

# More Event Ideas

Campaign Themes, Employee  
Engagement Tactics, Games and Contests



**Questions?  
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**United Way**  
Lethbridge &  
South Western Alberta

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## Energize Your Campaign!

Your campaign can be so much more than just listening to a campaign presentation and filling out a pledge form! As the Employee Campaign Champion, you can put the “FUN” back in fundraising with creative ideas for special events and incentives.

While special events shouldn't be the backbone of your campaign, they're a great way to get your co-workers excited about it. Special events can also present an opportunity for team-building as you work together in support of a cause.

This guide contains a variety of event and employee engagement ideas for your campaign. Most can be adapted to suit the size of your workplace. Before you begin planning any of them, we suggest speaking with your manager or CEO to ensure that time, space and a budget are available to you.

Please also refer to the 'Campaign Guide' and the 'Guide to Canvassing, Special Events, Promotions and Incentives' for help on carrying out a United Way campaign that is not only fun and engaging, but successful in meeting the goals you set.

Don't forget, your United Way representative is here to help you, too. Please feel free to make contact if you have any questions or if there is something United Way can help with.



## Did you know?

**There are different types of special events. Be sure to consider your options and choose the one that will work best for your workplace, the number of committee members you have, your time and your budget!**

## Unique Campaign Activities and Themes

**“Canadian Idol”** – have your own contest based on the hit TV show. Employees can donate to vote for their favourite management singer/singing group. The group that gets the most votes will sing a song in front of an audience.

**Mardi Gras** – Even if it’s not the right time of year, you can model your campaign after the the biggest party around – Mardi Gras! Have a Cajun-style potluck lunch, dress up and have a parade with prizes for the best costumes, sell bead-o-grams with fun or thoughtful messages attached.

**Blast From the Past** – Have a theme day or week and go back to the Groovy ‘60’s ,the Renaissance or even the days of the dinosaurs. Ask staff to dress up and decorate their offices. Staff can donate throughout the week to vote for the best decorations or costumes.

**On the Silver Screen** – Have employees dress up as their favourite movie or TV characters and act out a popular plot that involves United Way. For example, The Avengers must band together to save the community from poverty. Sell tickets to a lunchtime performance, raffle off movie tickets, TVs or gift certificates.

**Tune in and Turn up!** – Music is a great way to get people involved. Have a karaoke party or lunchtime Rock Band competition to kick off your campaign. Invite your co-workers to dress as their favourite musicians. have a used CD/vinyl sale or organize a talent show.

**Multimedia Mayhem** – Have employees donate CDs, Blu-Rays, or video games for a company-wide sale. Set up in the foyer and invite customers and clients to browse the selection as well. Donate the proceeds to United Way.

**Lunch ‘n’ Laugh** – Invite a local comedian or improv group to donate their services for a lunchtime performance. Sell tickets for employees to attend.

**Book Bonanza** – Everyone loves a good book. Have employees donate their old books and buy used ones with the proceeds to United Way. Set up in the foyer and give customers and clients the opportunity to pick up some new reads as well.

**My Workplace Has Talent!** – Arrange an event to showcase your co-workers’ talents. Whether it’s singing, dancing, baton-twirling or another wild and crazy talent, your co-workers are sure to want to buy a ticket to the show.

**Colour My Community** – Colouring books for grown-up are the latest craze, so why not make a contest out of it? Have co-workers colour a picture of a local landmark and then donate to vote for their favourites. Invite customers and clients to donate as well.

**Be an Everyday Superhero** – Create a theme day or week around your favourite superheroes. Have employees dress as Batman, Wonder Woman or the X-Men. Have Hero Sandwiches for lunch. Subtly work in superhero catch-phrases throughout the day like “My Spider-sense is tingling” or “Up, up and away!” Vote by donation for the best costumes or best use of catch-phrases.

### Other Fun Ideas

- 60’s, 70’s, 80’s themes
- Australian Outback
- Circus
- Disco
- Holiday themes
- Medieval Times
- The Four Seasons
- When in Rome
- Movie Time

## Food-Centric Ideas

**Employee Cookbook** – Every staff potluck, Brenda makes that really great salad with the marshmallows... Collect your co-workers’ best-ever recipes and publish them in a company cookbook. At the end of the campaign, donate the proceeds of the book sales to United Way.

