

HOW TO BRING  
**YOUR**  
UNITED WAY  
CAMPAIGN  
**TO LIFE**  
GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.  
**LIVE UNITED**™



# IDEAS TO BRING YOUR UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN TO LIFE

**DID YOU KNOW?** The most successful campaigns use more than one way to reach their employees. It is said for someone to really get a message, they need to hear it at least three times. There are a variety of ways to communicate the work of United Way through communications, events and promotions.

- KICKOFF EVENTS
- COMMUNICATIONS
- FUNDRAISING EVENTS
- GAMES
- INCENTIVES

## PLAN AND IMPLEMENT A GREAT KICKOFF EVENT

*Your kickoff event can help generate enthusiasm and support for the campaign.*

- Make sure your CEO and senior management can attend.
- Kick the campaign off at an all-staff meeting already on the calendar (this prevents employees from having to attend an additional meeting or rearrange their schedules).
- Use the theme LIVE UNITED, educate your peers by showing the United Way video, inviting United Way speakers, and having your management and union representatives endorse the campaign.
- If your company has multiple shifts, make sure to plan a kickoff for other shifts, too (United Way staff is happy to help – no matter what time of the day or night!)
- Promotional items (at the kickoff, you may wish to distribute promotional items such as pins, coffee mugs, balloons or other items...many companies order a few items and distribute through a prize drawing during the event. To order United Way items, visit [unitedwaystore.com](http://unitedwaystore.com) or talk to your local premium vendor).

## SUGGESTED AGENDA FOR CAMPAIGN KICKOFF

1. Welcome participants and provide support for United Way (CEO/senior executive) – 3 minutes
2. Tell “how I LIVE UNITED” story (company employee who shares their story) – 2 minutes
3. Talk about United Way’s work (United Way campaign staff or company campaign coordinator) – 5 minutes
5. Thank leadership givers (CEO/senior executive) – 3 minutes
6. Show video – 4 minutes
7. Make the ask and explain options (campaign coordinator) – 4 minutes
8. Conclude the event with a heartfelt thank you – 1 minute

### ADDITIONAL IDEAS FOR A PIZZAZZ-FILLED KICKOFF

- Music options for your high-energy rally: We Belong (Pat Benetar), You Get What You Give (New Radicals), What's Going On (Marvin Gaye), Waiting on the World to Change (John Mayer), One Love (Bob Marley), Beautiful Day (U2), Feel United (Junior Senior).
- Décor ideas: Logos, posters, banners, United Way podium sign, LIVE UNITED balloons, large screen with LIVE UNITED portraits.
- Other activities: As employees arrive to the meeting, distribute pledge forms and campaign materials.
- Food brings people: Offer refreshments, breakfast, lunch or coffee.
- After the meeting: Remember to follow up with absent and part-time employees to ensure they have the opportunity to give.

### COMMUNICATE

*Keep employees informed about the progress of your campaign, and share the final results with them*

- Announce winners of various contests, games and incentives, as they encourage more people to get involved
- As each employee fills out a pledge form, give him/her a LIVE UNITED sticker. Encourage employees to wear the stickers or to place them on their badges
- Conduct a United Way “blitz” by placing information in each employee’s mailbox
- Create a United Way screen savers
- Create special displays
- Display posters on company bulletin boards
- Host a United Way information table in the company cafeteria
- Include a United Way message with your employee paychecks
- Include United Way information and pledge form with the new hire orientation program you conduct
- Include United Way information with payroll envelopes
- Place a link on your company’s website to United Way ([unitedwayelc.org](http://unitedwayelc.org))
- Place a thank you banner in your lobby
- Post an honor roll of campaign contributors
- Post an honor roll of campaign volunteers
- Post signs in employee restrooms
- Promote United Way during regular staff meetings
- Thank you [unitedwayelc.org](http://unitedwayelc.org) to donors who give a 100% undesignated gift of \$156 (\$3 per week) or more annually to United Way
- Provide United Way information on your intranet site
- Publish regular articles in your company’s newsletter
- Share employee testimonials with your staff. Highlight employees who have been helped by United Way-funded programs as well as employees who volunteer in the community
- Share information about the campaign through your email system
- Share stories through your internal newsletter
- Show the campaign video on display screens throughout the office
- Showcase your campaign effort on your company’s website
- Showcase your progress, internally and externally, on campaign thermometers
- Telephone calls and voicemail messages
- Toot your own horn. Let everyone know how you’re doing
- Use PowerPoint slides as part of a campaign presentation
- Utilize your company’s inter-office mail to distribute campaign information and reminders

## IDEAS TO BRING YOUR UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN TO LIFE continued

### LIVE UNITED

- Demonstrate how your employees LIVE UNITED: Take photos of your employees in the LIVE UNITED shirts, and ask them to share how they LIVE UNITED...by giving, advocating and volunteering.

