

## Little Book of Fun Ideas

### Suggestions to Make Your United Way Campaign Fun and Successful

This booklet was created to help you interject some fun and team building activities into your company United Way Campaign. These suggestions can help your employees get involved while having a lot of fun along the way. We have put together some ideas from previous campaigns that have been very successful. You are welcome to try these ideas or tailor them to fit your company or organization.

Our experience shows that when these activities are used, it enhances team building and creates a sense of unity within the organization, while giving all of your employees an opportunity to partner with United Way of Kenosha County to find solutions to the most pressing problems in our community. We have also found that companies that plan fun activities along with their fundraising campaign have experienced a much higher success rate and have increased their percent of participation dramatically.

We invite you to pick and choose the activities and ideas that will help you plan your best campaign ever. We also encourage you to think outside the box and come up with your own great idea. A little planning and brainstorming can have terrific results and create a win/win situation for everyone.

The first step in successfully planning any campaign activity is to meet with your CEO or Director to seek their approval, and ultimately their “buy-in” for this activity. Leadership endorsement and participation will improve your chances of success and give you and your committee a rewarding and memorable experience too.



Please let us know how we can help you get started. We are willing to help you in any way we can.

**Good luck...and have a great  
time!**



# LIVE UNITED

## Fear Factor

Fear factor is a tried and true event that has been very effective in several local campaigns. The basic rules of the game are:

- Invite some of your managers or supervisors to be a part of the contest.
- Place their pictures on money jars
- Ask your employees to put money in the jar of the person they would like to see hold a snake, eat a salad smoothie, hold a tarantula, pick worms out of an aquarium, or whatever yucky thin you can think of (within reason).
- The manager with the most money has to do the dastardly deed.
- If the manager/supervisor doesn't want to do the deed, they can match the money in their jar and buy their way out.



## Penny War

In a penny war, the value of a penny is a positive one point. All other coins have a negative value in the denomination of the coin. For example, a jar has 100 pennies and 2 quarters. The score for that jar is:

- + 100 (penny points)
- 50 (less 2 quarters)
- + 50 (total points)



- Invite some of your managers or supervisors to be a part of the contest.
- Please their pictures on the money jars.
- Ask your employees to put pennies in the jar of the person, department head, or team leaders they would like to see win, and silver coins in the jar of the person they want to lose.
- Make sure to seal the jars so no changes to the coins can occur.
- All the money goes toward your Special Event total for your campaign.

*NOTE:* You can also do this as a coin war where employees drop their spare change in the jar with the coins as a positive and paper money as a negative.

## Blue Light Specials

Hold daily or weekly "Blue Light Special" rallies throughout your campaign. Have different divisions, departments, teams, etc. host each special. Serve pastries and juice and have information presentations at each special. Organize prizes and/or games at each event.



## Thank You Gram

This is a great way for your employees to raise money for United Way and also say thanks to a colleague for their hard work or friendship.

- Decide on a product you would like to sell such as flowers, candy, office supply baskets, coffee mugs with hot chocolate or instant coffee inside, bags of cookies or snack mix, balloon bouquets, etc.
- Recruit a committee of delivery people (can be your campaign committee).
- Put out an email or memo to all employees with an order form telling them that they can purchase a special thank you gift and have it delivered to their own special person in the office.
- Make sure you charge enough to make a profit which will be included in your Special Event money for your campaign, or ask if your company would like to donate the items as part of their United Way donation.
- Pick a special day and time to have your team deliver the gifts to the recipients.
- Attach a note with the gift explaining that this gift will also help provide funding for solutions to Kenosha County's most pressing problems or a special message of your choice, including the name of the special person that purchased the gift.



## Calendar Guy/Girl

- Have your employees pose in costumes
  - Suggestions:
    - Old west outlaw or saloon girls
    - 30's gangsters
    - Dr. Seuss
    - Children's clothes
    - Senior citizen clothes
    - Athletic uniforms
    - 80's clothes
- Create a backdrop with an old sheet, blanket, tarp, or old cloth of some kind.
- Have someone with a digital camera take their pictures.
- Create a simple calendar using the pictures you've taken (most offices have software for this).
- Sell the calendar with the proceeds going toward your United Way Special Event.
- You can also have "hunky guy or foxy lady" calendar with pictures of your employees.
- Just take regular pictures of "stars" in your office that had great achievements or awards.
- Use your imagination. The sky's the limit!



