

# 100 Great Campaign IDEAS



*Ideas in this list have been gleaned from United Ways everywhere. Only enough information is given here to explain the basic idea. Each campaigner will be able to apply creativity and knowledge of their workplace to make a fun and engaging employee campaign. You may be able to combine two or three elements within a theme.*

## ***Incentives***

### ***Where do I get incentives?***

- Big vendors that your company uses, especially if they are United Way supporters.
- Travel companies.
- Budget for incentives when budgeting for campaign.
- Contact local merchants.
- Use things your company can offer (ex. days off, company store items, parking spaces, etc.)

### ***How do I use incentives?***

- Increase participation.
- Increase average gift.
- Get pledge cards in on time.
- Encourage attendance at campaign meetings.
- Get volunteers to help with campaign.
- Friendly competition among departments.

### ***What are good incentives?***

- A day off with pay, or sleep-in late day.
- A day to volunteer at a United Way agency (Day of Caring).
- A casual dress day.
- A product from the company store.
- Coupon books.
- Tickets to sporting events or concerts.
- Electronic equipment.
- Lunch for a department.
- Movie tickets.
- Theatre tickets.
- A night out on the town.
- A traveling trophy.

- An ideal parking space.
- Airline tickets.
- Lottery tickets.
- Use of a pool for a pool party with choice of friends.
- Free baby-sitting.
- Professional massage.
- Gym membership for a year.
- Lunch with a local celebrity.
- Golf lessons or green fees paid.
- Phone cards.
- Use of a pager or cell phone free for one year.
- Delivery of cookies, flowers, or doughnuts every month for a year.
- Shares of stock.
- Weekend getaway with hotel accommodations.
- Use of a company car for week/month/year.
- A hot air balloon ride.
- Autographed memorabilia
- Certificates for free oil changes.
- Certificates for free haircut/manicure/pedicure/facial.
- Framed artwork.
- Free lunch or dessert in the cafeteria once a month for a year.
- Use of a prime parking space for a month or year.
- A limo ride to work for a week or a chauffeur for a week.

## ***CONTESTS***

These events have a prize that is awarded through some activity. Contests can be modified to fit your individual workplace circumstances or culture. An existing workplace contest may be modified to fit the United Way Campaign.

***Dollar an Inch Contest*** - Executives participate in an all-day competition to end the day with the shortest tie. Employees cut an inch off their favorite executive's tie each time they give to the community. You can have prizes for the shortest tie, the ugliest tie, etc.

***Baby Picture Match Game*** - Invite employees to try matching baby and/or pet pictures to pictures of management. Award an incentive to the entry with the most correct answers. Charge employees a set amount for each ballot.

***Balloon Pop*** - Before filling a balloon with helium, put a note inside with the name of a prize. Employees pay \$1.00 to buy a balloon and

pop it to find out what prize they have won. Employees or companies can donate prizes.

***Bidders Bake Sale*** - Well-known employees and/or management bake items of their choice. The person must actually bake the item. All items are gathered for the bidding contest and labeled so everyone knows who baked each item. Employees bid on items and the baker may bid to take their own item home (in case they would not like anyone else to sample their cooking).

***Children's Artwork Contest*** - Invite children of employees to enter drawings of people helping people. Use United Way agency stories to spark the drawings. Post them and vote for the most heartfelt, the best faces, the most use of red, etc.

***Chili Cook-Off Contest*** - Employees cook their favorite chili recipe and enter it into a cook-off contest. Sell bowls of chili to employees for lunch.

***CEO/Key Management Pie in the Face*** - Key management agrees to take a pie in the face from each member of the department with the greatest increase. Use whipped cream "pies" in some celebration setting.

***Executive Tricycle Race*** - Set a relay course for executives to go through riding a tricycle. Use a stopwatch to time contestants, with the best time winning a prize. Observers can wager on their favorite contestants.

***Funny Photos*** - Employees bring in the funniest photos of other employees. Vote for the funniest. Vote with money or tie voting to the turning in of pledge cards or the per cent increase by department.

***Peon for a Day*** - Top management agrees to be a "slave" to any department for a day based on campaign performance.

***Pumpkin Carving Contest*** - Find a local business willing to donate pumpkins for your organization to sell to your employees. Employees enter carved pumpkins individually or by group. Charge \$5.00 to enter and \$1.00 per vote.