### GAMES AND COMPETITIONS

*Games and contests can raise funds, create awareness, motivate employees to get involved, promote team spirit and set the stage for your employee fundraising campaign.*

- American Idol Contest
- Baby photo match game
- Basket auction
- Bingo
- Board games (create a custom game about United Way modeled after Monopoly, Life, Twister, Chess, Scrabble or other favorite games)
- Bowl-a-thon
- Children's drawing contest
- Chili cook-off
- Colleagues UNITE! Host team trivia contest during lunch. Quiz the teams about their knowledge of United Way facts
- Company olympics
- Create crossword puzzles with campaign clues
- Cubicle decorating contest
- Email trivia game
- Football toss
- Golf tournament
- Guess how many jelly beans in the jar
- Hold a poster coloring contest for children and grandchildren of employees
- Hold an E-Z bake oven cook-off
- If your company has an atrium area, hold an airplane toss contest. The person close to the United Way marker wins. Or, you can have employees throw the planes through hula hoops.
- Jeopardy, Trivial Pursuit, other favorite games
- Miniature Golf Tournament (encourage departments to set up challenging courses or set up the game through hallways and conference areas)
- Mini-Indy 500 (rent or borrow remote controlled cars)
- Olympics
- Pet picture match Game (match employee pet photos with their owners)
- Pie eating contest
- Ping pong-a-thon
- Reality campaign (tie to reality TV shows...Weakest Link putt-putt contest, Who Wants to Be a Millionaire trivia, etc.)
- Scavenger hunt
- Spelling bee
- Sports challenges (volleyball, softball, touch football, basketball)
- Sumo mania
- Survivor
- Tricycle race
- Video game tournament
- Wii tournament

## IDEAS TO BRING YOUR UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN TO LIFE continued

### HOST SPECIAL FUNDRAISING EVENTS

*Keeping everyone excited about your United Way campaign is vital to its success. Special activities are a great way to have fun, boost awareness about United Way and raise more funds for your campaign.*

- Academy Awards
- Auctions (online, silent or group. Consider opening your auction to vendors and customers. Ask people and vendors to donate items for auctions or prize drawings)
- Back to school (collect supplies for United Way)
- Bake sale
- Be a Lifesaver (have some fun, beach style! Sand, sunglasses, beach balls and the Beach Boys music make your office feel like you're at the beach. Employees who donate are awarded life preserver vests or stickers and Lifesavers candies)
- Be an Everyday Superhero (at a luncheon, serve hero sandwiches, power bars, PowerAde, Wheaties and Superman ice cream, show old superhero movies)
- Campaign wrap-up event (consider a thank you breakfast, lunch or dinner, a barbecue or picnic, ice cream social or victory rally)
- Car washes
- Casino night
- Casual day passes
- Celebrate United Way through the seasons (Halloween, Oktoberfest, Thanksgiving, etc.)
- Circus
- Company Jail 'n Bail (employees volunteer to be locked up in a makeshift jail. From their cells, the volunteers call co-workers and urge them to complete pledge forms. The pledge forms are used as bail)
- Cooking demonstration
- Employee cookbook
- Employee or Family Carnival (be sure to include a dunk tank for executives)
- Fashion shows
- Fishing
- Have Food? They'll Follow! (Popular food-related events include Hawaiian luau, African safari, ice cream social, tailgate party, barbecue, breakfast with champions, Olympics, wine tasting, waffle/pancake breakfast, pizza, picnic, coffee cart)
- High school nostalgia days
- Historical eras (Wild West, Psychedelic Sixties, Roaring Twenties)
- Indiana Jones
- Lights! Cameras! Action! Dress up like favorite characters from movies or TV shows, and act out a plot that involves United Way
- LIVE UNITED and pay it forward (decorate a LIVE UNITED baton. The person holding the baton must do a good deed for a coworker. Make a time limit, for example, within one hour, and see how fast it takes for everyone in the office to receive the baton at least once)
- LIVE UNITED Telegram (tell a colleague she did a brilliant job on that project. Thank a friend for his bright idea. Recognize a United Way champion among your campaign volunteer team. Bright someone's day with a compliment. Think of a coworker who has made an impact in your life or the life of another and send them a note telling them so)
- Lunch 'n learn (invite speakers from United Way or agencies to share information about health and human services issues – taking care of aging parents, mental health or wellness, parenting skills, etc.)
- Magic
- Mardi Gras (invite a jazz band, sell bead-o-grams (beads with thoughtful messages attached), host a Cajun potluck)