## Sports Themes

Choose your favorite sport and design your campaign around it. For example, using a baseball theme:

- Divide your employees or departments up by Major League baseball teams – Cubs, Red Sox, Brewers, Yankees, Mets, etc.
- Use baseball terminology such as innings, strikes, double play, etc. to describe activities.
- Teams can compete against each other by the amount of their pledges (this requires some careful thought when forming the teams).
- Award prizes to the winners such as tickets to baseball games. You could ask your company to purchase the tickets as part of their United Way contribution. You could also get tickets to a Brewers or Cubs baseball game or to the Skybox and include a night stay in Milwaukee depending on your budget for Special Events.
- You can use the same idea with football, hockey, golf, bowling, NASCAR, etc.



## Picture with your pet

Have a special day where employees can bring their pets to work and have their picture taken with them. Or, have your boss pose with the employee's pet. It could be a gold fish, pet rock, snake, gerbil, hamster, and of course the standard cat or dog. This activity will need to be approved by your CEO/manager.

- Animals can be dressed up for the occasion. You could gather some cute costumes ahead of time and have them available for the portrait. You might also provide some props like animal toys, etc.
- Provide a safe area for your set using a backdrop of a sheet, blanket, tarp, or large piece of fabric. It could be set up outside if the weather permits.
- Use a digital camera and print them out on a color printer to save time and money. Each employee pays a fee to get the portrait. Make sure you charge enough to cover your expenses and still make a profit for your United Way Special Event.
- Ask the boss or manager if he/she would be willing to pose with the pet for the pictures.
- If you have someone in your company that is an amateur photographer or has a friend that is good at taking pictures that would be helpful, but not absolutely required.



## Scavenger Hunt

A scavenger hunt requires some preparation and several people to help, but it is great fun and is a good way to get 100% participation. It can be confined to your office, or, if approved, can be expanded to all over the city or county. Make sure you have approval before pursuing this special activity. It is a great opportunity to educate your employees about United Way.

- Divide your employees up into teams and give each team a fun name.
- Have your committee decide the scope of your hunt, i.e. confined to the office, confined to the city, etc.
- Write down all the rules of the game and review them with the group before the hunt starts.
- Place items in pre-selected locations in obvious view.
- Create clues for each team that forces them to figure out where the item is. You can make the places United Way partner agencies which is a great way to educate your people on what United Way is all about.
- Ask each team to pay an entry fee (optional).
- The first team to retrieve all the items and return them to the office wins a prize.
- Come up with your own variations such as:
  - The team must correctly count all the money in a jar before they can move on to the next locations.
  - They must buy one can of food to be taken to the next location (can be a food bank).



NOTE: Because of the nature of this activity, it can be dangerous if people drive or run too fast from location to location. **MAKE SURE YOU MAKE ONE OF THE RULES – NO SPEEDING!** Make sure they know they can be disqualified if they are caught exceeding the speed limits, especially in school zones, etc.

## A Dollar an inch contest

Engage executives in an all-day competition to end the day with the shortest tie. Employees cut an inch off their favorite executive's tie each time they donate to United Way. Have prizes for the shortest tie, ugliest tie, etc.



## Casual Day

Sell casual day badges (as easy as labels) allowing employees purchasing them to dress casual on certain days. Badges can be purchased for an amount and added to their payroll pledge or paid for in cash. Define what is meant by casual to avoid confusion.



Invite your employees to “go crazy” during casual days. Designate days for Crazy Days such as “Stupid Hat Day”, “Silly Socks Day”, “Flip Flop Day”, etc.

## Cook Off

You undoubtedly have a few amateur chefs on your staff who love to cook. Have a cook-off featuring the food of your choice – could be lasagna, pies, casseroles, chili, soup, cake, barbeque, cookies or candy.