***Reverse Voting*** - Set up any voting contest. Vote for the winner with dimes, but any other coin deducts from the dime votes. You can vote against a contestant by putting in quarters. Use any denomination of coin you choose for the event. Avoid paper money.

**Root Beer Float Sale** - Set up during lunch or breaks on a warm day. Committee can sell root beer floats and pass out information. (Get donations of the root beer and ice cream if possible.)

**Soak the Boss** - Rent a dunk tank and allow anyone who has made his or her pledge to throw at the boss. Contestants get one ball for getting the pledge in, two balls for increasing the pledge, three balls for pledging an hour a month. In lieu of the dunk tank use wet sponges in the cafeteria.

**Sculpture Contest** - Use modeling clay, Legos, coat hangers, any craft item that is easy to work with. Key leaders create their "sculpture" and vote on the most creative with pennies.

**Ugly Tie/Hat Contest** - Management team members wear a tie or hat for the contest day. Charge a dime a vote.

**Work on the Roof** - Top management agrees to work on the roof for a day if a goal is met.

## **Promotion Events/Activities**

<p>These events are fun and engage employees in the event and contributing to United Way.</p>
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**Auction Hotline** - Set up a special voice mailbox with weekly messages announcing auction items. Outline the items, including their face value, in a flyer. Employees call the hotline to record their bids. Update the recorded message daily, announcing the highest bids received to date. Each Friday announce auction results for the week and next week's items. Get items by asking employees to donate items or services.

**Baby Photo Challenge**-Collect baby photos of employees. Make it a contest to match the photo to the person.

**Book/Video Sale** - Employees donate their old books, videos and cassette tapes for an employee book sale. Sell paperbacks for \$1.00, hardbacks for \$2.00, cassettes and videos for up to \$5.00.

**Box Lunch Auction** - Give prizes for the most creative lunch, the most healthful lunch, the best looking box.

**Casual Day** - Sell Casual Day Badges allowing employees purchasing them to dress casually on certain days. Employees purchase badges for \$5.00 each through payroll deduction or cash donation. The badges carry an expiration date, depending on the amount donated. Designate certain casual days as “Crazy Days” and encourage your employees to show their wild side (ex. Tuesday-Stupid Hat Day, Wednesday-Outrageous Socks Day, Thursday-Sports Team Day, etc.).

**CEO Car Wash** - Employees donate \$5.00 to have their car washed at high noon by their “boss” in business clothing. Charge extra for special services like cleaning the interior or polishing the rims. Charge for Polaroid photos of the employees and the boss washing their car.

**Company Auction** - Clean out the company store room. Pull out those old pieces of equipment or office furniture, old computers, tools, obsolete stationery. The company donates it all to the employee auction. Proceeds go to the United Way campaign. Anything left over goes to a Gift in Kind program or the dump.

**Craft and Bake Sale** - Ask employees to bake and donate their favorite desserts and crafts and sell them as a fund raiser cars.

**Employee Cookbook** - Collect favorite recipes from employees and sell cookbooks with proceeds going to United Way.

**Executive Fantasy Auction** - Executives at your organization create “fantasy” packages, which employees can bid on at an auction. Executives can also auction their special services (ex. cooking for the winner, mowing the winner’s lawn, etc.)

**Ice Cream Social** - Top management team will make ice cream sundaes for everyone who has made a pledge, or increased their pledge. Have carts made up with the ice cream and the “fixin’s” and fill custom orders.

**Iron Chef Contest** - Define the ingredients and the cooking apparatus. Seek contestants and volunteers to be the judges/samplers of the completed food. Provide a limited time and judge appearance as well as palatability.

**Paint Ball Shooting** - Dress volunteers as “bad guys” (Don’t Care, Cheap, Stingy, Selfish) and allow donors to take a shot at them after the pledge card is turned in. Bad Guys can move in a designated target area. Make it fun and a challenge for the shooters.

**Photo Gallery** - Collect pictures of employees at an agency or engaged in day of caring. Get photos of employees signing pledge cards, volunteering in helping programs. Post the photos in a public place.