### HOST SPECIAL FUNDRAISING EVENTS continued

## IDEAS TO BRING YOUR UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN TO LIFE *continued*

- Massage stations
- Poverty simulation
- Send thoughtful notes (cookie grams, compliment o-grams, flower grams, candy-grams)
- Snack or dessert cart (bring the treats to work areas!)
- Special luncheon, breakfast, reception (executives can serve as chefs or servers)
- Sponsor small fundraising events to benefit United Way throughout the year with your employees. Or share information about key United Way-funded programs during certain times of the year. You might consider tying your efforts to national major or even quirky special days (i.e., for National Popcorn Day on Jan. 19, sell bags of popcorn and even consider showing a movie in your break room...or during National Soup month, invite a United Way speaker to share information about hunger issues that people are facing in our community).
- Stress Relief Week (bring in massage therapists, offer stress relieving workshops, give stress ball)
- Superbowl
- Tune Into Community (host a karaoke party)
- Turn casual Friday into LIVE UNITED Day (offer employees the opportunity to wear jeans and their LIVE UNITED shirts on a Friday. Charge for participation). Download “I’m wearing jeans for United Way” stickers on [waybetterunitedway.org/campaign\\_tools](http://waybetterunitedway.org/campaign_tools)

### GIVEAWAYS AND INCENTIVES

*Award prizes to winners of your campaign-related contests or to recognize outstanding efforts.*

- Rewarding individuals or departments is a great incentive for generous giving. Include the names of contributors and volunteers in drawings for special prizes. Incentives can be big or small.
- Corporate Match (For every \$1 that employees contribute, the company matches \$1 or \$.50 – the total gift from the company could be capped)
- Hold separate prize drawings for people who make an increased commitment (Early Bird – for employees who turn in their pledge forms by an early deadline, Buck a Week – for employees who increase their giving by at least \$1 a week, Leadership Givers, Caring Club Givers, etc.)
- Lunch with the CEO
- Movie passes
- Sports tickets
- Company merchandise
- Preferred parking spaces
- Gift certificates to local restaurants
- Extra 30 minutes or 60 minutes for lunch for one week
- Lunch for department with highest participation (hold a drawing if tied)
- LIVE UNITED T-shirts
- Gift certificates for gas or groceries
- Weekend getaway for two
- “Sleep in Late” passes or coupons

## IDEAS TO BRING YOUR UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN TO LIFE continued

### DONOR RECOGNITION IDEAS

*Recognition is important.  
So is saying thank you,  
often.*

- Thank and recognize your campaign committee and contributors
- Announce the final results and thank employees through a personalized letter, departmental meetings, company newsletter, email and voicemails
- Letters of thanks and recognition (thank you letters or emails can come from your CEO or campaign chair. The more personalized the correspondence, the better it will be received. Try delivering the letter personally)
- Gifts (you might choose to order items from United Way of America's store, work with local vendors, or share your own company items)
- Time off (one of the most appreciated gifts)
- Parking spaces
- Awards (certificates, plaques, traveling trophies)
- Develop a thank you collage with photos from the campaign activities
- Hold a recognition event for leadership donors at United Way or an agency
- Thank you paycheck stuffers
- Develop United Way bulletin board to display photos of your employees during campaign activities
- Run a thank you ad in your company's newsletter
- Provide employees with paid time off to volunteer for an organization of their choice
- Initiate a volunteer of the month program