- Have your committee set up the rules of the cook-off being very specific about ingredients, amounts, time limits, etc.
- What qualities you are looking for along with judging criteria (hottest, spiciest, creative, healthiest, etc.).
- Each participant could pay an entry fee to compete (optional).
- Have all of the food prepared and completed by noon.
- Have all of the employees sample the food and vote for the best one. Provide ballots and a ballot box for voting.
- Award prizes to the winners and serve the food as a luncheon.
- You could add other items such as carrot sticks, salad, relish trays, and drinks to complete the meal.
- Charge employees for the meal with the proceeds going toward your Special Event United Way campaign.



## Baby Baby who are you?

Ask your employees to bring a baby picture of themselves and display the baby pictures in the break room or in a display case if you have one.

- Number each picture
- Create a voting ballot with the picture numbers and a line for each. Include the rules of the game and potential prizes on the ballot.
- The voter will identify employee and record them on their ballot. Include a list of participating employees to match up.
- The voter will pay an entry fee for each ballot (\$1 each, five for \$4, or whatever you choose).
- You can vote as many times as you wish.
- The person who gets all the answers correct (or has the most answers correct) wins a prize.
- If there are multiple winners, the names will be drawn out of a hat for prizes.



## Silent Auction

A silent auction is always a simple way to raise money and have a lot of fun too.

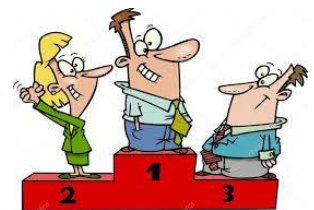
- Ask your employees to donate items to be sold at your silent auction.
- Suggestions for items:
  - Baked item (cake, pie, cookies, lasagna, cinnamon rolls, banana or zucchini bread).
  - Services such as clean your house, wash your windows, mow your lawn, clean your garage.
  - Hand crafter items such as quilts, pillows, bird house, wood working, jewelry, painting or art work, pottery, ceramics.
  - Items can be purchased such as gift certificate for massage, gift card, tea set, CDs, DVDs, dolls.
- Put items on display for a few days in a secure area.
- Provide a bid sheet for each item with a full description (including limitations or exclusions) with lines for each bid. We suggest bids be in a minimum of \$1 increments.
- Post the deadline for bidding and make sure someone is there to shut down the bidding. The time of the deadline should be announced at about 30 minutes prior with a page or email to everyone.
- Plan a luncheon or potluck and announce the winner after the meal.
- A variation on this idea is have all bidding done by email in a kind of “e-bay” fashion. This will require the help of your IT department and could eliminate those who don’t have access to a computer, but it is REALLY fun if it works out for your company.



## Office Olympics

Office Olympics will test the skills of your office staff. This game will require your employees to do every day office tasks as a race with the winning team receiving a grand prize.

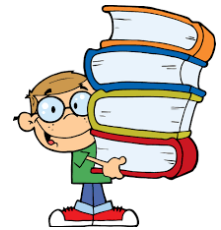
- Have your office sign-up for a team (or you can create the teams) making them as diverse in skills as possible. Make sure each team has a fun name.
- Create an obstacle course in the lunchroom, several offices, several floors of the office, or outside.
- Each station will require a specific skill such as:
  - Typing a memo accurately (deductions for typos!) in a certain amount of time.
  - Filing a stack of paperwork correctly (again, deductions for mis-files) in a certain amount of time.
  - Make a pot of coffee in the breakroom.



- Make a telephone call to get specific information such as flight times, bus schedules, scores from yesterday's baseball game.
- Create a spreadsheet with a specific set of instructions.

## Book Sales

Invite employees to donate books they've read and get great deals from other employees. Encourage employees to bring their donations in early. Sell paperback for \$1 and hard cover for \$1.



Have a company bring a book fair to your business; Employees can buy books and donate them back to United Way children's programs.

## Executive Chair Race

Set up a relay course for executives to go through sitting in chairs. Use a stop watch to time contestants and give prizes to those with the best times. Observers can wager \$1 or more on their favorite contestants.



*NOTE:* This activity can also be done using children's tricycles. The contestants can decorate their bikes and race around the building or parking lot with observers wagering money on who will win.

