

## Strategies for Retaining & Increasing Donors!

One of the primary objectives of almost every employee campaign is to retain and increase donors. Here is a list of suggestions to help you accomplish this in your workplace:

**\*\*\*\*Improve Your Canvasser Training:** Make sure you are sending out the most enthusiastic, well-prepared team possible. Insist all canvassers attend training and work with your United Way staff support person.\*\*\*\*

**Face-To-Face Canvassing:** People give to people, so make sure that employees are personally “asked” to support the campaign - either one-to-one by a canvasser or during the course of a group canvass meeting.

**Focus on Retaining Donors:** Let past donors know the impact of their donations. Make sure that people feel good about giving by thanking them for their gifts.

**Hold a Team Planning Session:** A Team Planning session facilitated by United Way will save you time and help you develop creative and effective strategies for retaining and increasing donors.

**Recruit a Representative Campaign Committee:** The people you recruit should reflect the general make-up of your organization, i.e., people from labour, management, support staff, each department/floor, various ethnic/cultural backgrounds, etc. If you already have a committee, identify areas with potential for increasing donors and actively recruit a committee member to ensure representation from all areas.

**Secure Visible Management Support:** Ensure that representatives from senior management/labour leadership are present at all key meetings and events.

**Ensure that Middle Management is on Side:** Present the campaign plan at management meetings. Have your CEO issue a memo outlining how she/he plans to participate in the campaign and listing the ways that other members of the management team can get involved.

**Set a Participation Goal and Declare it Publicly:** You may even want to build it into your campaign theme. Alternatively you can publicize the number of donors you are aiming for.

**Personalize all Pledge Cards:** It is much more difficult to ignore a form that has your name on it than one that is generic.

**Focus More on Pledge Card Canvassing:** (particularly on leadership and payroll deduction) and less on special events.

**Give Every Employee the Opportunity to Participate:** Ensure that all employees are being asked for their support (i.e., part-time, contract, unionized, management, support staff, shift workers, home-based workers, retirees, new hires, field employees, etc.).

**Regain Lapsed Donors:** If possible, Identify employees who did not donate last year, but did contribute in the past. Approach them and find out why they didn't contribute - it could be that they just weren't asked.

**Welcome New Donors:** Develop a special “welcome program” for new donors. This could involve a special “thank you draw for first-time donors”, a special thank you letter or a personal thank you from a long-time donor.

**Ask for 100% Return of Pledge Cards:** Request that all employees return their pledge cards whether or not they decide to donate. This will simplify tracking, help maintain confidentiality and likely result in some additional donations.

**Offer Early Bird Incentive Prizes:** This is a great incentive for donors to submit their pledge cards by a specified deadline. (One of the most popular incentives is a draw for time off work with pay or free parking for a specified length of time if employees generally pay for parking).

**Re-Canvass:** If you don't get the results you expected the first time around, then re-canvass employees using some of the techniques described in the Best Practices section of this guide.

**Implement a Participation Challenge** between departments, floors or locations within your organization, or challenge another organization within your industry/sector.