
Great Ideas to Energize Your Award-Winning Campaign

Your campaign can be so much more than just listening to a small speech and filling out a pledge card. Put the fun back in fundraising with these creative ideas to energize your workplace campaign!

- **Entertainment:** Entertaining Campaign Ideas
- **Food:** Campaign Tasty Treats!
- **Games:** Fun Campaign-Based Games to Play
- **Sports:** Sports-Related Activities for Your Campaign
- **Themes:** Give Your Campaign a Creative Twist!
- **Miscellaneous:** More Ideas to Feed Your Imagination
- **Incentives:** Boost Participation and Reward Your Donors

Entertaining Campaign Activities

'American Idol' Contest

Employees can conduct an *Idol* contest, based on the hit TV show *American Idol*. Employees make a donation to vote for the management-singing group of their choice. The duo or group that attracts the most will sing a song of their choice in front of an audience.

Historical Eras

Go back in time to the Wild West, Psychedelic Sixties, Roaring Twenties or Renaissance. Ask staff to dress up in clothing from your chosen era and decorate their offices.

Lights! Camera! Action!

Have employees dress up as their favorite characters from movies or TV shows. Act out a plot that involves United Way. Incorporate movie plots or famous lines into flyers and emails. Raffle off movie tickets, TVs and video gift certificates.

Mardi Gras

Everyone loves a party so why not model your campaign after the biggest party in the world—Mardi Gras. Invite a jazz band to play at your kick-off event. Hold a parade float contest, with departments decorating shoeboxes as floats. Sell bead-o-grams (beads with thoughtful messages attached). Host a Cajun potluck.

Tune into Community

Music is a great way to get everyone moving to the United Way beat. Hold a karaoke kickoff party. Have participants and volunteers dress up as their favorite musicians. Sell employees' old CDs. Hold a musical talent show. Organize a sock hop. Raffle off stereos or CDs.

Blue Light Specials

Host daily or weekly "Blue Light Special" rallies throughout the office. Serve food and have a United Way grantee speak on a particular topic.

Book, Music and Video Sale

Have employees donate old books, CDs and videos for a company or department wide sale, with proceeds earmarked for United Way.

Comedy Hour

Ask a local comedian or improv group to donate their services over the lunch hour. Have employees buy tickets to attend.

Carnival and Talent Show

Hold a carnival and talent show to kick off your United Way campaign. As a part of the program, have a group of executives perform songs, with written lyrics to fit United Way. An executive dunking booth is part of the carnival games, giving

employees the chance to dunk their favorite executive. Employees can participate in traditional carnival games such as the egg/spoon race, ring toss and ducky races. The finale event is the Mr. or Mrs. United Way Pageant where divisions nominate a contestant to compete in the pageant. Each pageant contestant must educate the audience about one United Way grantee during the talent competition and the audience votes by placing money in large water jugs.

Casino Night

What are the ingredients for a successful Casino Night? A few gaming tables, one bingo table, a snack table, employees and their families. Have local businesses donate prizes for winners

Cruise for Donors

Organize a local cruise for a fundraising event/dinner dance. Use a nautical / pirate theme for decorations and invitations.

Reality Campaign

Get "real" with your employees and conduct your campaign with a theme centered on the Reality TV shows that have taken over the world! Hold daily activities with a tie to the numerous reality shows that are out there, i.e. Temptation Island picnic, Weakest Link putt-putt contest, Who Wants To Be A Millionaire trivia...

United Way Goes Hollywood

Use a series of colorful, creative and humorous posters to publicize the campaign. Hold a bake sale with slogans like "The Pies of Laura Mars" and "Romancing The Scones". Hold a bowling party with slogans like "Bowl Durham" or "Honey, I Struck The Pins."

Be an Everyday Superhero

Employees dress as heroes: Batman, Superman, Spiderman, etc. Serve hero (sub) sandwiches.

Sock Hop

Invite employees to kickoff—"Fifties Style." Give prizes for most authentic dress. Hang posters that tell what "fifty cents more per week can do for our community."

Zoo-Mobile

Rent the Zoo-Mobile. A van that brings various small animals to children's birthday parties to a company. It touches employees "inner child" makes them excited about United Way.

