

United Way Campaign: Fundraising Events and Ideas

Successful campaigns have two things in common: good planning and wide participation. Here are ideas to spark involvement and FUN!

Successful Coordinators say special events take **planning!** Ask yourself these questions before your event:

1. **What are your organization's goals** for the campaign? What do you hope to accomplish through the special event?
2. **What non-monetary goals** do you have?
 - Creating greater community understanding
 - Increasing Volunteering
 - Building Morale
 - Other: _____
3. **What resources are available?**
 - People
 - Supplies/Material
 - Prizes/Incentives
 - Entertainment
 - Inspiration

Think about the return on your investment—what makes a special event valuable? What “returns” do you expect and plan for?

Include ways to inform employees about the campaign at the special event. See the example, “**Conversation Starters,**” at the end of this booklet.

Above all, ***have fund and say thanks to everyone!***

???Have more questions? Please contact your United Way rep!

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A DOLLAR AN INCH CONTEST



Engage executives in an all day competition to end the day with the shortest tie. Employees cut an inch off their favorite executive's tie each time they donate to the United Way. Have prizes for the shortest tie, the ugliest tie, etc.



AGENCY FAIR

Invite agencies to set up information booths in your office or lunchroom. Try a carnival theme; each booth has a game as well as valuable information. Add free hot dogs, soda, popcorn, a Chili Cook-Off Contest and a White Elephant Sale. Campaign committee members team up with agencies to sponsor games (ring toss, fish pond, etc.). Include entertainment from agencies such as a "Rain Forest Dance" performed by youth and art displays.

Remember to publicize well. To announce the fair, have a top level manager write a memo stressing the importance of attendance and of learning about the important community work that the agencies perform.

Encourage attendance by providing give-away incentives at the end of the fair for all those participating. Ideas for incentive could include:

1. A Carnival Passport: agency representative will provide employees with information to complete question on the Passport. All completed Passports will be entered into a grand prize drawing. Talk to a local travel agent about donating a trip.
2. A Chili-Cook-Off Contest: a panel of chili experts will select the Official Chili Champion. Talk to a local hotel representative about donating a weekend stay at their hotel.

BINGO NIGHT



Sell bingo cards for employees to purchase. Get a local store to donate prizes for all winners.

BOOK SALE

Invite employees to donate books they've read and get great deals on books from other employees. Encourage employees to bring their donations in early. Sell paperback for \$1.00 and hardbacks for \$2.00.

BOWL-A-THON



Ask employees to participate and consider charging \$2 to enter. Give each participant a pledge sheet in advance to use when asking employees for their support. Make the event fun and encourage fan support.

CASINO NIGHT



Set up a few blackjack tables, add a Bingo game, create a bean-bag toss, sell sandwiches and sodas, and you've got Casino Night. Invite employees to bring the whole family. Get local businesses to donate prizes and items for winners.

CASUAL DAY

Sell Casual Day Badges allowing employees purchasing them to dress causally on certain days. Badges can be purchased for \$5.00 each through payroll deduction or lump sum donation. The badges carry an expiration date, depending on the amount donated. Define what is meant by "casual" to avoid confusion. Invite your employees to "go crazy" during casual days! Designate days for Crazy Days and encourage employees to show their "wild side." For example:

Tuesday	Stupid Hat Day
Wednesday	Silly Socks Day
Thursday	Sports Team Day

CEO CAR WASH



Invite employees to donate \$5.00 to have their car washed at high noon by their CEO/CAO in business clothing. Charge extra for special services like cleaning the interior or polishing the rims. Charge for Polaroid photos of the employees and the "boss" washing their cars.

CHILDREN'S DRAWING CONTEST

Employees are given "official photographs" of one or two top executives to take home for their children to draw. Contest is limited to children under 12 who are related to any employee. There is a \$5.00 entry fee per child. Post entry forms at various places around the office. Employees vote for the best drawing by paying \$1.00 per vote. Prizes are given to all participants (get a local fast food restaurant to donate a certificate for a free lunch). Display winning portraits as a part of the organization's permanent art collection. Some organizations choose to have children draw what "helping others" or what "hope" mean to them.

CRAFT AND BAKE SALE



Bake sales are especially popular events. Craft sales give employees a chance to share their hobbies and special talents. This type of event raises money for the United Way and helps employees get an edge on their holiday shopping.

