CAMPAIGN IDEAS

United Ways serving Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties

Creative Ideas to Spark Your United Way Campaign

United Ways serving Linn, Benton, & Lincoln Counties wants to help you help your community. We also want to help you make your workplace campaign as successful as possible. An innovative and fun campaign makes the job of the Campaign Coordinator more enjoyable, and creates increased awareness of United Way among your co-workers. So we've put together these ideas that will make a positive impact on your workplace campaign – ideas that will encourage more employees to participate and help increase the total dollars contributed to your overall campaign.

KICKOFF/ SPECIAL EVENTS / GAMES

50-50 Raffle Fundraising

50-50 raffle fundraising simply involves the sale of raffle tickets with the proceeds being split evenly between the winner and United Way. Your only fundraising expense is the raffle tickets (a double ticket roll, a single ticket roll that you tear in half or a board with the numbers for sale). Winners are always happy with a cash prize. All you need is one or more ticket sellers. Raffle tickets normally sell for $1 apiece, with an incentive for multiple purchases such as 3 tickets for $2, or 5 tickets for $4, etc. Using a price incentive for multiple tickets can often increase your total sales and builds a larger 'prize' to split with the lucky winner. All ticket stubs (or duplicate tickets or numbers, depending on your style of raffle tickets) are placed in a hat or other container from which one lucky number is drawn. The 'take' is tallied and one-half awarded to the holder of the lucky number.

A-Dollar-An-Inch Contest

Male executives participate in an all-day competition to end the day with the shortest tie. Employees who donate a dollar to the campaign cut an inch off their favorite guy's tie. Prizes are awarded for the shortest tie, the ugliest tie, etc.

Baby Picture Contest

Employees provide a baby photo of themselves, and staff guesses who is who. Those who want to guess must pay per guess. The person with the most correct guesses wins a prize.

Bake Sale/Bake Contest

Encourage employees to bake for a bake sale. All proceeds from items sold benefit your campaign. Have a "Top Chef" competition – between floors or departments; or have a contest – see who makes the best chocolate chip cookies, apple/pumpkin pie, or cheesecake.

Bakeless Bake Sale Fundraising

Send this letter to your members: You are invited to NOT bake a cake, pie, cookies, or brownies. You do NOT have to find the recipe. You do NOT have to shop for the ingredients. You do NOT have to mix. You do NOT have to cook. You do NOT have to cut. You do NOT have to wrap. You do NOT have to wash dishes. You do NOT have to clean up your kitchen. You do NOT have to deliver the baked product. You do NOT have to stand in the heat/cold/rain to sell the baked product. You can write a check for $10 to United Way and stay home and enjoy doing something yourself or with your family!

Balloon Pop

Employees donate prizes for this event – a variation of a traditional raffle. Before filling a balloon with air, put a note inside with the name of the prize. Employees pay $1 to buy a balloon and pop it to find out what prize they've won.

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Basket Raffle
Ask each department to sponsor, create and fill a theme basket (spa, chocolate, lottery, gourmet cooking, home improvement, entertainment, sports, night on the town, dog/cat oriented, kids/game oriented, etc.). Sell raffle tickets for $1 each or 6 for $5. Employees can select which basket or baskets they'd like to win.

Book Sale (also CDs, DVDs, videos)
Invite employees to donate books, CDs, DVDs, videos. Price paperbacks at $1, hardbacks at $2, CDs/DVDs/videos for up to $5.

Brown Bag Lunch Day
Encourage employees to bring their lunch to work one day, and to donate the money they would have spent had they gone out to lunch. Consider holding the brown bag lunch as a group event, and have a speaker or show a hit TV show or short movie.

Casual Day
Sell Casual Day badges entitling employees to dress casually on a pre-determined day. Be sure to define what "casual" means for your organization. Consider things like a jeans day, or a sports team themed day (wear team attire or colors). Monitor who has paid (who is entitled to dress casual) so only those who pay the casual day fee are eligible to participate. Depending on the nature of your business, you may want to post a flyer explain the reason for the casual attire to visitors/customers.

CEO Car Wash
Ask employees to donate $5 to have their cars washed by management. Charge extra for special services like cleaning the interior or polishing the rims.