Bon Voyage

With a traveling theme, you can host a “bon voyage” party as a victory celebration. Everyone who gives through United Way gets a “passport” to get into the party. Top contributors will be put into a drawing to win a prize, possibly donated from a travel agency or cruise line.

Be a Lifesaver

Have some fun, beach style! Sand, sunglasses, beach balls and The Beach Boys music make your office feel like you are on the beach. Employees who donate are awarded life preservers vests to wear at the next meeting and lifesavers candies in their offices.

Academy Awards Night

Have employees dress as their favorite celebrities. Create video movie “skits” using your favorite movies with a United Way twist.

Other Fun Entertaining Ideas

- 60's, 70's, 80's
- Australian
- Circus
- Disco
- Gangsters
- Hoe-down
- Holiday
- Medieval Times
- Monopoly
- New York! New York!
- Seasons
- Southwestern
- When in Rome...
- Movie Showing

Campaign Tasty Treats

Exotic Locales

Whether you transform your campaign into a Hawaiian luau, African safari or the Australian outback, employees are sure to have a wild time. Encourage staff and volunteers to dress the part. Host a lunch with theme-related food. Organize a scavenger hunt or hula-hoop contest.

Ice Cream Social

Set up an ice cream bar with a variety of favorite toppings. Charge employees by the scoop.

Employee Cookbook

Have employees donate their favorite recipes to be published in a company cookbook. A variation of this theme is to sell hint books on golf, gardening, etc. Have employees' children provide illustrations.

Lunch Box Auction

Have employees create gourmet lunches to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. Give prizes for the most creative, nutritious, elegant or humorous meals.

A Taste of (your company name here)

Create "A Taste of Atlanta". Invite local restaurants out in the area to set up their best dishes for employees to sample and purchase in order to raise funds for your campaign.

International Food Day

Employees team together to create taste treats from around the world. Employees decorate their own booths and dress in costumes. Hold the event at lunch, allowing employees to purchase tickets redeemable for food at the booths. Have a panel of "celebrity" judges award prizes.

Tailgate Party

Create a sports theme to coincide with football season. Hold the party in the parking lot. Serve hot dogs, chips, soda and peanuts. Play a game of flag football or video football with participants donating an entry fee.

Have a "Good Neighbor" Barbeque

Join with other companies near your business to have a cookout with games and giveaways. Have an grantee speaker present or invite families from area agencies to partake in the festivities.

"Breakfast of Champions"

Decorate with athletic gear, flags and banners. Company departments become teams, campaign progress is marked by moving teams across a playing field

poster toward goal, campaign chair or CEO "coach" gives a pep talk at a kickoff "Breakfast of Champions" where Wheaties is served.

Wine Tasting

Hold a wine tasting and select five wines to be rated. All employees and their spouses/guests in attendance are given rating sheets. Special drawings are also held for contributors to the United Way Campaign, throughout the week. The larger the contribution, the more chances for prizes.

Waffle/Pancake Breakfast

Sell tickets and have people sign-up for their choice of pancakes or waffles. Cook breakfast in your company cafeteria. Don't forget bacon, sausage, butter etc. Each department can donate an item. The proceeds will go to United Way.

Whipped Cream Sponge Throwing

Instead of a pie-throwing contest, use a sponge with whipped cream on it. Get management to participate and let employees buy chances.

Other Fun Ideas

- Latte Stand
- Pizza Party
- Popcorn Sale
- Pumpkin Carving Contest
- October fest
- Picnic

Fun Campaign Games to Play

International Olympics

Celebrate diversity by transforming departments into various countries with décor and dress to match. Organize an international potluck luncheon where employees bring their favorite ethnic dishes. Host a mini-Olympics tournament. Invite United Way speakers to talk about various cultures throughout the Miami Valley. Showcase music from around the world.

Baby/Pet Picture Match Game

Invite employees to try their luck at matching baby or pet pictures to pictures of employees. Charge employees to vote and award a fun prize to the entrant with the most right answers.

Bingo

Sell bingo cards to employees and play some games. Get local stores or company vendors to donate prizes.

Scavenger Hunt

Have employees pay a fee to hunt for hidden items around the office or neighborhood. Equip employees with Polaroid cameras and give them the task of taking pictures of their team in front of the office or neighborhood landmarks. Give employees a time limit. Award the winning team a prize.

