

# Fun Activities

## **Baby Picture Match Game**

Invite employees to try their luck matching baby and/or pet pictures to current photos of management. Award the entry with the most right answers a prize or some other incentive. Charge employees \$2 per ballot to participate and raise funds while having fun!

## **Balloon Pop**

Employees donate prizes for this event – a variation on a traditional raffle. Before filling a balloon with helium, put a note inside with the name of the prize. Employees pay \$1.00 to buy a balloon and pop it to find out their prize.

## **Bingo**

Sell bingo cards to employees. Schedule a game and use donated prizes for the winners.

## **“Blue Light Special” Rallies**

Have different divisions or departments host daily or weekly “Blue Light Special” events. Have appropriate snacks available depending on the time of day. Schedule entertainment by a youth or senior group. Have some door prizes or games to add to the fun.

## **Book and Video Sale**

Ask employees to donate old books, video's, CD's, DVD's etc. for an employee sale. Sell all of the items in even amounts from \$1 to \$5 (like a garage sale) for easy change making.

## **Casino Night**

This event can include employees' families. Ask local businesses to donate prizes for the winners. Some items you might need – Blackjack tables, a Bingo game, a bean bag toss. Make sure there are snacks available. Get a cake decorated like a card or dice. Play festive music to liven the festivities.

## **Cookie Gram**

Ask employees to bake or donate cookies or candies. Package them in zipper bags and allow employees to add a note and pay \$2 to send a Cookie Gram to their co-workers.

## **Casual Day**

Sell Casual Day passes to employees to allow them to dress casually for a day for each pass purchased. You can have a “Spirit Week” theme too. For example, instead of just jeans, try – Silly Hat Day, Outrageous Sock Day, or Sports Team Day.

# Fun Activities

### **Children's Drawing Contest**

Give employees "official" photos of some of the top executives to take home for their children to draw. Or have children draw a picture of what "helping others" or another theme means. Limit the contest to children in a certain age group. Charge a \$5 entry fee to enter the contest. Employees vote on their favorites by paying \$1 per vote. Give a prize to all participants. Display the winning entry in a prominent location.

### **Chili Cook-Off Contest**

Employees cook their favorite chili recipe and enter into the contest. Have a group of chili experts, or discerning co-workers, judge the chili. Give a prize to the winner and display a photo of the Chili Champion for the year. Employees can pay \$1 to sample the chili.

### **Coin War – version I**

Give each department an empty jar or container. Employees can drop their spare change into the container. At the end of the time frame, weigh the containers and give a prize to the heaviest container.

### **Coin War – Version II**

Give each department an empty container. Have pennies, nickels, and dimes count as positive. Quarters count as negative. Sabotage other departments by adding quarters to their container. At the end of the fundraising, count the positives and subtract the negatives and give a prize to the department with the most positives.

### **Craft and Bake Sale**

Have employees jump-start the holiday season by shopping at a craft and bake sale. This activity gives everyone a chance to share their hobbies or baking expertise with their fellow employees. Have recipes printed so they can share in a swap.

### **Cruise for Donors**

Organize a local cruise or dinner dance for a fund raising event. Use a nautical or pirate theme for the party. Give prizes for best dressed "pirate" or nautical attire.

### **Diversity Events**

Tie in your United Way program to special events in your office. For example, have a Latin American speaker talk to employees during Latin American history month and describe how the United Way impacts the Latin American community.

## **Employee Cook Book**

Collect recipes and helpful household hints into a customized cookbook. Have employee's children create illustrations for the cover and for other pages. Print or copy and bind the books so they look professional. Sell the books to whomever is interested and donate the proceeds to United Way.

## **Employee Guessing Events**

Have employees guess the following:

- The organizations grand total given to the community.
- The number of lives helped in the community through their donations
- The per capita donation of the organization
- Community needs questions such as "How many homeless people are in our community?"
- The amount of candy or other items in a jar

Give prizes for correct answers and have discussions on how many more lives in the community they can help.