CRUISE FOR DONORS

Contact a local cruise specialist such as Blue and Gold Fleet or Hornblower Yacht's to organize a fundraising event/dinner dance. Have a nautical/pirate theme and use when designing invitations and incentives.

EMPLOYEE COOKBOOK



Collect recipes and helpful household hints. Group the collection into sections for a customized cookbook. Employees' children provide the cover artwork and illustrations. Print and bind books by a local business pro bono. This even has been so popular that some organizations have not been able to fill all requests. Plan for an enthusiastic response!

EMPLOYEE GUESSING EVENTS

Employees guess:

- ◆ The organization's grand total in pledges
- ◆ The per capita gift of the organization
- ◆ The United Way campaign grand total for the community
- ◆ United Way trivial questions
- ◆ The amount of candy or other items in a jar

EXECUTIVE CHAIR RACE



Set up a relay course for executives to go through sitting in chairs. Use a stop-watch to time contestants with the best time winning a prize. Observers wager \$1 on their favorite contestants.

EXECUTIVE FANTASY AUCTION

Have executives at your organization create “fantasy” packages, which employees can bid on at a special auction. Packages could include fishing trips, dinners or movie tickets. Executives could also auction their special “services.” For example:

- ❖ Cooking the winning bidder a special dish
- ❖ Singing at a wedding, party or special event
- ❖ Mowing the winner’s lawn
- ❖ Changing the winner’s car oil
- ❖ Babysitting the winner’s children
- ❖ Washing the winner’s car
- ❖ Washing the winner’s windows



FLASHBACK CARNIVAL

Invite employees to an old-fashioned carnival, complete with cake walks, bake sale, bubble blowing and \$.50 hot dogs. Hold a hoola hoop contest and hoops shoot to really give it that “flashback” flavor. Charge participants a fee to enter the contest. Set up a dunk tank with all your favorite dunakable executives. Charge \$2.00 for three balls. Have a pie throwing booth with all your favorite executives behind the “eight ball.”

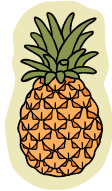
HALLOWEEN – PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST

Use a Halloween theme for your campaign this year. Hold a pumpkin carving contest. Invite employees to enter carved pumpkins individually or by group. Charge \$5.00 to enter and \$1.00 per vote. Award prizes in categories including:

- Best traditional pumpkin
- Most creative pumpkin
- Best effort by a group
- Best effort by an individual



Find a local business willing to donate pumpkins for your organization to sell to your employees. Employees can buy pumpkins for their families, their staff or to use in the pumpkin carving contest. Throw a Halloween party to end your campaign!



HAWAIIAN LUAU

Invite employees to a mini luau. Serve ham, pineapple upside-down cake and other goodies. Give prizes to employees wearing the most outrageous Hawaiian attire.



INTERNATIONAL FOOD DAY

Team employees together to create taste treats from around the world. Employees decorate their booths and dress in appropriate costumes. Hold the event over the lunch hour, allowing employees to purchase tickets redeemable for food at the booths. Invite a panel of “celebrity” judges to award prizes.

KARAOKE PARTY

This has the potential of being a **BIG** fundraiser! Participants pay \$2 to enter and are given a list of songs and a pledge sheet in advance. Participants ask employees to support them by pledging an amount of money. At the event, have a big box of funny hats, boas and other costume items available for participants to use. Consider “passing the hat” at the party to receive even more pledges! This fun event is also good for team building.



LAFF OLYMPICS



Employees compete in crazy events for silly prizes. Participants donate a \$5.00 fee to enter. Observers can wager bets on their favorite entrants.

MINIATURE GOLF

Build a nine-hole course featuring slinkys, ramps, water and sand around the office laid out to test the skills of your employees. The lowest score (which may be decided by a tie-breaker) will take home a tacky golfing sportcoat. Interested twosomes return an entry form and bring a putter the day of the event. Fees are:



- ◆ \$25.00 for twosomes of upper management
- ◆ \$15.00 for twosomes of middle management
- ◆ \$10.00 for twosomes of all other staff

SPELLING BEE

Invite employees to participate, charging a \$5.00 entrance fee. Galley observers can place \$1.00 bets on their favorite participants. Present the winner with a special “Dan Quayle Spelling Bee” Award.



