fun to “build up” a special gathering around a holiday or made-up theme, and use the energy of that special event to invite Visitors.
- **Post on Social Media** – some use Social Media for local connections. In this case it can be helpful to invite neighbors, or remind people of Village gatherings.
- **Share a Testimonial** – these are very important to provide “social proof” of the value of attending and joining a Village. Collect testimonials to share in marketing materials.

What Materials Do You Need?

Finally, with a list of engagement ideas in hand, grounded in the general timing that you have selected, you can determine what work needs to be done before the campaign.

This largely centers around materials needed, but may also include further planning (as in for special events), or internal management (as in collecting testimonials from members).

Generate a list of things that need to be created or smaller tasks that need to be carried out.

Combine the outcomes of these three questions in a document with a little polish, and you now have a Village Campaign Plan!

Running a Campaign

There isn't much else we can write to help you here.

However, we believe that by starting a campaign project as outlined in this letter, you are guaranteed to not only succeed in your campaign, but you will also strengthen the connections between Villagers.

And that is the real purpose behind Village.