WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Special events can be a fun component to your United Way Workplace Campaign. They can raise funds, create awareness, motivate, promote team spirit and set the stage for your employee campaign. Quality is more important than quantity. Select events with a proven track record that involve as many employees as possible and will be cost-effective in terms of time and energy. Hold special events year-round, it is an easy way to raise funds and lessen the stress of packing a number of events into a single week. Special events are also a great way to increase United Way visibility.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Before choosing an event for your campaign, ask yourself the following questions:

- What do you hope to accomplish with this event? Do you want to raise money, increase United Way awareness or boost employee morale? Some events are great fundraisers but poor as morale boosters.

- Has a similar event been held at your organization before? If so, you should determine how successful it was. If it wasn’t successful, was it due to poor planning or a general lack of interest? You can learn from past mistakes and successes.

- How much time will you need to organize this event? Consider the time commitment the event will consume. If you are the chair of your organization’s United Way campaign, you may be too busy planning the employee campaign to run a special event. In this case, recruit someone who is resourceful, creative and able to plan a special event. Encourage senior management to be visible and participate in the promotion and the actual day of the event.

- What are your resources? Before committing to an event, you need to think about the resources you have on hand. Is there someone on your committee who has helped organize this type of event before? Does a committee member know a local business owner that might donate prizes? Consider the tangible and intangible assets available. Recipients of services, agency staff and volunteer are available to speak about the positive impact that dollars raise for United Way have on people’s lives. It’s easy to request a speaker—just call your United Way contact.

- What is your budget? Plan a budget and stick to it. Include staff time, supplies, planning, food and facility expenses when determining the full cost of an event. You can decrease costs by soliciting donations of supplies, services and facilities. Compare the estimated cost of the event to the amount of money you expect to raise. You need to make sure the event is financially viable if the main objective of the event is to raise funds.

- Do you have a back-up plan? It’s always a good idea to come up with some alternate ideas in case an event proves impossible. You may also need a contingency plan if your event is to be held outdoors.
THEMES

- Monopoly—Don’t leave your community to chance
- Counting on You—Count jelly beans in a jar
- Vegas—tie in the theme “What happens in Vegas...” to “What’s raise in our community, stays in our community”
- Music Mania—Play musical chairs, have a karaoke contest, play a musical trivia contest
- Halloween/Fall Festival—Pumpkin decorating contest, guess the weight of the pumpkin, haunted house, apple bobbing, apple or pumpkin pie baking contest
- Sports—Hold a tailgate party. Have a playing field with players advancing toward the goal. “Go the Extra Yard—Give!”
- Carnival—Have a putt-putt, pool table, ring toss
- Olympics/Give for the Gold—Mini Olympic games with teams. Hula Hoop relay, tricycle race, tug-of-war, sack race, Minute to Win It games, etc.
- Decades—50’s: Wear decade attire, have a sock hop. 60’s: Sell headbands, tie-dyed shirts, smiley face pins. 70’s: Have a disco. Wear your favorite polyester shirt. 80’s: who has the best or biggest 80’s hair?

- Game Shows
- Hollywood Movies
- Reality Show
- LIVE UNITED
- Get in the Game
- Are You Smarter Than...?
- NASCAR
- New York
- Mystery Theme
- Red Carpet/Academy Awards
- A Night at the Casino
- Be a Superhero
- Back to School
“FUN” RAISERS

EMPLOYEE COOKBOOK
- Ask employees to bring in their favorite recipes from home.
- Research publishing companies to print the collected recipes in a book format or do it in-house.
- Plan on a two to six month time period for the preparation and printing of the project.
- Take pre-orders after determining price per copy with the publishing company. Profit earned from the sale can be added to the United Way donation from your company.
- Order extra books for last minute shoppers. (Those who have done this always run out!)

BACKYARD/PARKING LOT BBQ
- Determine the costs of set-up. Set a sale price for the barbeque. Pre-sell tickets to the event.
- The event may also be set up as a pot luck picnic with everyone bringing a dish to share.
- Items needed to be purchased include: paper products, meat and fixings, buns, beverages, products, grill, lawn chairs and tables.
- Set-up outside. You may wish to include volleyball net, frisbee, music, etc.

