



## Fun Ways to Raise \$\$\$\$ for the United Way

### **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 e-mails. Raffle off movie tickets, TVs and video gift certificates.

### **Tune Into Community**

Music is a great way to get everyone moving to the United Way beat. Hold a karaoke kick-off 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 agency speak on a particular topic.

### **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 final 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 agency during the talent competition and the audience votes by placing money in large water jugs.

### **'American Idol' Contest**

Employees can conduct an Idol contest, based on the recent 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.

### **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."

### **Mardi Gras**

Everyone loves a party so why not model your campaign after the biggest party in the world —Mardi Gras. Play jazz music at your kick-off event. Hold a parade float contest,

with departments decorating shoeboxes as floats. Sell bead-o-grams, which are beads with thoughtful messages attached. Host a Cajun potluck.

### **Hang It On Your Manager**

Employees bring odd fashion accessories like scarves, goofy glasses, bit ties, etc., and place them in a box. Throughout the day, employees may pay \$1 for an accessory they would like their favorite manager to wear. The manager can pay \$2 to take any item off.

### **White Elephant Sale**

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

### **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.

### **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 such as “Temptation Island picnic, Weakest Link putt putt contest, Who Wants To Be A Millionaire trivia”.

### **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.”

### **Academy Awards Night**

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

### **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.

### **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.

### **Employee Raffle**

Ask Employees to contribute something special for a raffle prize. Suggestions could be: homemade pies/treats, lunch with a co-worker, car wash, tickets to a special event, weekend stay at a vacation cabin or condominium, 50/50, gift certificates.

### **Putt Today “Fore” United Way**

Set up a portable putting green. Employees buy chances to hit a hole-in-one. Those who make a hole-in-one are eligible for various prizes such as gift cards.

### **Community Hero Recognition**

“Turn in” the heroes at your company workplace campaign. Let the examples of their good works be an inspiration to others to get out and participate in helping others in Jefferson City. Recognize these “heroes” at your United Way events and theme your rally around “the hero in all of us”!

### **Days Off Drawing**

Set up a couple types of drawings for days off (or other prize incentives). Have a drawing for new givers, givers who return their pledge card by the deadline, and givers who increase by a certain percent. If a person gets their card in by the deadline and increases by the identified percent, they are eligible for both drawings – doubling their chances to win.

### **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.

### **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).

Give prizes to the employees who turn in their pledge forms the day of the kick-off event. This is a great way to get all employees’ to participate 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- have 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 male executive's tie each time they give to the community. Executives participate in an all-day competition to end the day with the shortest tie.

### **Back to School**

Relive the glory years of school (without all the homework). 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.

### **Joke Books**

Employees submit their favorite jokes.

### **Stress Darts**

As a stress reliever during Campaign week, offer employees the opportunity to pay \$1 for three darts. Balloons with paper inside listing a prize serve as targets.

### **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."

### **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 whose 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.

### **In Hot Pursuit of Cool Millions**

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

### **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 you can find.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Participation Pizza Party**

Have some friendly competition amongst departments. Since your departments vary in rate of pay, have the competition based on participation. The department with the highest percent of participation in the workplace gets a free lunch. If the whole organization exceeds whatever participation goal is set – everyone gets lunch. (If people have different lunch periods – give everyone gift certificates for lunch at a nearby restaurant.)

### **Ice Cream Social**

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

### **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.

### **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 to 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 a United Way 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 towards goal, campaign chair or CEO "coach" gives a pep talk at a kickoff "Breakfast of Champions" where Wheaties is served.

### **Waffle/Pancake Breakfast**

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

### **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.

### **Hold a Kansas City Chiefs or St. Louis Rams Day (or your favorite NFL team)**

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

### **Start Your Engines**

Using remote controlled cars, have employees buy chances to race the cars against each other for prizes. Run it on the honor system and have single elimination competition with a winner's bracket and a loser's bracket. As employees race against each other on their breaks, have them note their names in the winners and losers brackets. Have winners race each other and losers race each other for a winner of each bracket and then have an overall company winner. Vary the prizes for the levels of winners.

### **Bowl-A-Thon or Miniature Golf**

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

### **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.

### **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 your employees who are gardeners to donate flowers or vegetables. Sell the flowers or vegetables to employees and give the money to the UW.

### **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. Employees also have the option to donate unused vacation days to the campaign.

### **Auction Hotline**

Set up an email “hotline” with weekly messages announcing auction items. Outline the items, including their face value in a flyer. Employees can email the hotline to record their bids. Update the 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 .50 cents.

### **THEME IDEAS**

Playstation or X-Box contest

Pizza party

Pumpkin carving contest

Croquet tournament

Tennis or Racquetball tournaments

Flea market

Book fair

Executive shoeshine

Category ideas

Senior support

Kick off

Education

Fundraisers

Thank you

Awareness fundraisers

**Funny Stunts:** Have jars out in break room that employees have made suggestions for a stunt a supervisor has to do if that jar collects the most money. Reasonable stunts only, of course.