



United Way
Halton & Hamilton

Special Events - Putting the 'Fun' in Fundraising

Special Events are a fantastic way to create awareness, infuse your workplace with energy, and boost employee morale. They certainly can raise money, but the real value in special events is the excitement and momentum they create for your annual United Way workplace campaign.

Nothing inspires people to action like a compelling story of lives changed as a direct result of their support for the campaign. There are many passionate volunteers ready and willing to share their stories of triumph over adversity on United Way's Speakers' Bureau. Or consider playing our campaign videos to raise awareness about the work United Way does in our community thanks to workplace campaigns just like yours.

There are hundreds of innovative ways to raise awareness and create excitement about the United Way campaign. We've listed a handful of proven special events that you might consider:

Agency Speaker	Arrange for a member of United Way's Speakers' Bureau to attend a departmental meeting or coffee break. Most presentations take about 10 minutes and it's a great way to learn about our community.
Agency Tours	Arrange for your workplace committee, canvassers or small groups of employees to tour United Way Agencies and see first-hand the work they do in our community. Tours take as little as 30 minutes.
Auction (Services)	Auction off your employees' special talents as prizes. For example: guitar lessons, cook dinner, valet parking, or buying & delivering coffee everyday for a week.
Auctions (Silent/Live or Email)	Employees and/or departments can donate baskets or prizes to the auction. Employees write their bid on a bidding sheet (Silent/email), or have a Guest Auctioneer and use paddles to bid (Live).
Bake / Book / Garage Sale	Always fun to shop! All proceeds donated to United Way.
BBQ Lunch or Breakfast	Executive Chefs serve breakfast or lunch to kick off your campaign. Arrange for our mascot "Carey" to come and join in the fun.
Bowling	Use your hallway, play the real thing or try your hand at Wii bowling.
Carnival / Mardi Gras	Employees pay to play a variety of games and/or they can win "starter" chips with every \$5,\$10,etc pledge made.
Car Race / Horserace	Build a large display of a racetrack with toy cars or horses representing each department. Cars/horses will advance around the track as dollars &/or participation rates increase in each department.
Car Wash	Executives and volunteers wash cars in the company parking lot over the lunch hour to maximize employee participation. Charge a flat minimal fee.
Casual / Jean Days	Charge a donation fee to wear jeans on Friday or free when you return your pledge form. "I'm Dressed This Way for United Way" stickers easily identify participants.
Celebration	Hold a Celebration at the end of your campaign to thank all your volunteers and donors and celebrate your success!
Chilli Cook-off	Coworkers compete for bragging rights for best chilli recipe! Charge a small fee per bowl and include rolls for lunch.
Coffee Cart	Executives and/or Canvassers hand out free coffee &/or donuts as they distribute pledge forms and brochures. This event is great for workplaces that employ shift workers or those who can't leave their desk for traditional events.
Cookbook	Compile a cookbook of employee recipes and sell to raise money for United Way.

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Crossword Puzzle	To create awareness, generate a crossword puzzle using clues and answers from United Way's website. Award small prizes to the person who answers all questions correctly.
Dance Lessons	Talented employees offer to teach dance, yoga or aerobic lessons for a small fee with all proceeds to United Way.
Day of Caring	Help out at a United Way Agency during the week or on a weekend. Jobs may include painting, building a fence, planting gardens, BBQ's, etc. These can be arranged by United Way.
Dress Up Days	Wear RED for United Way or dress according to a specific theme to build energy and excitement.
Dunk Tank	Employees pay a small fee to dunk their favourite Executive! Yes, you can rent Dunk Tanks!
Jail & Bail	Employees pay a small bail to free their favourite Executive from "jail"! Advertise all proceeds to United Way.
Lunch	Executive Chefs serve lunch to kick off your campaign.
Lunch & Learn	Leading up to your campaign, offer free information sessions during the lunch hour. Arrange for an Agency Speaker to present. Encourage employees to bring their own lunch.
Office Olympics or Mini-Golf	Schedule noon hour events each day during your campaign to promote team spirit and encourage inter-departmental competition. Charge a flat fee per team and donate proceeds to United Way.
Piggy Bank Challenge	Groups decorate piggy banks. Have a best dressed pig competition or fattest pig with the most dollars. Piggy banks then used for employees to drop-off their change during campaign. Alternately, have collection jars beside cash registers or vending machines and collect donations all year long.
Pie Throwing Competition	Pay to throw a pie in your favourite Executive's face!
Pizza Night	Free pizza for that 2am shift. Arrange an Agency Speaker to raise awareness (yes, even at 2am!).
Potluck Lunch	Promotes team spirit.
Prize Survivor	Each player donates a prize worth a specific amount and pays an entry fee. Every day a name is drawn and the last "survivor" in the drawing wins all of the prizes. (Optional: Participants can pay for "immunity" from being drawn for a fee.)
Spelling Bee	Employees vs. Management. Use United Way words (messaging, agency names, etc), to create awareness and promote team spirit.
Talent Show / Karaoke	Encourage employees to compete for the title of "Workplace Idol". Executives or Local Celebrities can guest judge.
Themed Events	Coincide your campaign &/or event with the current season or holiday (Back to School, Thanksgiving, Halloween).
Trivia	Include questions about United Way and your own workplace campaign to create awareness. Award prizes to the person who answers all questions correctly.
Ugly Sweater Day / Ugly Tie Day	Employees can vote on their favourite (or "ugliest"), use as a fun event.
Video Game Tournament	Individuals or teams pay to play faves like Guitar Hero, Rockband and Wii Olympics. Teams can dress the part.

Offering free admission, charging a *minimal fee* for special events is a great way to ensure employees still have the capacity to support the annual campaign and help you reach your pledge goal.

Better yet, why not use the donor's completed pledge form as an entry ticket to a special event!

Have questions or need someone to bounce ideas off? Give us a call at 1-844-392-7639.
Your United Way Staff Partner is a great resource to help ensure your campaign is a huge success!