Trivial Pursuit/Chess/Scrabble Contest

Recruit employees to play a chosen board game. Create a pool around the winning team or allow employees to move/acquire a game piece for every returned pledge card.

Ugly Tie or Ugly Earring Contest

Have contestants pay to enter the ugliest tie or earring contest. Take pictures of the participants with their tie or earrings and have employees “vote” on the ugliest tie and earrings by contributing a dollar.

Executive Chair or Tricycle Races

Set up a relay course for executives to go through, either sitting in a chair or on tricycles. Let observers “bet” on their favorite contestants.

The Battle of the Sexes

It's the men against the women in the company to see which will get the highest percent participation. At the kick-off meeting, have a short game show in which 2 men and 2 women "volunteer" to be contestants. (Because women are from Venus and men are from Mars, the teams could be called the Venutians and the Martians.) Women have to answer questions about topics that men know a lot about, and vice versa. Example: One man can be asked the name of a product used to slough dead skin cells off the face (exfoliator) and a woman can be

asked what was the house of Ruth (Yankee Stadium, made famous by Babe Ruth). Have fun with the theme by creating United Way space posters have flying saucers on them, and for employees who turn in their pledge forms the day of the kick-off event, each one gets a little flying saucer that lights up. This is a great way to get all employee participation in your campaign!

Children's Drawing Contest

Give employees photographs of 1 or 2 top executives to take home for their children under 12 to draw. Charge a \$5.00 entry fee to vote for the best portraits. Display the winning portraits as part of the organization's permanent art collection. Variations of this event include having children paint depictions of people helping other people. Poems, collages, and photography can also be submitted.

A Dollar an Inch

Employees pay to cut an inch off their favorite executive tie each time they give to the community. Executives participate in an all-day competition to end the day with the shortest tie.

Executive Prison

Transform an office into a jail cell. Arrest managers and executives and allow them to make a phone call to their staff to "bail" them out. All proceeds go to the campaign.

Laugh Olympics

Employees compete in crazy "athletic events" for silly prizes. Participants donate a \$5 fee to enter. Observers wager bets on the contestants.

Back to School

Relive the glory years of school (without all the homework). Collect school supplies for a United Way grantee partner. Hold a spelling bee with managers versus employees or department versus department. Contestants must spell the word correctly or everyone on the team must pay. The winning team receives a prize. Or e-mail United Way pop quizzes to employees with winners receiving a prize. Give away customized lunchboxes. Have employee's kid's help in the decoration of flyers and custom printed materials.

Joke Books

Employees submit their favorite jokes.

Funniest Home Video Contests

Invite employees to create their own "home" or "work" videos. Charge an entry fee at a viewing party; offer a prize.

Corporate Challenge

Take on another company in your field in a campaign goal challenge.

Put Yourself in Their Shoes

Ask employees to wear a crazy pair of shoes and enjoy a wild and crazy lunch. The menu: FOOT-long hot dogs, SHOESTRING potatoes, CORN chips, ARCHway cookies, and SOLE music, i.e. "Blue Suede Shoes", "These Boots Were Made For Walking."

Company-wide Walk/Run/Ride, with Sponsors Pledging Per Mile .

Proceeds to benefit United Way.

Whose Legs are Those?

Line up co-workers for mug shots of their legs in Bermuda shorts, legs only. Encourage employees to pay a small fee (\$1) to guess who's legs belong to which co-workers.

United Way 007

Clues are given to employees in the form of riddles. The department or individual who figures out all the riddles receives a prize at the end of the campaign.

United Way Jingle Contest

Employees write jingles for United Way. There is \$5 entry fee and voting fee for the best jingles.

Ugly Lamp Month

Use any elephant (an ugly lamp works great) and offer the opportunity to purchase points to move the item to someone's work space or keep it out of your work area. Calculate and move daily, weekly, etc. Wherever it ends up at the end of the time period, it must stay for one month or until the next campaign.

United Way Boot Camp

Camouflage decorations, YMCA Ropes Course or Rock climbing ...
"1...2...3...United Way for Me!"

In Hot Pursuit of Cool Millions

Campaigners dress up as spies wearing trench coat and carrying magnifying glasses. Pass out United Way informative messages in code and offer a prize for the employees who can decode the messages.