**Pie Eating Contest** - Solicit contestants and include this event in your kickoff. This can be a team event depending on the amount of pie. Can also be a chicken wing contest, donuts, bananas, etc.

**Company-wide Rummage Sale** - Rummage items are gathered for a one-day sale. Company items and employee contributions are sold and the proceeds go to the United Way campaign.

**White Elephant Reverse** - Each department contributes one item to the White Elephant Sale. Other departments bid on items to be placed in the department of their choice. If it is something nice they may want to keep it. If it is something awful they may want to place it in a rival department.. (Exercise some care, this could get out of hand.)

## ***Athletic Events/Games***

<p>These events can be built around the kickoff or final celebration. They invite employee attention and enthusiasm. Use to gather sponsoring pledges, tie to information about United Way help. Invite guests to judge or participate.</p>
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**Aerobic-a-thon** - Employees seek pledges for the length of time they can keep up aerobics. Set it up in public place to get everyone involved.

**Fun Run** - Organize with regular runners. Collect entry fees, promote with United Way information and tie to goal achievement.

**Tug-of-War** - Designate employee departmental teams or just seek entries. Collect fees to enter. Schedule as a part of the kickoff or celebration. Promote as the war of caring and indifference.

***Bike-a-Thon*** - Collect pledges for the number of miles ridden. Employees can ride for their favorite kind of helping or service.

***Croquet Tournament*** - Set up the course on the company lawn or nearby. Charge entry fee and offer prizes.

***Indoor Golf*** - Set up a course through the workplace. Use a child's sponge ball set or real golf balls and clubs. Do 9 or 18 holes around obstacles. Run it outside and back in. Charge to play. Use the names of United Way agencies as hole identifiers.

***Office Olympics*** - Set up events using office equipment and skills. One station uses a typewriter, rolling chair race, paper wad baskets, stair climbing race, filing relay, pencil throw, waste basket emptying relay.

***Reverse Tour*** - Hold an event and invite service recipients from a United Way funded program to visit the workplace. They can judge contests, participate in events, or just greet employees and say thanks.

***Scavenger Hunt*** - Seek items that come from United Way agencies. Give teams a week to gather the items from the specified places.

***Slam Dunk*** - Set up portable basketball goal in parking area. Use different heights based on age, gender, or height. Offer prizes for most creative, highest dunk, best style.

## ***Themes***

<p>Themes can make a campaign more fun. It ties the information together in a fun way. Below are some possible themes that could be used or modified to fit your work environment. Support the theme with decorations, contests, costumes, photos &amp; messages from service agencies.</p>
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### ***Misc. Themes***

- Seeing is Believing
- Answer the Call
- Mission Possible
- United Way Goes Hollywood (use Hollywood look-alikes)
- Be a Hero

- A Commitment to Our Community
- We Share Be Cause We Care
- United Way and You—Making a World of Difference
- Going Places Together
- Be the Difference, See the Difference
- Your Gifts Are in Good Hands (use gloves)
- Don't blow it (use bubbles)
- People Helping People
- Be a Part of the Solution
- Make a Wish Come True
- Share a Dream
- When We Give, We Show We Care
- 1960's or 1970's

### **Star Themes**

- Wish Upon a Star
- Be A Star in Someone's Life
- Make Life Shine
- Play a Starring Role in Your Community
- Shine for United Way
- Reach for the stars

### **Heart Themes**

- Thanks to You, The Beat Goes On
- United Way—We're the Heart of It
- Touch Someone's Heart
- Let Your Heart Lead the Way
- Love Makes A Difference
- Give...Wholeheartedly
- Give from the Heart
- Gotta Have Heart
- Give 'Til Your Heart's Content
- Have a Heart...Be a Part
- Raiders of the Lost Heart

### **Sports Themes**

- Pitch In for Your Hometown
- Here's to the Winners
- United Way Fever...Catch It
- Join the Winning Team
- Be a Champion for United Way



- Step Up to the Plate for United Way
- Catch the Spirit

### **Food Themes**

- Be a Life Saver
- Raisin Big Bucks
- Making Dough (use cookies)
- A Recipe for Caring
- Give a Whole Bunch
- Chip In
- “Lettuce” Give
- Food for Thought
- Cooking Up a Brighter Day for United Way