EMPLOYEE CAR WASH
- Recruit a team of car washers (consider involving managers) and determine shifts.
- Team members bring sponges, rags, soap, buckets, hoses, radio, etc. on day of event.
- Set up wash site in employee parking lot.
- Wash tickets may be purchased in advance ($3-$5) or simply recruit cars on wash day.
- Car washers get keys from coworkers, pick up vehicle and bring it to the wash site to be cleaned. Return washed cars to the parking places. Workers never have to leave the site!

ROOT BEER FLOAT SALES
- Charge $1.00 a float (depending on size).
- Purchase root beer and vanilla ice cream. Other items needed include straws, spoons, cups, and ice cream scoopers.
- Have committee schedule work shifts. This popular event works well during lunch and breaks in the summertime.
- Remember a freezer will be needed to store the ice cream if the event is held all day.

IDENTIFY THE BABY CONTESTS
- Employees bring in a favorite baby picture, writing their name on the back side.
- Pictures are numbered and posted on a bulletin board.
- Employees purchase a chance to match coworkers with baby pictures.
- When purchasing a chance, give purchaser a numbered sheet with blanks to write their guesses. Have them put their own name at the top and turn in.
- Employee with the greatest number correct wins a prize. Remember to have more than one prize on hand in the event of a tie!
“FUN”RAISERS

LET THE RACE BEGIN

- For this auto racing theme, create a large goal poster that looks like an Indy race track to set the pace of your campaign race. Use Velcro cars to measure progress along the track as the company moves closer to the finish of the campaign.
- Decorate main room with race flags, jerseys and auto racing posters.
- Hold your own race with remote controlled cars in the parking lot.
- Encourage competition between departments.

VOICES OF UNITED WAY

- Hold a breakfast meeting as part of the campaign kick-off.
- Have several managers seated throughout the audience, equipped with microphones.
- As the campaign program progresses, each person stands and shares their commitment to being personally involved with a designated agency, the work they have personally seen the agency accomplish, and the unmet needs of the agency.
- Then explain the critical role United Way plays in seeing these services are provided.

TRICYCLE RACES

- Create two or more teams of three to four riders per team. Teams are named and publicized in advance, allowing employees to make pledges or “bets” on the winning team.
- Team members ride large tricycles (rent or arrange to borrow from a cooperating store) through a predetermined course through the office. Possibilities include: hallways, lunch/break rooms, around cubicles, chairs, and in and out of offices.
- Have course marked with signs or tape on the floor. Fans are able to watch and cheer from different areas around the office.
- The race is designed as a relay. Team members may pass off a flag, pinwheel, teddy bear, or similar item to their succeeding team member. REMEMBER: Take pictures for the company bulletin board or newsletter!

PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR SHOES

- Encourage the wearing of crazy/funky shoes the week of the campaign.
- Hold a campaign kick-off lunch with FOOT-long hotdogs, SHOEstring potatoes, CORN chips, SOFT SHOE drinks, and SOLE music (“Blue Suede Shoes,” “These Boots Were Made for Walking”).
- To start the campaign and to get across the meaning of the theme, host guest speakers from United Way partner agencies, or have guest speakers from within the company. Speakers relate their experiences with United Way and personally ask people to “put yourself in my shoes.”
- Keep track of fundraising progress with a poster board designed with a track and moveable shoes that come closer to the finish as the campaign evolves.
- Hand out thank you’s at the end of the campaign, tied with shoelaces.

SURVIVOR

- Divide the office into teams and have them battle it out to see who can raise more.
- Play games like office immunity challenges and eat gummy worms!
“FUN”RAISERS

TEAM CHIA PET CONTEST
- Employees will need to divide into teams and choose a Team Captain.
- Each team will care for and provide food, clothing(?), and shelter for the week. Sun lamps, Rapid Grow, and “sweet talking” are all fair game to grow your Chia pet.
- Judges will need to be chosen for the contest, results can be announced at a closing luncheon; winning team receives a treat – such as cake, cookies, etc.