Male Beauty Contest

Contestants represent a United Way grantee. They receive votes at so much a bid. They can have photos of themselves with "biography" information available.

Catch and Release

Managers have to stay in a giant "fish Tank" until they raise ten or more dollars in donations. Decorate with an "under the sea" type décor.

Pucker-up Pig

For a set donation amount, employees can cast votes for the co-worker who will “kiss the pig” at the end of the campaign. This would work with goats, cows... or any other animal.

Puppy Love

Ever hear that a lot of pets look like their owners and vice-versa? Test this theory by having employees pay for a chance to try their luck at matching a pet picture to its correct owner. Award a prize to the contestant with the most right answers and provide gift certificates to a pet store for the owners who look the most like their pets!

Other Game Ideas

- Executive Auction
- Home-Grown Auction
- Playstation, X-Box Contest
- Look-a-Like Contest
- Penny Jar
- Soak the Boss
- E-mail Bingo
- Draw the Management
- Fun Run
- Executive shoeshine
- Tug-of -War
- Cubicle Decorating

Sports-Related Activities

Teaming Up

Everyone becomes a team player when you tie your campaign to sports. Kick-off your campaign with a tailgate party. Departments can make up the different teams or sporting events. Set up a mini-golf course, briefcase toss or wastebasket free-throw, charging participants to enter. End the campaign with a trophy awarded to the department with the highest participation or most wins.

Mini-Indy 500

Rent or borrow remote controlled cars and set up an “Indy 500” race. Use office supplies to make the track more interesting. Teams can be sponsored to compete. Spectators can place bets on the winner.

Volleyball/Softball/Touch Football/Basketball Challenge

Play real or improvised games with teams of employees. Charge an entrance fee or a canned good for each participant. Have spectators bet for the winning team.

Touchdown for United Way

For any High School or University –Donate \$5 from every \$15 football ticket when the ticket purchaser mentions United Way during their ticket purchase. It's a great way to support United Way and a local football team.

Bowl-a-Thon or Miniature Golf

Employees pay a fee to participate in the event. Hold challenges among other departments.

Sumo Mania!

Call a local company and rent the Sumo Wrestling package. Have teams pay to play.

Playing the Field

Use baseball, basketball, football, golf or hockey themes. Teams of employees advance around bases or down the field. Include sports-related competitions and prizes for participants.

Hold a NFL Football Day

Sell buttons that allow employees to wear their favorite NFL gear on a Friday or any game day during the season. Host a NFL “Tailgate Party” during the lunch hour asking employees to bring their favorite dish to pass. For even more fun, play NFL Trivia.

Other Sporting Ideas

- Interdepartmental Basketball
- Aerobic-a-thon
- Slam Dunk Contest
- Team Sports Competitions
- Bike-a-thon
- Croquet Tournament
- Tennis or Racquetball Tournaments
- Super Hoop

Event Themes

Themes

- 60's, 70's, 80's
- Australian
- Be a Lifesaver
- Circus
- Disco
- Gangsters
- Hoe-down
- Holiday
- Indy 500
- Medieval Times
- Monopoly
- New York! New York!
- A Night at the Casino
- Picnic
- Seasons
- Southwestern
- When in Rome

Fun Theme Ideas

- Bowl-off
- Costume Contest
- Craft Fair
- Cubicle Decorating
- Draw the Management
- E-mail Bingo
- Interdepartmental Basketball Tournament
- Latte Stand
- Movie Showing
- Pizza Party
- Popcorn Sale
- Pumpkin Carving Contest
- Tricycle Race
- Trivia Pursuit

For All Kinds of Office Athletes

- Golf Tournament or Putt-Putt Contest
- Aerobic-a-thon
- Walk-a-thon
- Tug-of-War
- Slam Dunk Contest
- Team Sports Competitions
- Ping Pong-a-thon
- Bike-a-thon
- Croquet Tournament
- Fun Run
- Tennis or Racquetball Tournaments
- Super Hoop

Auctions (it's not art, but...)

