THE GUIDEBOOK TO TOTALLY AWESOME UNITED WAY CAMPAIGNS
# Table of Contents

Overview..................................................................................................................Page 3  
Sample Vendor Donor Letter.......................................................................................Page 4  
Special Event Ideas ........................................................................................................Page 5  
  Low or No Cost Events ...............................................................................................Page 6  
  Major Events .................................................................................................................Page 8  
Employee Incentive Coupons .........................................................................................Page 9
Overview

Successful United Way campaigns have two things in common: good planning, and wide participation. The heart of fundraising are donations and pledges, but the cherry on top is the extra campaign fun and funds generated by hosting special events. Ask yourself these questions before planning your special event:

1. What do you hope to accomplish through the special event?
   - Create greater community understanding
   - Build morale
   - Increase volunteering
   - Raise money
   - Honor leadership givers
   - Reward team

2. What resources are available?
   - People
   - Materials
   - Incentives
   - Entertainment
   - Inspiration
   - Facility
   - Budget
   - Communication
Sample Vendor Letter

Dear (Vendor),

I am writing to local businesses that our organization and employees utilize seeking donations for our 2016 United Way of Treasure Valley campaign.

We will soon begin our fundraising campaign to help local children, families and individuals, and we would appreciate it if your organization would make a donation to our campaign. Your company's name and contribution will appear in all event publicity, creating an easy way to market yourself to others at our organization. A contribution is a great way to show your support for your community and will also be an added incentive for employees to contribute.

I will contact you next week to discuss how we can work together and to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind Regards,

Mary Smith, President & CEO
Campaign Kickoff Celebration Ideas

- Incorporating special events and speakers at your kickoff meeting will help energize your staff and build awareness of your United Way campaign.
- Be creative. And have fun!

Chocolate Kick Off Rally
- Excite their “sweet tooth” when kicking off your campaign. Print gold paper candy bar wrappers with the employee giving theme. Put the wrappers on chocolate bars and distribute at your kickoff.

Life is Not a Spectator Sport — Go the Distance
1. At the start of the campaign, hold a kickoff meeting explaining “touchdowns” (accomplishments of previous years), “penalties and receptions” (areas needing improvement), and “huddles” (ideas for the coming campaign).
2. To launch the campaign, hold a tailgate party in the parking lot or at a park. Arrange to have the party at the same time as a local softball game and cheer on your home team.
3. Throughout the campaign, hold sport-themed fundraisers such as a slam dunk/shootout contest, volleyball tournament, football toss, etc. Sports tickets make great prizes!

Special Event Ideas

Special events are your opportunity to add a little something extra to the campaign. Not only do they raise extra funding for United Way, but they can be instrumental in team development and great for company spirit. Use this as an opportunity to further educate your employees about United Way and most importantly, have FUN! Remember, not every special event has to be elaborate.
- Events should be strategically scheduled throughout the campaign to be most successful. Make it easy for employees to participate.
- Secure the support of upper management.
- Involve a team in the planning and implementation process.
- Remember, when planning special events, please stress that the support for the event is in addition to the individual campaign pledge.
**Little or No Cost Events**

**Desert Cart/Bakery Cart**
Wheel a cart of bagels, doughnuts, danishes, cookies, brownies etc. through the office, collecting United Way donations in exchange for the goodies. Everyone wants something sweet after lunch.

**Craft and Bake Sales**
This popular activity gives everyone a chance to share their hobbies and special baking talents. All items are donated, and sales go to the campaign.

**Chili Cook-Off Contest***
Employees cook their favorite recipe and enter into a cook-off contest. A panel of “chili experts” selects the Official Chili Champion. Talk to a hotel representative about donating a weekend stay at their hotel for the winner.

**Balloon Pop**
Employees donate prizes for this event – a variation of a traditional raffle. Before filling a balloon with helium, put a note inside with the name of the prize. Employees pay $1-$5 to buy a balloon and pop it to find out what prize they’ve won.

**Department Penny Wars**
Each department is designated a jar. Employees are encouraged to fill their own department’s jar with pennies, each equaling one point. Opposing departments may then add other coins to their jars that are equal to their value but in the negative (for example, a dime is minus 10 points). The department with the most positive points at the end of the week is awarded a prize.

**Employee Cookbook**
Collect and group recipes into a customized cookbook. Employees’ children create illustrations for the cookbook, including the cover. If possible, print and bind books by a local business, pro bono. You set the price.

**Employee Raffle***
Ask employees to contribute something special for a raffle prize:
- Homemade pies
- One-day vacation
- Lunch with a co-worker
- Prizes donated by vendors
- Car wash
- Tickets to a special event
- Employee Parking Spot

Employees make contributions using pledge forms. Employees turning in pledge forms early receive three raffle tickets. Employees turning in pledge forms after the “early” date, but before the campaign’s final event, receive one raffle ticket. Employees who make a certain dollar pledge receive two additional raffle tickets.