TAILGATE PARTY

Create a sports theme for your campaign if the United Way campaign coincides with the football season. Back a truck into the employee lounge, lower the tailgate, and sell football fare: hotdogs, chips, soft drinks and other goodies. Play a game of tag or video football with participants donating an entrance fee and observers wagering bets.



TRIVIAL PURSUIT MATCH

Create a pool around the winning team. Hold the challenge during a staff meeting. Give the event a game show flavor with participants using bicycle horns if the answer is known. All employees who bet on the winning team receive prizes.

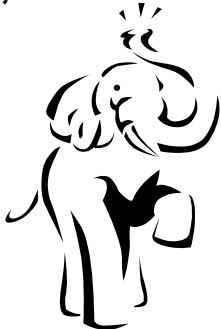


UGLY TIE OR UGLY EARRING CONTEST

All contestants pay \$5.00 to enter the best awful earrings or ugly ties they own (or can make or borrow!). Place voting boxes at various places around the office, and charge \$1.00 per vote. Have a parade of all the contestants, offering a last chance to vote at the end of the day. Circulate the names of entrants the day before the event so employees can anticipate the voting. Bring a Polaroid and charge for photos taken of the employees with their favorite contestant. Employees vote as many times as they want for their favorite!

WHITE ELEPHANT SALE

Encourage employees to donate “white elephants” early. This event can be held in conjunction with a carnival. Invite employees to buy unique gifts at affordable prices.



RALLIES & RAFFLES



BLUE LIGHT SPECIAL

Hold daily/weekly “Blue Light Specials” rallies throughout your campaign. Have different division, departments, or project areas host each “special.” Serve pastries and juice and have an agency representative speak from an agency that your organization’s campaign supports. Schedule entertainment by a youth or elderly group. Organize prizes and games.



CHOCOLATE KICK-OFF

Appeal to “sweet teeth” when kicking off your campaign! Create gold paper candy bar wrappers with the United Way logo and “Thanks to you, it’s working...”. Put the wrappers on Hershey Chocolate Bars and distribute at your kick-off.



EMPLOYEE RAFFLE

Ask employees to contribute something special for a raffle prize. Suggestions are:

- ❖ Home made pies
- ❖ Lunch with a co-worker
- ❖ Car wash
- ❖ Tickets to a special event
- ❖ Weekend stay at a vacation cabin or condominium.

Employees can make contributions using a raffle donation form. Those employees turning in pledge forms early receive three raffle tickets. Employees turning in pledge forms after the “early” date but before the campaign’s final event, receive one raffle ticket. Additional raffle prizes to consider:

- ❖ I-Day vacation
- ❖ Prizes donated by vendors
- ❖ Tickets to sporting events, concerts, etc.
- ❖ Gift certificates from retailers, restaurants, movie theaters, etc.

TICKET GIVEAWAY/GIFT CERTIFICATES



Give free tickets to movies, theater productions, amusement centers and other local attractions for pledge incentives. Encourage employees to pledge \$2 per week giving two movie passes to every employee who meets that challenge. In addition, any employee who turns in a signed pledge form during the first hour following the campaign kick-off has their name entered in a special drawing for two tickets to a fun local destination such as Wisconsin Dells. Get local businesses to donate tickets to these attractions.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Experience Coordinators use these conversation starters by cutting out each United Way fact and wrapping one around **every hot dog, raffle ticket or brownie**. You can choose a different “goodie” to hand out at your special event and be sure to include a fact with every one!

Please work with your United Way rep if you are interested in **creating your own** conversation starter based on a specific area of need that is important to your organization.

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Through the United Way, you provide...counseling, day care and family support services for families, children and youth.

.....

Through the United Way, you provide...food, shelter and training for homeless and hungry people.

.....

Through the United Way, you provide...counseling, emotional support, and direct service for people with AIDS/HIV and their loved ones.

.....

Through the United Way, you provide...adult day care, recreation, and health care services for elderly people.

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Through the United Way, you provide...alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment.

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Through the United Way, you provide...rehabilitation, advocacy, counseling and health care services for people with disabilities.

.....

Through the United Way, you provide...recreation, leadership development, job training and counseling for women and girls.

.....

Through the United Way, you provide...a wide range of health care services.

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Through the United Way, you provide...education, training, opportunity development and counseling through African American Community Services.

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Through the United Way, you provide...education, training, opportunity development and counseling through Hispanic Outreach.

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Through the United Way, you provide...education, training, opportunity development and counseling through the Literacy Council of Janesville.