## Tailgate Party

Create a sports theme for your campaign to coincide with football season. Back a truck close to the employee lounge or in the parking lot close to the employee exit, lower the tailgate, and sell football fare:

- Hamburgers/cheeseburgers
- Hot dogs
- Chips
- Soft drinks
- Peanuts



Play a game of tag football with participants donating an entrance fee and observers wagering bets.



## Hold a Carnival

Try a carnival theme with free hot dogs, soda, and chips or popcorn. Employees try their luck at games like ring toss, hula-hoop contest, hoop-shoot contest, and the fishpond. You can even include a dunk tank selling 3 balls for \$3 to dunk a manager or throwing pies at an executive charging \$1 per pie. Include entertainment and art displays from youth projects or employees.



## Low Budget but Fun Ideas

### Treasure Hunt

Prepare United Way messages on small strips of paper and attach them to give away items (pens, pins, etc.). Hide the items all over the building (places where everyone goes like bathrooms, break room, cafeteria, etc.). When that item is returned to the Employee Campaign Ambassador (or volunteer group) the employee can receive a candy bar or your name is placed in a drawing for a prize. You would need to prepare posters letting everyone know or send email blasts.



### Crossword Puzzle

Create a crossword puzzle with United Way answers. Place a display of information about United Way in a common area (lunch room, break room, etc.). The answers to the crossword will be in that material. When someone completes the crossword puzzle correctly, their name can be entered to win a prize.



### Designate the best parking space

Designate the best parking space in the parking lot as a United Way space. Names of givers are entered into a drawing to win that space. The employee who wins could park there for a week/month/two weeks/etc. This could be a drawing done every month for the whole year.



## Sleep In or Vacation Day

Givers can be entered to win a Sleep In Day or a Vacation Day. They would be allowed to show up to work late. Or leave early, without pay being docked or take a vacation day without using personal time.



## America's Funniest Office Video Party

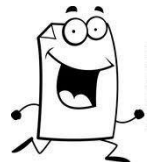
Find an employee who can volunteer to bring in their video camera to take candid video footage around the office. Schedule a short meeting in a conference room to show the video to your employees. Sell tickets, soda, and popcorn and donate the proceeds to your Special Events United Way campaign. If the video is a big hit, perhaps hold an opportunity drawing of a copy or sell duplicates.



## Humorous or Informative Payroll Stuffers

Prepare fun messages on small strips of paper and stuff them into payroll checks or place on employees desks on pay day. Some ideas:

- Have donuts available in a common area (break room, cafeteria, etc.) with a sign that says "DOUGHNIT" Make Sense to Give to United Way.
- Hand out pennies with a note that says "It Makes Cents to Give to United Way"
- Give a small candle with a note that says "You Can Light Up a Life".
- Give a roll of Lifesavers candy with a note that says "Be a Lifesaver; Give to United Way".



## Ugly Shirt Contest

Contestants pay \$5 to enter the best Ugly Shirt contest. Place voting boxes in various places around the office and charge \$1 per vote (optional). Employees can vote as many times as they want for their favorite Ugly Shirt. Have a parade of contestants, offering a last chance to vote at the end of the day. The employee with the most votes wins a prize.



## Balloon Pop Game

Get prizes donated by area businesses, from movie tickets to lunches to certificates for free hamburgers, or other inexpensive prizes such as candy bars or suckers. Place



pieces of paper inside balloons with the prize name. You may or may not want to have a prize in each balloon. Sell balloons for the dollar amount of your choice (e.g., average is \$3 - \$5 each). People pop balloons to see what they won.

## Cake Walk

Have employees donate baked goodies such as cakes, cupcakes, cookies, etc. Place numbered pieces of paper on the floor corresponding to the number of cakes or baked goodies in the event. Play music like musical chairs and when the music stops, draw a number from a jar. The person standing on that number wins their choice of goody.



## CEO Car Wash

Employees donate \$5 to have their car washed at high noon by their “boss” in business clothing. Charge extra for special services like cleaning the interior or polishing the rims. Charge for Polaroid photos of the employees and the boss washing their car.



## Spelling Bee

Hold a spelling bee contest, charging \$5 entry fee. Galley observers place \$1 bets on their favorite participants. Present the winner with a special reward.