**World Foods** – Centering your campaign around exotic foods ensures that everyone will have a wild time. Choose a Hawaiian Luau menu, Japanese Bento Boxes, a Mexican fiesta or foods from another locale of your choice. Encourage staff to dress the part. Organize games or activities related to your theme.

**Ice Cream Social** – Set up an ice cream bar with all the fixin’s . Charge employees by the scoop or by the topping and everyone will have a cool time.

**Buy My Lunch?** – Have the best chefs in the office prepare gourmet lunches to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. Consider prizes for the healthiest, fanciest or most humorous meals.

**Top Chef Challenge** – Have employees take part in a cook-off by each preparing their version of the same dish. Other employees can donate to vote for their favourite. Have management act as official judges with a prize to the top chef.

**Neighbourhood BBQ** – Get together with a few of the businesses around you to have a BBQ. Invite staff, customers and families from the area to take part in games and prize draws. Donate proceeds to United Way.

**Wine Tasting** – Select five wines for staff and their guests to rate on special score cards. Make special draws during the week for United Way contributors. The bigger the contribution, the better the chance for prizes!

**Pancake Breakfast** – United Way is a part of a complete breakfast! Ask CEOs or managers to flip the flapjacks. Don't forget sausage, butter, syrup etc. Consider asking each department to supply an item. Donate the proceeds to United Way.

**Pie the Prez** – If your company president or CEO is up for it, let employees buy a chance to throw a pie in his or her face. Instead of wasting a perfectly good pie, consider using a new car wash sponge covered in whipped cream. Donate the proceeds to United Way.

#### Other Fun Ideas

- Latte Stand / Coffee Bar
- Pumpkin Carving Contest
- Pizza Party
- Oktoberfest
- Popcorn Sale
- Company Picnic

## Campaign Games and Contests

**Office Olympics** – Celebrate diversity by transforming each department at your workplace into a different country, complete with dress and décor to match. Have an international potluck lunch with a variety of ethnic dishes. Play music from around the world. Have a mini-Olympics challenge with medals for the winners.

**Ugly Contest** – Have contestants pay a fee to enter the Ugly Contest with their ugliest tie, sweater or earrings. Employees can vote for the ugliest in each category by contributing a \$1 per vote. Donate the proceeds.

**Singing Telegrams** – Recruit the best singer in your office to deliver singing telegrams to co-workers for a donation to United Way. Use popular songs like Bohemian Rhapsody or silly songs like the Batman theme. Invite the recipient to donate and pass the tunes to another colleague.

**Scavenger Hunt** – Have employees pay to participate in a hunt for hidden items in the office or around the neighbourhood. Give each team a list of items or landmarks to find and a time limit. Have teams use mobile phones to take pictures of their team with the item/landmark. Award a prize to the winning team and donate proceeds to United Way.

**Guess Who?** – Ask each employee to provide a baby picture of themselves. Charge co-workers per guess to figure out who each one is. Give a prize to the person with the most correct answers.

**Bingo!** – Build your own Bingo cards and sell them to co-workers. Build in fun squares like “had to make a fresh pot of coffee” or “printer jam”. Have prizes donated from local stores or company vendors.

**They Call It “Puppy Love”** – Have employees buy a chance to see if they can match the photo of the pet to its owner. Follow up by having employees donate to vote on which pet/owner look the most alike. Award a prize to the person with the most correct answers and award a pet store gift card to the look-alike winner.

**Just for Laughs** – Who doesn't like to laugh? Have employees submit their best (clean) jokes and publish them in a company joke book. Donate the proceeds from the sale of the book to United Way.

**Cutting Ties** – Employees pay a dollar to cut an inch off Executives' ties. Have an all-day competition to see who will end up with the shortest tie. Donate the proceeds to United Way.

**All Locked Up** – Transform an Executive's office into a jail cell for the day. “Arrest” managers and Executives and set an amount for bail for each of them. Allow them to make phone calls to their staff and/or friends to “bail” them out.

**Workplace's Funniest Home Videos** – Invite staff to submit the funniest moments they've caught on video. Sell tickets to a viewing party with a prize for the funniest video. Sell snacks and drinks or have viewers donate to vote for their favourite video.

**Nice Legs** – Line up your co-workers for a leg-only shot of them in their Bermuda shorts. Charge employees \$1 to guess which legs belong to which co-worker.

**Get That Thing Off My Desk!** – Buy an ugly lamp or tacky piece of artwork at a thrift store and give co-workers the opportunity to purchase points to move the item to someone else's workspace or to keep it out of their own. Calculate the points and move the item daily, weekly or hourly. Wherever it ends up at the end of the set period is where it must stay for the next month or until the next United Way campaign!