## **Executive Races**

Set up a relay course for the executives to go through on rolling office chairs or tricycles. Use a stopwatch to time the contestants and raise money by letting employees wager on the outcomes.

## **Employee Raffle**

Ask employees to donate something special as a raffle prize. Items can range from homemade pies to lunch out to tickets to a movie. Employees can purchase raffle tickets or receive raffle tickets for free by turning in their pledge form early.

## **Executive Prison**

Transform an office into a jail cell. Round up the prisoners and "arrest" the managers. Allow them to make phone calls to raise "bail" money. All bail money goes to the United Way.

## **Flashback Carnival**

Invite employees to an old fashioned carnival that includes: baked goods, bubble blowing and hot dogs. Hold a hula-hoop and a free-throw contest. Set up a dunking booth and charge for balls, an automatic dunk, and a buy-out escape. Set up a pie throwing booth and have the subjects heckle the crowd.

## **Halloween Pumpkin Carving Contest**

Employees can enter pumpkins they carve at home. They can carve individually or with a group. Charge \$5 to enter and \$1 to cast a vote. Award prizes in various categories – best traditional pumpkin, most creative, scariest, best group effort, etc. Take photos of winning pumpkins with their carver(s) and post in the employee newsletter.

## **Health and Giving**

Have each department host an event that will raise money for the community and better the health of the employees at the same time. For example, offer yoga classes after work, have brown bag lunch workshops put on by service providers, offer a stress reduction class at lunch. Ask the people providing the services to donate their time and use the class fees for a donation.

## **Ice Cream Social:**

Management serves employees ice cream to kick their activities off.

## **International Lunch:**

Have employees bring ethnic dishes for potluck. Charge \$1 or \$2 a plate.

## **Laugh Olympics**

Have employees compete in crazy “athletic” events like potato sack races, egg tosses or dizzy bat race. Charge a \$5 fee to enter. Let observers bet on their favorite participants.

## **Latte Stand:**

For more distinguished coffee drinkers, offer a latte stand during a morning rally. Remind them how much a cup of gourmet coffee costs. Give examples of what giving up one cup of coffee, one soda or one candy bar a day can do for a person in need. Ask if they can donate that same amount (or more) each week to United Way.

## **LIVE UNITED Bingo:**

Bingo with Live United questions as an ice breaker.

## **Miniature Golf**

Build a 9-hole golf course with slinkies, ramps and water hazards around the office. Have interested twosomes sign up to play, bring their own putter and pay an entrance fee. The low score team takes home a tacky golfer sports coat.

## **Mystery Hunt:**

Clues (sent via email or memo) lead hunters to a United Way agency or co-worker who is connected to an agency. This is a great way to educate employees about United Way’s involvement in the community.

# Fun Activities

## **Premier Parking:**

Hold a drawing with one month of a premium parking space as the prize.

## **Tailgate Party**

Have a sports theme for your activities during football season. Bring a truck or tent to an employee area and sell hot dogs, chips, soda, and peanuts. Set up one area each for rival teams and see who makes more money. Play a game of tag football with participants donating a small entrance fee.

## **Theme Baskets**

Each department within your company sponsors a themed basket (golf, chocolate, day of pampering, etc.) by purchasing products to fill it up. The baskets are then auctioned off via live or silent auction.

## **Ugly Tie or Jewelry Contest**

Charge \$5 to enter a tacky piece of jewelry or ugly tie. Place voting boxes around the office and charge \$1 per vote. Have a parade with the contestants wearing their ugly piece. Charge for photos of employees with their favorite contestant in their ugly wear.

## **United Way Trivia Contest:**

Distribute e-mail, printed questions or put up “powder room papers” in the restrooms about United Way and its programs every day for a week. Then ask trivia questions based on the information. Those completing all the questions are entered into a drawing to win door prizes or special company offered incentives.

