

TWENTY WAYS TO RAISE FUNDS AND SUPPORT YOUR UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

Check out the following ideas for special events, incentives, and promotions to promote team building and get more employees involved in the United Way Campaign.

IN-PERSON FUNDRAISERS

1. **Competitions** – Host interdepartmental or intercompany competitions, e.g., golf challenge, lip-sync challenge, race, etc. Charge a donation fee to enter, and vote on the winners (don't forget the prizes!).
2. **Tailgate/cookout** – Organize a tailgate or cookout for employees and collect donations for tickets.
3. **Baked goods contest/sale** – Rally a team of employees with baking skills to create some sweet treats to sell. To make it more fun, send a prize to the employee that makes the most (or best) treats.
4. **Specialized food sales** – Sell special food items like candy bars, pies, international foods, and more for a small amount.
5. **Pie in the face** – Have your leaders volunteer to get a pie thrown in their face. People can donate towards the person they want to see get pied, and the leader(s) with the most donations gets the pie(s).
6. **Theatre tickets or tickets to sporting events** – Raffle off movie tickets or game tickets (bonus if any team members are season ticket holders and donate some of their tickets!).
7. **Office garage sale** – Organize a garage sale where team members can bring items they no longer use and sell those for donations.
8. **Draw for a day off** – Set a dollar amount per entry. Employees can submit as many entries as they wish. Winner gets an extra day off!
9. **Jar wars** – Have a friendly competition by putting jars around the office for different departments or floors where employees can donate their spare change. The team whose jar has the most money at the end gets a pizza party, cookie tray, or another prize.
10. **Walk/run fundraisers** – Organize a walk-a-thon or a run (1 mile, 5k) for employees. Participants get sponsors to pledge a total amount or per mile.

VIRTUAL FUNDRAISERS

1. **Spirit week** – Pay a set amount to virtually participate in things like Crazy Hair Day, Favorite Team/Jersey Day, Hat Day, Company Color Day... you get the idea! Raffle a prize at the end of the week for all who participate.
2. **Cooking lesson** – Find team members who have always wanted to host a cooking show; have them record or host a live cooking demonstration and charge “admission” (donations) to join the meeting or view the video link.
3. **Talent show** – Line up virtual performances from your most talented team members who play an instrument, sing, dance, do comedy, or have a special hidden talent. Charge “admission” to view, and vote on the winners with an extra donation.
4. **Department challenge** – Challenge internal departments with prizes for the most United Way campaign donors, highest increase in average gift, or first department to complete donations.
5. **Baby photos** – Have employees send their baby photos to be included in a virtual document or presentation; charge a small amount for each entry and challenge team members to match the photos. Send a prize to the person who matches the most!
6. **Cutest pet contest** – Post pet pictures on your intranet or send via email and have people vote with dollars on the cutest furry friends.
7. **Recipe exchange** – Have team members submit their favorite recipes to share in an electronic cookbook. Charge a set amount to “buy” the book.
8. **Lunchtime Bingo** – Send Bingo card documents and call numbers via Zoom/Teams. Charge for each card, and offer a prize for the winners.
9. **Candy count** – Send a picture of a packed candy jar and charge a small donation to guess the count. The winner will come back to their office with a big jar of candy!
10. **Home date night raffle** – Enter to win gift cards to a delivery service or local restaurants and a movie rental. Maybe add a delivery from a local winery or brewery, too!

INCENTIVES & COMPETITIONS

Sponsor contests that revolve around your campaign effort and offer incentives/prizes to contributors. These are examples of ideas that have been used successfully by other organizations.

During your campaign you can give employees extra incentives based upon their status, i.e.:

- For a returned pledge form – 1 drawing ticket
- For a new contributor – 1 drawing ticket
- For an increased gift – 1 drawing ticket
- Individual incentives – departments, divisions or “teams” of employees compete for top results and a group prize

OTHER IDEAS AND CONCEPTS

- “The Gift of Time” – ½ day or day off with pay (many variations).
- Raffle off the boss. Employees increasing their pledge or a new pledge receive a chance to win the boss and have them perform their job for one hour.
- Senior executive wears the same tie for one week. As company approaches its goal, the tie gets shorter each day to mark campaign progress.
- Challenge between departments based on % participation or % increase in giving or average gift.
- Gift for department coordinator who delivers best results.

FUNDRAISING DO'S AND DON'TS

Decide that this is the year to have fun by using special events and other creative activities in your organization’s campaign. Special events are FUN and are an excellent method of raising United Way awareness in your office. Review the guidelines listed below, discuss your plan with your United Way campaign representative and go for it.

DO

- Talk to contributors.
- Check out your ideas with your CEO.
- Something different to bring interest to your campaign.
- Solicit services and/or items from your co-workers.
- Use a special event to focus attention on the campaign—not as the total campaign effort.
- Use special events as frosting on the cake—to help you meet and exceed your “stretch” goal.
- Tie special events, where appropriate, to completed pledge cards . . . and encourage the use of payroll deduction.

DON'T

- Surprise your boss with a golf tournament on company time!
- Do “the same old thing.”
- Overlook the tried and true elements of a successful campaign—personal contact!
- Forget your well-planned employee solicitation campaign.