Chili Cook-Off Contest
Ask employees to cook a favorite chili recipe and enter it into a cook-off contest. Invite employees to pay $5 for lunch (a sample of each chili dish). Each participant casts one vote for their favorite and the chili with the most votes wins a prize.

Classy Brown Bag Lunch
Charge a small fee for attendance at a series of brown bag lunch classes where attendees can learn a new skill (flower arranging, pottery painting), relieve stress (yoga, time management), or improve their health (exercise tips, heart healthy cooking). Ask a professional to donate their time.

Clothes Swap
We all have them, clothes we've purchased and never worn, with the price tags still on. Have employees donate those items (leave the tags on), then have a sale.

Coin Wars
Have each department find a large empty water bottle (or other container). Invite employees to drop in spare quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies. For a fun twist, designate quarters as "sabotage" and encourage competing departments to drop quarters into each other's bottles. At the end of the campaign, count coins and subtract quarters. The department with the most money wins a prize and all proceeds go to United Way.

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Company Carnival
Invite employees to an old-fashioned carnival, complete with a bake sale, bubble blowing, and 50 cent hot dogs. Have a hula hoop contest and hoop-shoot. Charge participants a fee to enter contests. Have a dunk tank with your favorite executives. Have a pie-throwing booth.

Company Olympics/Minute to Win It
Teams participate in Olympic or Minute to Win It type events, such as wastebasket paper ball free throws, balance a Styrofoam cup on a service tray while navigating an obstacle course, make a paper airplane and fly it the longest distance, make the longest paper clip or staple chain in one minute, fold and stuff letters/envelopes in one minute. Teams pay to participate and the company buys prizes or lunch for the winning team.

Compliment-O-Gram
Make up special recognition forms and sell them to employees as a way to give a compliment or say thanks to a fellow employee. Charge $1 per compliment ($2 if they wish to do so anonymously).

Craft Sale
Ask employees to donate handmade items. This popular activity gives everyone a chance to share hobbies.

Crazy Hat Day Fundraising (or Hair, Shoes, Etc.)
This is a simple fundraiser that is easy to do and works with all age groups. Select a day that staff can wear their craziest hat. Each person pays a fee and gets their hand stamped or wears a sticker to prove they paid. Winners are selected according to originality, creativity, and the hat that was most favored by co-workers. You can have a panel of judges or let everyone vote. Regardless, it's lots of fun! You can do the same with hair, shoes, etc.

eBingo
Sell Bingo cards for a small fee. Send emails sporadically throughout the week with one or two Bingo numbers each time. The first person to get Bingo should let everyone know by sending an email to all players (you'll need a Bingo specific email distribution list!). The winner receives a donated prize.

Employee Cookbook
Collect recipes from employees, and compile them into sections and into a cookbook. Sell the cookbook for a reasonable fee. Consider having an employee's child provide the cover artwork. Books can be printed and bound by a local business. This is such a popular fundraising idea that some organizations have not been able to provide enough cookbooks to meet the demand, so plan for an enthusiastic response! This would also be a great way to highlight the "Top Chefs" at your organization.

Employee Funniest Videos
Set up your own company "YouTube" site! Employees submit their funniest videos. Those who want to enter a video pay a fee, then all vote to choose the funniest!

Executive Prison
Transform an office into a jail cell. "Arrest" managers and executives and allow them to make telephone calls to their staff members to "bail" them out. All bail proceeds go to your United Way campaign.

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Executive Receptionist
Put together a board with head shot photos of company executives. Place an envelope below each photo for "votes". Employees purchase "votes" and put them in the envelope of the executive they want to see be the "receptionist". The executive receiving the most "votes" must serve as company receptionist for a predetermined period of time (one hour, one morning, one afternoon, one day, etc.).

Garage Sale
Employees donate items to sell (be sure to set parameters as to what types of items can be donated). Proceeds from items sold go to the United Way campaign.

Halloween Theme
How about a Halloween theme for your campaign this year? Have a pumpkin-carving or a Halloween costume contest. Charge a fee to enter and to vote. Award prizes for both in categories like most original, scariest, funniest, traditional, and best effort by group.

Las Vegas Day
Convert your office or cafeteria into a casino for the day. Conduct card, dice and wheel games. Provide food and drinks to sell during the event.