## Turkey Bowling

Set up a bowling alley in the parking lot or hallway. Get a small frozen turkey or Cornish game hen or chicken to use as a ball (the loser gets the used turkey). Charge \$5 for entry and observers can bet \$1 on their favorite participant (optional). The winning person or team gets a prize.



## Paper Airplane Flying Contest

Have employees make an airplane by folding the same size paper or building one at home and bringing it into work. Charge \$1 per entry. Set winner categories for plane that flies the farthest, straightest, most loops, and best decorated.



## Employee Cookbook

Collect and group recipes and helpful household hints into a customized cookbook. Ask employees to have their children create illustrations for the cookbook including the cover. You can use binders and three-hole punched colored sheets of paper to house the recipes and hints. Sell cookbooks for \$5-\$10.



## Executive Prison

Transform an office into a jail cell. Next round up your prisoners (the usual suspects). “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 Special Events United Way campaign.



## Karaoke Party

Participants pay \$2 to enter and are given a list of songs and a pledge form in advance. Participants ask employees to support them by pledging an amount of money. At the event, have a big box of funny hats, boas, and other costume items available for participants to use. Pass the hat at the part to receive even more pledges.



*NOTE:* A variation on this activity is “Executive Karaoke”. Employees pay money for executives to get up and sing the song of their choice. Videotape the event and sell copies as well.

## Incentive and Prize Ideas

- Traveling trophy for department with highest participation
- Chair massage
- Lunch or dinner with the CEO
- Gift baskets or goodie bags
- A two-hour lunch break
- Job swap (boss does winner’s job for a day)
- Gift certificates donated by local businesses
- Mugs, t-shirts, key chains, water bottles, etc. with company logo

- Lottery tickets
- Employee-designed t-shirts
- Medals or blue ribbons for winners
- Hall of Fame plaque or name on a star in the hallway
- Provide gift certificates for free coffee for a week
- Randomly choose from pledge cards and provide gift certificates to local restaurants for those who turn in pledge cards by a certain date (cards must include a pledge amount)
- Provide ice cream/popsicle treats to employees and consider having the boss(es) serve it.
- Car started and windows scraped every snow day in January.
- Complimentary hotel stay
- Computers – new or gently used
- Free babysitting
- Free oil change
- Movie passes
- Tickets to local sporting events

## Saying Thank You

During and after a successful campaign, it's important to say "thanks" to all the employees, who volunteered their time and energy to help run. Here are some ideas to convey your gratitude:

- Host a "thank you" breakfast or luncheon at a local restaurant or have management cook food on office premises.
- Develop a bulletin board featuring your employees' efforts: hang a giant thank you card, post a thank you from an agency or develop a collage of photos of your employees doing volunteer work or helping with the campaign.
- Spend a few minutes at the next staff meeting during which your CEO can congratulate employees and acknowledge campaign workers.
- Start the day on the right foot by delivering coffee and pastries to each employee's desk.
- Run a "thank you" ad in your company newsletter.
- Hand out pens, hats, t-shirts, or notepads with your company logo on them.
- Insert "thank you" notes with pay checks or pay stubs.
- Distribute candy with a personalized note from management.
- Display thank you messages on computer screens, bulletin boards, voice mail, etc.



Make sure to also thank all employees who donated to the United Way campaign. It doesn't matter if someone gave a little or a lot, we are so grateful for their support and want them to be thanked. Here are some ideas, but be as creative as you like!

- Send out "Thank You" emails, notes, cards, or letters.
- Post "Thank You" flyers in high traffic areas.
- Throw a pizza party.
- Bring in donuts with a large sign that says "We could not have DONUT without YOU!"
- Have a special lunch for your Leadership Givers
- Put a piece of candy on each person's desk.
- Most importantly, REMEMBER TO REPORT FINAL CAMPAIGN RESULTS TO EMPLOYEES.

## Looking for More Ideas?

If you are looking for more ideas, need help, or have any questions on your campaign, please contact United Way of Kenosha County at [info@kenoshaunitedway.org](mailto:info@kenoshaunitedway.org) or call 262-658-4104.