

FUN

IN FUNDRAISING

Time Off

Many companies say this easily grows campaign participation. This incentive may come in the form of an extra full or half-day off for employees who donate at a certain level, or maybe all, employees who participate will be entered into a drawing for some extra paid leave.

Casual Day for United Way

This is probably the second most popular incentive/fundraiser in workplaces with a professional dress-code. Consider giving “passes” to wear jeans, t-shirts, or flip-flops on scheduled days for employees who participate. Is your CEO concerned about the team in accounting sporting sweatpants and cutoffs? Feel free to set a “Casual Day” dress code to keep everyone on the same page.

Complementary Snacks or Meals

Nothing draws people to a morning event or presentation like good-old coffee and donuts! Or, if your employees aren't morning people, how about a “snack bar” with some popular candies, chips, and beverages (HR approved, of course).

Primo Parking

Who doesn't like scoring up-front parking, or nabbing that sweet parking spot that keeps your car in the shade in the summer? If practical, consider “reserving” a few of those spaces for a week or month for employees who give a certain amount or use them in a drawing for people who participate in the campaign. This can also easily be turned into a year-round fundraiser for your organization!

Prize Drawings

Employees who participate or those who donate at or above a certain level will be entered into a prize drawing. Suggested prizes include sports tickets, gift cards, days off and prime parking spaces. When in doubt, ask employees what they would really like to win and use that!

Give an Inch Contest

Executives participate in an all-day competition to see who can raise the most money. Each Participant wears a tie marked with “donation” lines. Each time an employee makes a donation to that person they get to cut off a piece of the tie at a line (starting at the bottom, of course). The winner at the end of the day is whoever has raised the most money. Additional prizes can be given to the shortest tie, the ugliest tie, etc.

Baby Picture Match

Invite employees to try their luck matching baby pictures of management and/or each other. Set up a board with numbered baby photos on one side and current management/employee! photos with names on the other side. Charge a set amount for ballots, and whoever gets the most correct answers wins a prize. Be sure to have a back-up plan in case there is a tie.

Ice Cream Social

Provide several flavors of ice cream and all the toppings needed to make a decadent sundae! Charge employees a fee for their decadent creation, with all donations going to United Way. Offer hot fudge, caramel, strawberry sauce, chopped nuts and whipped cream – don't forget the cherries.

50-50 Raffle Fundraising

50-50 Raffle fundraising simply involves the sale of raffle tickets with the proceeds being split evenly between the winner and United Way. Your only fundraising expense is the raffle tickets (a double ticket roll, a single ticket roll that you tear in half or a board with the numbers for sale). Winners are always happy with a cash prize. All you need is one or more ticket sellers. Raffle tickets normally sell for \$1 a piece, with an incentive for multiple purchases such as 3 tickets for \$2 or 5 tickets for \$4, etc. Using a price incentive for multiple tickets can often increase your total sales and build a larger "prize" to split with the lucky winner. The "take" is tallied and one half awarded to the holder of the lucky number.

Basket Raffle

Ask each department to sponsor, create, and fill a theme basket (spa, chocolate, lottery, gourmet cooking, home improvement, entertainment, sports, night on the town, dog/cat oriented, kids/game oriented, etc.). Sell raffle tickets for \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Employees can select which basket they want to win.

Book Sale (also CDs, DVDs, videos)

Invite employees to donate books, CDs, DVDs, videos. Price paperbacks at \$1, hardbacks at \$2, CDs/DVDs, videos up to \$5.

Candy Cart

Load a cart with containers of different kinds of candy, and a scoop and small plastic bags. Wheel the cart around to different departments at set times during your campaign, letting employees choose the candy they prefer to purchase and sell candy for \$1 per bag. Proceeds go to United Way.

Casual Day

Casual Day badges entitle employees to dress casually on a pre-determined day. Be sure to define what "casual" means for your organization. Consider things like jeans day, or a sports-themed day. Depending on the nature of your business, you may want to post a flyer explaining the reason for the casual attire to visitors/customers.

Ask employees to donate \$5 to have their cars washed by management. Charge extra for special services like cleaning the interior or polishing the rims.

Classy Brown Bag Lunch

Charge a small fee for attendance at a series of brown bag lunch classes where attendees can learn a new skill (flower arranging, pottery painting), relieve stress (yoga, time management), or improve their health (exercise tips, heart healthy cooking). Ask a professional to donate their time to lead the classes.

Clothes Swap

We all have them, clothes we've purchased and never worn, with the price tags still on them. Have employees donate those items (leave the tags on), then have a sale.

Coin Wars

Have each department find a large empty water bottle, or other container. Invite employees to drop in spare quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies. For a fun twist, designate quarters as “sabotage” and encourage competing departments to drop quarters into each other’s bottles. At the end of the campaign, count coins and subtract quarters. The department with the most money wins a prize, and all proceeds go to United Way.

Good Sports

Elevator races

Halloween costume or celebrity look-alike contest

Pajama Day Fundraising

Employees pay a fee to wear their pajamas to work. It’s a very easy fundraising idea. All you need is someone to collect the money. Everyone likes it so much that even managers participate! Consider having a contest for the ugliest, weirdest, etc. pajamas.

Tailgate Party

Consider creating a sports theme for your campaign since the United Way campaign coincides with football season. Sell football fare from a truck in the parking lot “tailgate” style. Offer hot dogs, popcorn, peanuts, soft drinks, and other goodies. Organize a tag football game with participants donating an entry fee and observers wagering on the outcome.

eBingo

Sell Bingo cards for a small fee. Send emails sporadically throughout the week with one or two Bingo numbers each time. The first person to get Bingo should let everyone know by sending an email to all players (you’ll need a Bingo-specific distribution list). The winner receives a donated prize.

APPRECIATION

How you say thanks isn’t as important as the act of saying it. And 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! Just be sure to have fun and acknowledge your co-workers’ hard work and generosity. Some thank you suggestions are below, 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
- Have a special lunch for your Leadership Givers and campaign team.
- Give out United Way pins or stickers.
- Put a piece of candy on each person’s desk.
- Most importantly, REMEMBER TO REPORT FINAL RESULTS TO EMPLOYEES!