- Lunch Box Auction
- Executive Auction
- Home-Grown Auction
- Rummage Sales
- Balloon Sales

Better Odds Than the Football Pool

- Match the Baby Face Contest
- Nintendo Contest
- Coloring Contest
- Look-a-Like Contest
- Most Humorous Photo Contest

Almost Anything Goes

- Compliment-o-grams
- Dead Flower Bouquets
- Penny Jar
- Car Wash
- Soak the Boss
- Can Drive
- Treasure Hunt
- Executive Shoe Shine
- Cookbook Sales

The Way to a Donor's Heart

- Bake sale, candy bar sale, popcorn sale
- Pie-eating contest
- Chili cook off
- Pancake breakfast
- October fest
- Ice cream social

Build Your Theme Around a Song

- You Light Up My Life
- You Are The Sunshine Of My Life
- That's What Friends Are For
- Put A Little Love In Your Heart
- Reach Out and Touch Somebody's Hand...

Theme Ideas to Build On

- Your Gift Works Magic
- Do Something Wonderful
- Light Up A Life
- Touch A Life
- United We Stand
- Building A Better Community
- Just Care
- A Race Everyone Wins
- The Magic Is You
- Imagine
- Making It Happen
- The United Way – It Works
- Brighten A Life
- Be A Star In Someone's Life
- Something To Believe In
- Share Your Light

Theme Ideas

- Sports Slogans: Pitch In for Your Home Team
- Join the Winning Team
- Catch the Spirit

Other Fun Events to Engage Employees

Balloon Pop

Ask business partners to donate prizes. Before filling a balloon with helium, put a note inside some of the balloons with the name of a prize. In other balloons, put a note with a United Way fact. Pledge forms and other office notices can be shaped like balloons. Have employees purchase and pop balloons. Have the end prize be a donated hot-air balloon ride.

Flower Event

Ask a local florist to donate flowers. Sell the flowers at the office to employees. This works well in conjunction with Secretary's Day or Valentine's Day.

Health and Giving Event

Have each department host a health event such as a yoga class, stress reduction workshop or nutrition and personal trainer consultation. Charge employees to attend each event.

Vacation Day

This is probably the most effective and appreciated event. Have employees "buy" a vacation day by contributing a day's wages to United Way.

Auction Hotline

Set up a special voice mailbox or web page with weekly messages announcing auction items. Outline the items, including their face value in a flyer. Employees can call the hotline to record their bids. Update the recorded message daily, announcing the highest bids received to date. Each Friday announce auction results for the week and next week's items.

Half & Half

Employees each donate a dollar to be kept in a plastic container. Hold a drawing where the worker receives half the funds in the container and United Way receives the other half. Employees were also able to buy "Jeans on Friday" coupons for \$5, \$10 or \$20, each which allowed for variable lengths of wearing time.

Late Meeting Fee

Employees who arrive late for meetings pay a nominal fee of 25 cents

Other Events

- Flea Market
- Book Fair
- Craft Fair
- Rummage Sales
- Compliment-o-grams
- Executive Shoe Shine

Incentives for Giving

What behaviors to incent:

- Increase giving by ___% or \$_____ per pay period
- First Time gift to the United Way Community Solutions Fund of at least \$_____ per pay period.
- Increase giving through the United Way Community Solutions Fund by returning a pledge form, whether employees donate or not ? Department with the highest participation (Note: United Way strongly recommends against setting 100 percent participation goals)

What incentives to offer:

- Including a ride on the private jet, gourmet meal cooked in a vice president's home or a golf game with senior management
- Use of the executive office
- Weekend getaway for two
- Extra vacation day with pay
- Half hour to two-hour lunch extension
- Babysitting services
- Equipment your company no longer needs, but is still in good working order
- Cabin Stays
- Cash Prizes
- Celebration or Dept. Lunch
- Mugs, Pens
- Big screen T.V/ stereo equipment
- Software
- Stress Balls
- Casual Day
- Hand out pens, hats, T-shirts or notepads with the United Way logo
- Dinner at the CEO's home
- Hotel stays
- Free oil changes
- Tickets to Six Flags, King's Island, Cedar Point, etc.
- Gift certificate to local stores, spa for a massage or manicure/pedicure, restaurants, clothes or books
- Open soda machine
- Prime parking spaces
- "Sleep in Late" awards
- Vacation packages
- Shopping spree at local mall
- Golf lessons
- One day of limousine service