**Pumpkin Carving/Decorating Contest**
Plan a Halloween theme and hold a pumpkin carving contest. Find a local business willing to donate pumpkins for your organization to sell to your employees. Employees buy pumpkins for their families, their staff or to use in the contest. Employees enter carved or decorated pumpkins individually or by group. Charge $5 to enter and $1 to vote. Award prizes in various categories. Examples:
- Best traditional pumpkin
- Most creative pumpkin
- Best effort by a group
- Best effort by an individual
Little or No Cost Events

Silent Auction
Gather gift items and create bid sheets, being certain to provide a minimum bid for each item. Put together a book that shows all items so that everyone is able to see the items available. Tap into employees’ talents and resources for themed baskets.

Flowers
Work with a local florist to donate flowers that employees buy for $2 to send to co-workers or bring home for a special someone. For a special touch, have a couple of employees deliver the flowers in tuxedos.

Tricycle Races*
Create teams with three or four riders. 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) along a predetermined course through the office or outside. Have the course marked with signs or tape on the floor. Fans are able to watch and cheer. The race is designed as a relay. Team members pass off a flag, pinwheel, teddy bear or similar item to their succeeding team member. Remember to take pictures for the company newsletter.

Spelling Bee
Hold an event during staff meetings or lunch. Contestants pay a $5 entry fee. Gallery observers place $1 wagers on their favorite participants. The winner walks away with the coveted “Who Needs Spell Check” award.

Talent Show
Put on a talent show during lunch time. Have contestants pay a $5 entry fee.Observers pay $1 to attend the show. Make sure to have a panel of judges.

Pie in the Face
Employee pays $5 for a pie to be thrown in the face of the Executive of their choice.

Name that Tune
Employees pay $5 to participate. Contestants then go up against each other to test their knowledge of songs.

Walking Taco
Set up a cart with taco ingredients and have an employee push it around during lunch time for people to purchase and make their own tacos. Or, use a bag of Fritos and place meat and topping in the bag. Great for people that don’t have a long lunch break.

Sports Team Day
Have employees pay $1 (your choice) to be able to wear their favorite sports team apparel.

Jeans Day*
Have employees pay $1 (your choice) to be able to wear jeans to work for one day. Pay $5 if they want to wear jeans for a week.

Push Up Contest
Ever want to find out who is the strongest person in the office? Contestants pay a $5 entry fee. Observers pay $1 to wager on who they think will do the most push ups.

Jump Rope Contest
Contestants pay a $5 entry fee. Observers pay $1 to wager on who they think will jump rope for the longest amount of time.

* = Annual Favorite!
Major Events

Flashback Carnival
Invite employees to an old-fashioned carnival, complete with cake walks, bake sale, bubble blowing and 50 cent hotdogs. Hold a hoola-hoop contest and hoop shoot to really give it that flashback flavor. Set up a dunk tank with all your dunkable executives (charge $3 for three balls). Throw pies at all your favorite executives. Bean bag toss, $1 for 3 throws. Charge participants a fee to enter the contests.

CEO/Executive Car Wash*
Employees donate $5 to have their car washed at high noon by the “boss” in business clothing. Charge extra for special services like cleaning the interior or polishing the rims. Charge for pictures of the employee and the boss washing their car.

Pot Luck Luncheon
Participating employees bring a hot-dish, appetizer, salad, side, dessert, etc. to be shared. Paper products are also needed. There is no sign up for this event. Items brought are completely random. Employees pay $5 to fill their plate and sample everything in the room.

Casino Night
What are the ingredients for a successful Casino Night?
• Blackjack tables
• A Roulette wheel
• A Poker table
• One Bingo table
• Food and drinks
Invite employees and their families. Local businesses can donate prizes and items for winners. Many party rental stores have gaming tables that give casino night a real Vegas-like experience.

International Food Day
Employees team together to create tasty treats from around the world. Employees decorate their own booths/tables and dress in appropriate costumes. Hold the event over the lunch hour, allowing employees to purchase tickets redeemable for food at the booths. A panel of “celebrity” judges awards prizes.

* = Annual Favorite!
Thank you for helping children and people in the Treasure Valley through United Way.

**Call In Well**

Use this coupon and take a day off. It's a small way of saying thanks for your donation.

Thank you for helping children and people in the Treasure Valley through United Way.

**Call In Well**

Use this coupon and take a day off. It's a small way of saying thanks for your donation.

Thank you for helping children and people in the Treasure Valley through United Way.

**Call In Well**

Use this coupon and take a day off. It's a small way of saying thanks for your donation.

Thank you for helping children and people in the Treasure Valley through United Way.

**Call In Well**

Use this coupon and take a day off. It's a small way of saying thanks for your donation.
Thank you for helping children and people in the Treasure Valley through United Way.

Use this coupon and come to work a little later! It's a small way of saying thanks for your donation.

Use this coupon and wear jeans for a day. It's a small way of saying thanks for your donation.

Use this coupon and come to work a little later! It's a small way of saying thanks for your donation.
Thank you for helping children and people in the Treasure Valley through United Way.

Flee @ 3

Use this coupon and get off work early. It's a small way of saying thanks for your donation.
THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING UNITED WAY