# Fundraising Themes

Using a theme for your fundraiser is a great way to tie your activities together and create a feeling of excitement for supporting United Way. A clever theme helps boost participation. In fact, involving employees in the selection of your theme is a good way to build support right from the start. Below are some great fundraising themes that have been used throughout the years.

## **Go for the Gold:**

Conduct your own Olympic Games in your office. Employees compete in friendly competitions such as a water balloon toss or wastebasket free throw contest. All employees who invest in United Way could receive a gold medal or departments with the most participation receive the gold medal grand prize (vacation time, tickets to a sporting events, etc.)



## **Building Relationships & Community:**

Use road construction equipment, hard hats, cones, road signs, etc. to decorate the office. Give road maps to employees for them to find direction in their charitable giving. Demonstrate the roadblocks some people face who can benefit from United Way agencies. Create road signs featuring real statistics from our community. Celebrate when you reach your final destination.

## **Survivor:**

Divide the office into two teams and have them battle it out to see who can raise more funds. Play games like office immunity challenges and eat gummy worms. Learn what it's like to live without necessities, as some who use United Way agencies do. Quiz employees on what it's really like to survive in El Paso when you're in need. (Example: You have \$100 for bills. Do you buy groceries or pay the heating bill?) Ask the Salvation Army Canteen to cater breakfast.

## **Paint a Brighter Tomorrow:**

The rainbow is traditionally the symbol of hope for the future. Create a poster board with the rainbow and pot of gold at the end, the fundraising goal serving as the gold. Hold a viewing of the United Way video while serving rainbow colored popcorn. Create a rainbow by layering jellybeans in a clear jar. Hold a "guess how many" contest with the winner receiving the jar of jellybeans as the prize. The big event is a team relay race: each department wearing a different color t-shirt so all the colors of the rainbow are represented.

# Fundraising Themes

## **Make a World of Difference:**

Entice your employees through a global community theme. Divide each department into teams by assigning them a specific country or continent. Hold rallies inviting each team to dress in their represented country's attire or colors. Use flags, maps, company passports, compasses and globes to promote the theme. Arrange a global potluck allowing each team to prepare foods representing their designated country's cuisine. Use prizes such as travelers' checks, airfare vouchers or foreign currency as incentives to give.

## **Be a Champion for our Community:**

Hold a "Breakfast of Champions" kickoff meeting and hand out miniature boxes of Wheaties to all employees. Scan the CEO's face onto sports champions' bodies. Throughout the week hold the United Way Olympics. Present medals to investors with extra vacation days, casual days or other incentives.

## **Dare to Care:**

Set daily employee pledge goals based on participation or total dollars raised. Enlist executives to compete in challenges as an inspiration to meet or exceed each day's goal. Executive Dares can include revealing details of an embarrassing moment, coming to work dressed as a comical person or character, serving the staff breakfast or completing 25 push-ups. Give away prizes to any employee who accepts the dare to invest in the United Way.

## **Festivals:**

Create a festival atmosphere with hot dogs, popcorn and cotton candy. Ask volunteers to dress up as clowns and pass out balloons. Arrange for a magician or juggler and have local agencies set up information tables. In addition, organize games like ring toss, fishpond, pie throw and dunk tank.

*A Pie in the Face contest is a great way to motivate employees.*



## **Building a Better Tomorrow:**

Use Legos to build a house or structure in a central office space. Each employee that contributes gets a lego to add to the project. Decorate the office with building materials and serve treats out of construction hats.

## **Stars and Stripes for United Way:**

Decorate the office in red, white and blue. Have members of management dress as Uncle Sam and the Statue of Liberty. Tie a red, white or blue balloon to the desk of all investors as a visible sign of their support.

# Prizes and Incentives

There are many different prizes to award employees for participation in fundraising events. Not every prize has to be huge – people like to be recognized no matter what the prize. Even if your event budget is small, you have access to some great prizes. Vacation days, extended lunch hours and donated items from places with which you conduct business are great ways to offer incentives without spending a lot of money.