REACH FOR THE GOAL
- Tie together the title with an Olympic theme. The company wins the gold medal when the campaign goal is reached. Create a poster with a bronze, silver and gold medal goal. Track progress.
- The Opening Ceremonies are the “kick-off” to the campaign, explaining the goal and theme. Symbolic passing of the “torch” from last year’s campaign chair to the new chairperson.
- Hold a mini-Olympics with employees forming teams of three or more. Events include hula hoop relay, tricycle race, basketball dribble, tug-of-war, 100 yard dash, mile relay, sack race, Minute to Win It Games, etc.
- Charge an entry fee for teams, offering prizes for the winning team along souvenir gold medals.
- Conclude the Olympic campaign with an awards ceremony, awarding Olympic winners, as well as all employees for their new campaign efforts.

GIVE FROM YOUR HEART
- Hold an aerobic/fitness/exercise workshop over the lunch hour with YMCA staff members leading the sessions and giving a presentation on fitness and health tips.
- Create a Heartstation booth for blood pressure checks and healthy heart information.
- Feature songs with the word heart in their titles and hold a “name that tune” contest.
- Give away thank you's with candy heart shaped cookies.

FEAR FACTOR
- Put executive staff member’s pictures on coin jars and collect money votes all day.
- The executive with the most money votes at the end of the day has to kiss a pig, snake, cow, dog, etc. or karaoke in front of the entire office.

CASUAL DAY
- Give buttons or stickers to employees purchasing coupons.
- Every Friday, employees have the opportunity to purchase coupons for a Jeans Day or Casual Wear Day for the Friday of the following work week.
- Cost is $5.

AIRPLANE TOSS
- Throw paper planes through an hula hoop and charge per throw.
“FUN” RAISERS

BALLOON POP LUCK
- Blow up balloons and place a numbered ticket in each balloon.
- Participants purchase balloons and pop them to win a prize.

EMAIL BINGO
- Sell bingo cards to email users
- Sporadically throughout the day, call out bingo numbers using email.
- First email user to get bingo should then notify everyone, either through email or the phone intercom.
- Solicit contacts/suppliers for prize donations or use raffle tickets.

PENNY WARS
- This event can last during the duration of your campaign.
- Have departments compete to collect the most pennies.
- You can make it so other types of coins are worth negative points (a nickel would cancel out five pennies) so you can sabotage other teams with raising more money for United Way.

OTHER IDEAS
- Garage Sale
- Jail & Bail
- Company picnic with a dunk tank
- Guess how many
- Silent Auction
- Halloween Costume Contest
- Football Toss
- Bake Sale
- Candy Grams
- Pancake Breakfast
- Pot Luck Lunch
PRIZES & INCENTIVES

- Sleep in Late Awards
- Prime Parking Spaces
- Paid Time Off
- Open Soda and Candy Machines
- Free Oil Changes
- Gift Certificates
- Pizza Party
- Casual Day
- Call in “Well” Day
- Shares of Company Stock
- CEO for the Day
- Cocktail or Dinner at the CEO’s Home
- Extended Lunch Break
- Vacation Day
- Tickets to the Movies
- Lunch with the Boss
- Raffles
- Dinner for Two
- Tickets to a sporting event
- Movie or concert tickets
- Gas card
- Traveling trophy
THE 6 DAY CAMPAIGN

FRIDAY
• CARD: “Company Name” and United Way of Central Louisiana hope you ‘chew-z’ to give.”
• GIFT: A stick of chewing gum

MONDAY
• CARD: “Please ‘chip’ in. Together we do what matters.”
• GIFT: Chocolate chip cookies

TUESDAY
• CARD: “Mark your calendar. Say ‘yes’ to helping someone improve their life.”
• GIFT: A pocket calendar

WEDNESDAY
• CARD: “Help sweeten someone’s future by giving to United Way.”
• GIFT: A piece of candy

THURSDAY
• CARD: “The good fortune of others in our community is in your hands. You can ensure a brighter future by giving to the United Way.”
• GIFT: Fortune Cookies

FRIDAY
• CARD: “Thank you for saying yes to helping others.”
• GIFT: A United Way lapel pin or sticker