

Who is an Apprentice?

At Village Church we desire to see every Facilitator have an apprentice as a part of their discipleship journey. As Christians, we have a responsibility to pass on the knowledge and skills we have in order to train up others. We not only want to be equipped to become better leaders, but also equip others to do the same.

An apprentice is:

- Not an Assistant Leader, whose primary role is to support the main leader. Apprentices are learning to become a leader. They are someone you intentionally invest in to one day lead themselves. They are leaders in training.
- Not an expert or someone who is ready to lead - yet. They are someone who understands, to varying degrees, the vision of ministry, and has the potential to grow to do more.
- An unofficial role. You may not ever formally ask them to apprentice or let them know you are doing this. You may likely have a conversation asking them if they have considered stepping into a bigger role and asking how you could potentially support, guide, and intentionally develop them into this.

Why should Facilitators have an apprentice?

- It's biblical. Throughout the Bible we see a model of leaders having an apprentice in their life that they built up to eventually take over. For example, Elijah and Elisha, Moses and Joshua, Paul and Timothy.
- It's strategic. Practically it is wise to have apprentices build into the model of leadership development and to support growing ministries. As groups grow and develop, it creates the space for succession and multiplication of groups. It creates an opportunity for information, knowledge, and experience transfer from one leader to an upcoming leader.

HOW TO IDENTIFY AN APPRENTICE?

F.A.I.T.H. - Faithful, Available, Intentional, Teachable, and Hospitable

- Someone who has a growth and learning mindset, and ongoing transformation in their life.
- An apprentice is not someone who has it all together, but has a degree of humility, and desires to grow in their relationship with God.
- Takes initiative and can handle responsibility. Is this someone you could trust, and who does what they say they will?
- Relational. Someone who genuinely enjoys being with people and listening to people. This does not mean that they need to be the life of the party or extroverted, but rather that you've seen that they have deeper relationships in their lives, and nurture these.
- Some degree of organization. They can plan, organize, and communicate with people.
- Are interested and available to serve and learn

IS THERE A TIMELINE?

It is never too early to start identifying an apprentice! Already during your first meeting try to identify who could be an apprentice. *Lead like you are leaving!*

There is no specific timeline as it depends on how ready the apprentice is to lead. Typically, we say you plan for a year with the apprentice and another half a year where they are leading on their own, and you are still supporting them. Some apprentices may start to lead their own group after half a year.

We would also like to see the apprentices do the Facilitator Training around 3-4 months after you identified and started intentionally apprenticing them. This training is to help them further understand the vision and goals of the Community Group, but also the resources and support available when leading a group.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO APPRENTICE SOMEONE?

- Meet with them one-one on a regular basis and be intentional in your relationship.
- Don't ask them to be 'your apprentice,' but let them know that you see potential in them, and that God has given them gifts that could be leveraged to leading a group. Tell them you'd like to help move them in this direction and support them if they're open to it.
- Pray with them and model what it looks like to pray for people.
- Pray for them.
- Help them discover their spiritual gifts.
- If there is someone in your group who needs additional support, ask if they would be willing to reach out to them during the week and/or take them out for coffee.
- Communicate with them the vision you have for your group. Help them understand the why behind how you plan your group and what you do.
- Spend intentional time, building a relationship with them. Ask them questions (i.e. what do they feel like they want to develop or grow in? How can you help move them in their journey? What do they feel like God is speaking to them about, and what are they doing about it?)
- Plan to debrief a discussion with them. Ask them what they thought went well and didn't go smoothly from their perspective? What did they observe or notice about how the group discussion went?
- Ask them to organize and run social or non-curriculum nights
- Be in charge of communicating with the group (i.e. reminders, encouragement)

Over time, have them start to take the lead on the following. Once you feel they are comfortable with those, ask them to lead an entire night with you not there.

- Run the icebreaker/opener questions
- Open/close in Prayer
- Lead a breakout group for a question that you've introduced
- Share the Facilitator Guides with them
- Ask them to facilitate a few of the questions

Finally, ask them to lead and run the entire night without them. Still help them prep, plan, and debrief the night. Let them know why you are doing this, and that you're pulling back, but you're still there to step in when needed.