- Sleep in late awards
- Prime parking spaces
- Paid time-off
- Open soda & candy machines
- Free oil changes
- Gift certificates
- Cellular phone with free minutes
- Big screen television
- Pizza party
- Corporate clothing
- Casual Fridays year-round
- Free dinner catering
- Use of company car
- Tickets to pro sporting events
- Postage stamps
- Call in “well” day
- Free hotel stay
- Shares of company stock
- CEO for the day
- Computers – new or gently used
- Cocktails or dinner at the CEO’s home

# Steps to Success

## **Gain Top Management Support**

Support from top management will make your job easier and your fundraising efforts more successful.

Find out what resources are available and strive for the following commitments:

- Management allows time for you to coordinate the fundraising efforts.
- Time and budget is allocated for fundraising activities and incentives.
- CEO writes a letter endorsing the fundraiser.
- Management makes appearances and speaks at employee meetings and events.

*Employees will only be as enthusiastic about the fundraising as top management. Be sure top management demonstrates a commitment to United Way.*

## **Develop a Strong Fundraising Team**

Having others assist you with the fundraising efforts will make it fun and easy for everyone involved. Here are some tips for recruiting your committee:

- Make sure to include representation from all areas of your organization.
- Include a member of management to work with the Leadership Campaign.
- Recruit people who believe in United Way and will help excite others about the efforts.
- Assign roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.

## **Plan & Prepare for the Fundraiser**

Decide what will work best for your company's environment. The chemistry of your group should determine the type of fundraiser you plan.

- Decide on a theme, activities, incentives, and a thank you event.
- Develop a detailed timeline and calendar. (Beginning and ending date)
- Set a challenging goal based on total dollars raised and/or percent of participation.
- Determine when employee meetings will take place. These meetings provide employees with the most information about United Way. (Be sure to check that the CEO or members of top management are available to attend the meetings).
- Leadership solicitation and a retiree campaign are two ways to involve sometimes forgotten groups. Contact a retiree and a past Leadership Investor to serve on the committee and lead these solicitations, if possible.

*Leadership Investors personally give gifts of \$750 or more. Spouses can combine their gifts to reach \$750 and become a member of the Leadership Society, even if they are employed at separate companies. Leadership investors are recognized in United Way of El Paso County's annual Leadership Society brochure.*

# Steps to Success

## **Promote United Way and Make the Ask**

Educating employees about the value and work of United Way is the best way to gain their support. Your United Way representative is an excellent source for any materials and assistance you may need.

- Utilize United Way brochures, posters and videos.
- Invite a United Way representative to speak at a kickoff/employee meeting about how their investment in the community can change lives.
- Hold a special event for Leadership investors and prospects.
- Use technological resources such as intranet, e-mail and/or voice mail to pass along information about United Way to all employees.
- Promote the ease of payroll deduction
- Promote investing in the Community-Wide fundraising effort.
- Give small gifts to employees to recognize their generosity.

*It is always best if a Leadership Investor is asked by others who give at the same level. Ask your CEO or senior management for support in making the request of this important group.*

## **Celebrate & Report Results**

Let employees know how much the community appreciates their time and dollars. Saying "Thank You" is reported as the investor's most important need.

- Say Thank You! Conduct a special celebration for investors with food and words of thanks from management. Don't forget to invite the retirees!
- Your results are important. Please tally and report your results to your United Way Loaned Executive or staff member as soon as possible.

## **Promote Year-Round Communications**

The main fundraising is done, but there are literally thousands of ways for your company to remain involved with United Way year-round.

- Work with your United Way representative to customize a New Employee Program that is right for your company.
- Volunteer. There are opportunities that fit your needs and interests. Visit [www.volunteersolutions.org/uwoepc](http://www.volunteersolutions.org/uwoepc) for a search of volunteer opportunities or contact the Volunteer Action Center at 915-533-1039.
- Include United Way stories in your company newsletter or send e-mails about the work that United Way is doing with the investors' contributions throughout the year.
- Your United Way representative can provide stories and information for you to use in company newsletters and other communications.