#### Other Game Ideas

- Executive Auction
- Draw the Boss Art Contest
- Video Game Competitions
- Fun Run
- Look-Alike Contest
- Cubicle Decorating

**Did you know?**  
Contests and guessing  
games are a fun way to  
get everyone involved!



## Sports-Related Activities

**Tailgate Team-Up** – Kick off your campaign with a tailgate party! Departments can plan a variety of sporting events like mini-golf, briefcase-toss, wastebasket free-throws. Charge teams or participants to enter each event and end the campaign by presenting trophies or medals to the winners.

**Two Points for United Way!** – Great idea for schools, colleges and universities. Donate \$2 from each football, basketball, volleyball or baseball ticket sold to United Way – a great way to support the team and the community at the same time.

**Sports Challenge** – Play a real or improvised game with teams of employees. Charge an entry fee for each team or participant and have spectators bet on the winning team.

**Sumo Battle!** – Rent a set of sumo-suits from a local company and have employees donate to challenge each other to battles.

**Office Mini-Putt** – Set up a miniature golf course in the foyer. Invite employees and customers to donate to play a round with proceeds to United Way.

**Fun Run/Walk/Bike** – Organize a fun run style event where employees collect pledges from friends and family members for completing the course. Donate the proceeds to United Way.

### Other Sports Ideas

- Slam-Dunk Contest
- Ping-pong Tournament
- Zumba-thon
- Inter-departmental Basketball
- Company Softball Game

## Other Fun Ideas

**Stuffed Balloons** – Start by collecting a variety of prizes. Before filling balloons, insert notes naming each of the prizes. When you run out of prizes, fill other balloons with a fact about United Way or the community. Have employees purchase and pop balloons for a chance to win a prize.

**Flower Power** – Find a local florist who is willing to donate flowers. Sell the flowers at your workplace in conjunction with Valentine's Day or Secretary's Day

**Stick It!** – Have Executives sell stickers to employees for \$1 each. Employees can then 'stick it' to the Executives. The Executive who is covered in the most stickers at the end of the day, wins.

**Corporate Showdown** – Challenge another company in your field to meet or beat a campaign goal, for example, highest number of individual donors. You could also challenge them in some of the sports-related events that are listed in this guide.

**'Giving is Healthy' Event** – Have each department host a health-related activity like yoga, a stress-reduction workshop or a healthy cooking class. Charge employees a small fee to attend each class. Donate the proceeds to United Way.

**Holiday Pay** – Everyone appreciates a little time off. Have employees "buy" a vacation day by donating one day's wages to United Way.

**50/50** – Sell 50/50 tickets to employees during the campaign. Hold a drawing where the winning ticket-holder takes home half the ticket proceeds with the other half donated to United Way. You will need a license from AGLC. Please contact United Way for help.

**Jeans Day/Week** – Have employees buy "Dressed this way for United Way" stickers for \$5 each giving them permission to wear jeans for the day. For example, 5 stickers for \$25 means they are allowed to wear jeans for five days during the campaign provided they are also wearing their sticker.

### Other Event Ideas

- Flea Market
- Book Fair
- Craft Fair
- Garage Sale
- Candy-grams
- Executive Shoe-shine



# Incentives

## Behaviours to Incentivize

- Increase giving by a certain percentage or a set number of dollars per pay period
- First-time donors to the Community Fund of a set number of dollars per pay period
- Increased donations to the Community Fund since the previous year.
- Returning a completed pledge form for any amount.

**Note:** Setting a 100% participation goal is noble but not always practical or achievable. United Way suggests setting goals based on the previous year's results. For example, '5% increase in donors over the previous year'.

## Sample Incentives to Offer

(be sure to get permission/approval from managers)

- Golf game with senior management
- The boss' office chair for a day
- An extra paid vacation day
- An extra 30 minutes for lunch
- Office gear your company doesn't need but is still in good working order
- Cash prizes
- Celebratory lunch
- Mugs, pens or other swag
- TV or stereo equipment
- Computer software
- Casual dress days
- Hotel stay
- Oil changes
- Tickets to movies or live theatre
- Gift cards for coffee or restaurants
- Prime parking spot
- 'Sleep in late' coupons

***Thank you!***  
**Together...**  
**We Are Possibility!**



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