### **Magical and Miracle Themes**

- Make Problems Disappear
- The Magic is You
- The Magic of Life is Giving
- You Can Make Magic
- Your Magic Works Wonders
- Let’s Make Magic Together
- Share in a Miracle
- Together We Make Miracles
- Work Some Magic

### **Themed events**

***Back to the 50’s, 60’s, 70’s***-Play music of the period chosen through the PA system. Hold a sock hop or disco party. Give prizes for the best period dress. Hold events of the period. Conduct an online trivia contest for the period. Bring in some classic cars. Collect old photos of employees in their best dress of the period and vote for the most chic, or maybe the goofiest.

***Halloween Party, Let’s Keep the Ghouls Away*** - Organize the victory celebration around an “anti-Halloween” theme. Caring people are keeping the goblins away from our community.

### ***Lets Go To The Circus***

Hold an outdoor kickoff called, “The Main Event.” Use clowns and a circus theme to all events. Have a mime contest. Tame the wild

animals of those “who don’t care about others”. Balloons, popcorn, hotdogs all contribute to the atmosphere.

***Make Someone’s Life a Hit: The United Way***

Use a 50’s or 60’s sock hop and lip sync contest. Decorate with “parade of hits”. Have theme days built around pop songs that invite the presentation of United Way helping information. Have a 50’s dress day. Do all the “oldies” party events, hula hoops, bubble gum contests, etc.

***Make a Toto Commitment to United Way***

Events are based on the “Wizard of Oz.” Make paths through the workplace of “yellow bricks” that are labeled with United Way facts. Give video of the movie. Keep the Wicked Witch of the East away from your community. Find a team to be Dorothy and company. Go to the wizard for the campaign celebration.

***Safety for the Community***-Some companies tie the United Way employee meetings to regular safety meetings. Use the safety theme for the community and organize around a “community safety meeting” theme.

***Star Wars*** - Use the characters and elements of “the force” to create campaign events and activities. Battle the evil empire to save and preserve your community. Give away small toys that symbolize reaching the goal. Give video tapes, labeled foods, etc. to carry out the theme.

***We Are Family***

This emphasizes family values and activity. Employees attend breakfast kickoff in their pajamas. Prizes for best house slippers, biggest foot, oldest pj’s, biggest foo foo slippers, etc. Talk about services to families from United Way agencies. Departments choose families for the week, Brady Bunch, the Walton’s, the Cleaver’s, and the Simpson’s. Hold Family Feud midweek. Families all do skits for the finale family pick nick

***Whodunit, A United Way Mystery***

Two-weeks of events utilized the mystery theme to take the unknowns out of United Way. Utilizing the mystery theme to present facts. Puzzles and clues were offered with prizes for the solutions, which answered basic questions about the community and United Way. On occasion a member of the campaign team donned “detective” apparel for some of the events.

**Wild, Wild West**-Organize on the old west theme. “Roundup” the caring cowpokes to make their pledge. Lasso those strays who need our help. Decorate, dress up, and hold Wild West contests. Get everyone to be a “pardner in caring”. Bring real horses to the workplace. Have the CEO ride through town as the sheriff.

## ***Lastly, but most importantly, say***

### **“Thank You!”**

Saying thank you is the most important part of the campaign. It can be said in a variety of ways including:

- ◆ Displaying a giant thank you card signed by service recipients and staff at the agencies.
- ◆ Place Thank You posters throughout the building.
- ◆ Publish a special Thank You newsletter.
- ◆ Send personalized Thank You letters.
- ◆ Hold a Thank You event such as an ice cream social, free luncheon, etc.
- ◆ Send a voice mail or e-mail expressing gratitude.
- ◆ Appreciation grams: use gimmicks to say thanks throughout the year. Use holidays to remind contributors that they helped people.
  - ◆ Hearts on Valentine’s Day
  - ◆ Jelly beans at Easter
  - ◆ Candy Corn at Thanksgiving
  - ◆ Hero stickers for July 4
- ◆ Hold a thank-you pancake breakfast.
- ◆ Make vending machines free for a day.
- ◆ Ask kids from a Day Care Center to color thank-you cards/posters.
- ◆ Feature the campaign committee in a company newsletter.

