



## Special Events

Special events create excitement and awareness for your campaign. They are a good complement to your campaign but should never be a replacement for pledge form canvassing.

Some things to consider when planning a special event:

- What would we like to accomplish with this event? Raise money? Raise awareness? Boost employee morale?
- Have we tried this event in the past? Was it successful? How many employees participated? How much money did it raise?
- What is our financial goal for this event?
- How much time will be required to organize the event? What other resources are required, i.e. money, equipment, volunteers, etc.
- Who will organize the event?
- Where will the event be held?
- How will the event be publicized?
- Is special approval or a license required?
- Is a back-up plan or rain date required?

Special events should take place after the initial employee canvass because small donations at a Special Event (a \$2 cookie at a bake sale) should not replace pledge form donations (\$2/pay).

## Special Events – putting the fun in *fundraising*

Special Events are a fantastic way to create awareness, infuse your workplace with energy, and boost employee morale. They certainly can raise money, but the real value in special events is the excitement and momentum they create for your annual United Way workplace campaign.

<b>Agency Speaker</b>	Arrange for a member of United Way's Speakers' Bureau to attend a departmental meeting or coffee break. Most presentations take about 10 minutes and it's a great way to learn about our community.
<b>Agency Tours</b>	Arrange for your workplace committee, canvassers or small groups of employees to tour United Way agency partners see first-hand the work they do in our community. Tours take as little as 30 minutes.
<b>Auctions (Services)</b>	Auction your employees' special talents as prizes. Guitar lessons, cook dinner, valet parking, or buying & delivering coffee everyday for a week for example.
<b>Auctions (Silent/Live or Email)</b>	Employees and/or departments and/or union locals can donate baskets or prizes to the auction. Employees write their bid on a bidding sheet (Silent/email), or have a Guest Auctioneer and use paddles to bid (Live).
<b>Bake / Book / Garage Sale</b>	Always fun to shop! All proceeds donated to United Way.
<b>BBQ Lunch or Breakfast</b>	Executive Chefs serve breakfast or lunch to kick off your campaign. Arrange for someone from United Way to come and join in the fun.
<b>Bowling</b>	At the end of the hall or playing the real thing.
<b>Carnival / Mardi Gras /Vegas</b>	Employees pay to play a variety of games and/or they can win "starter" chips with every \$5, \$10, etc. pledge made.
<b>Car Race / Horserace</b>	Build a large display of a racetrack with cars or horses representing each department. Cars/horses will advance around the track as dollars and/or participation rates increase in each department.
<b>Car Wash</b>	Executives and volunteers wash cars in the company parking lot over the lunch hour to maximize employee participation. Charge a flat minimal fee.
<b>Casual / Jean Days</b>	Charge a donation fee to wear jeans on Friday or free when you return your pledge form.
<b>Celebration</b>	Hold a Celebration at the end of your campaign to thank all your volunteers and donors and celebrate your success!
<b>Chili Cook-off</b>	Co-workers compete for bragging rights for the best chili! Charge a small fee per bowl and include rolls for lunch.
<b>Coffee Cart</b>	Executives and/or Canvassers hand out free coffee and/or donuts as they distribute pledge forms and brochures. This event is great for workplaces that employ shift workers or those who can't leave their desk for traditional events.
<b>Cookbook</b>	Compile a cookbook of employee recipes and sell to raise money for United Way.
<b>Crossword Puzzle</b>	To create awareness, generate a crossword puzzle using clues and answers from United Way's website. Award small prizes to the person who answers all questions correctly.
<b>Dance Lessons</b>	Talented employees offer to teach dance, yoga or aerobic lessons for a small fee with all proceeds to United Way.
<b>Day of Caring</b>	Help out at a United Way agency during the week or on a weekend. Jobs may include painting, building a fence, planting gardens, BBQ's, etc. These can be arranged by United Way.
<b>Dress Up Days</b>	Wear RED for United Way or dress according to a specific theme to build energy and excitement.
<b>Dunk Tank</b>	Employees pay a small fee to dunk their favourite Executive! Yes, you can rent Dunk Tanks!
<b>Elevator Toll</b>	Charge a toll for anyone using the elevator on a particular day of the campaign. Hand out "tickets" with United Way facts to create awareness while raising money at the same time.

## Employee Campaign Co-ordinator Handbook

<b>Jail &amp; Bail</b>	Employees pay a small bail to free their favourite Executive from "jail"! Advertise all proceeds to United Way.
<b>Lunch</b>	Executive Chefs serve lunch to kick off your campaign.
<b>Lunch &amp; Learn</b>	Leading up to your campaign, offer free information sessions during the lunch hour. Arrange for an Agency Speaker to present. Encourage employees to bring their own lunch.
<b>Office Olympics or Mini-Golf</b>	Schedule noon hour events each day during your campaign to promote team spirit and encourage inter-departmental competition. Charge a flat fee per team and donate proceeds to United Way.
<b>Piggy Bank Challenge</b>	Groups decorate piggy banks. Have a best dressed pig competition or fattest pig with the most dollars. Piggy banks then used for employees to drop-off their change during campaign. Alternately, have collection jars beside cash registers or vending machines and collect donations all year long.
<b>Pie Throwing Competition</b>	Pay to throw a pie in your favourite Executive's face!
<b>Pizza Night</b>	Free pizza for that 2 am shift. Arrange an Agency Speaker to raise awareness (yes, even at 2am!).
<b>Potluck Lunch</b>	Promotes team spirit.
<b>Scavenger Hunt</b>	Schedule during the noon hour to promote team spirit and encourage inter-departmental competition. Charge a flat fee per team and donate proceeds to United Way.
<b>Shoe Shine</b>	Executives shine shoes in exchange for a small donation.
<b>Spelling Bee</b>	Employees vs. Management. Use United Way words (messaging, agency names, etc.), to create awareness and promote team spirit.
<b>Talent Show / Karaoke</b>	Encourage employees to compete for the title of "Workplace Idol". Executives or Local Celebrities can guest judge.
<b>Themed Events</b>	Coincide your campaign and/or event with the current season or holiday (Back to School, Thanksgiving, Halloween).
<b>Trivia</b>	Include questions about United Way and your own workplace campaign to create awareness. Award a prize to the person who answers all questions correctly.
<b>Ugly Sweater Day / Ugly Tie Day</b>	Employees can vote on their favourite (or "ugliest"), use as a fun event.
<b>Video Game Tournament</b>	Individuals or teams pay to play faves like Guitar Hero, Rockband and Wii Olympics. Teams can dress the part.

Offering free admission, charging a *minimal fee* for special events is a great way to ensure employees still have the capacity to support the annual campaign and help you reach your goal.

Better yet, why not use the donor's completed pledge form as an entry ticket to a special event!

### Nickel-and-dimed vs. pledge-based

**Nickel-and-dimed:** Betty pays \$5 to enter a Jays game draw, \$8 for raffle tickets, and \$2 for dress down Fridays. Since Betty has already made 3 donations she does not submit a pledge form.  
Total donation = \$15

**Pledge-based:** Betty fills out her pledge form to get an All Access Passport, which includes an entry into the draw, 5 raffle tickets, and access to dress down Fridays. Betty pledges \$1/day = \$365 gift and freely enjoys all the fun

**Extra impact for our community = \$350!**

Give. Volunteer. Act.