Miniature Golf
Create a two-hole course in a conference room to test the skills of your employees. The lowest score (which may be decided by a tiebreaker) will take home a tacky sports coat. Interested employees return an entry form, pay a nominal fee, and bring a putter the day of the event. A variation of this event would be to create a small gold course in the parking lot of your organization and use child-size clubs.

Scavenger Hunts
Invite employees to participate in a scavenger hunt requiring them to find unusual items from around the neighborhood or office buildings. For a fun twist you can "plant" items with selected employees for others to "discover." Organize in teams of four and charge an entrance fee. Award different points for various items. Teams have one hour to find items and accumulate as many points as possible. The entire team must be present at the end of one hour. If a team arrives late, assess a penalty of two points per minute (or fraction thereof). Award the team with the most points a special incentive or prize.

Silent Auction
Ask vendors to donate items, ask employees to donate handmade items, solicit gift certificates from local restaurants, etc. Put the items on display, online, or in a prominent location. At a designated time, close the bidding. Then let employees know of the highest bid and continue the auction with one hour left to outbid it to win it.

Sports Square Sale
Similar to the "squares" sold for the Super Bowl, create a "squares" grid specific to an upcoming professional football or basketball game and sell the squares. Price per square can vary – have some grids sell for $1 per square, others for $5 per square. Split the winnings between those with the winning squares for each quarter and United Way.

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Summer Picnic
Host a summer picnic with a grilled lunch for employees. Raise money by conducting raffles and including games for prizes, e.g., an egg relay, tricycle races, water balloon toss and tug-of-war. Obtain prizes from vendors and local companies.

Tailgate Party
Consider creating a sports theme for your campaign since the United Way campaign coincides with football season. Sell football fare from a truck in the parking lot "tailgate" style. Offer hot dogs, popcorn, peanuts, soft drinks and other goodies. Organize a tag football game, with participants donating an entry fee and observers wagering on the outcome.

Take a Day Off for United Way
Employees "buy" a vacation day. When employees choose to participate, their wages from the day's work are deducted from their paycheck. The organization may choose to match the amount deducted, with all proceeds donated to the campaign. This is a win-win situation: the organization achieves high participation, the employees get a vacation day and the community is helped.

Talent Show
Use your campaign theme to put on a talent show. Think "American Idol", "The Voice", "Dancing with the Stars", "America's Got Talent", and consider creating your own company version of one of those. Charge employees to participate, and also charge admission to the show. Sell popcorn for a snack.

Ticket Giveaways
Free tickets for movies, theater productions, amusement centers and other local attractions can be a pledge incentive. Encourage employees to pledge $2 per week by giving two movie passes to every employee who meets that challenge.

Trash or Treasure Raffle
Ask employees to bring at least one wrapped white elephant item…an unwanted, still usable (although not necessarily useful!) object from their home. All who donate can get a raffle ticket, and when their name is called, they can choose one of the mystery items. Raffle tickets can be sold for the remaining items. Don't forget to publicize the winners and their new treasures.

Turkey Giveaway
Use the Thanksgiving holiday as inspiration for special campaign events. Raffle off a turkey or a gift card for a local grocery store for use with Thanksgiving dinner.

Ugly Lamp Month
Use any white elephant (an ugly lamp works great) and offer the opportunity to purchase points to move the item to someone's work space or to 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.

Valet/Reserved Parking
Have management park employee cars and retrieve them at the end of the day. Prizes can be awarded for giving levels. Or auction off a prime parking spot – high bidders each get use of the spot for one week, or one month – you'll need to decide up front what will be most appealing to those bidding.

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INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION

- Time off from Work or "Leave Work Early" Passes
- Tickets to Games/Movies or local events
- Company T-Shirts
- Casual Day/Jeans Day
- Grocery Certificates
- Hotel Getaways
- Reserved/Covered Parking
- Dinner for Two
- Sleep-In Passes
- Gift Certificates (spa, gas station, grocery store, Amazon, etc)
- Trophy for Department with Highest Participation

** Ask your United Way rep for information on collecting community donations. United Way is happy to provide you and your organization with materials to help make collecting incentives from the community easy!*