



**TOGETHER WE'RE GREATER  
THAN ANY CHALLENGE.**

**CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR : SPECIAL EVENT IDEAS**



**GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.** [unitedwayirc.org](http://unitedwayirc.org)



**United Way of  
Indian River County**

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# CAMPAIGN SPECIAL EVENTS

Successful campaigns have two things in common: good planning and employee participation. Special events are your opportunity to add a little something extra to the campaign. Not only do they raise extra funding for United Way, but they can be instrumental in team development and great for company spirit. Use this as an opportunity to further educate your employees about United Way and most importantly, have FUN! Remember, not every special event has to be elaborate. When planning your campaign events, keep in mind:

## Available Resources

- ▶ People
- ▶ Materials
- ▶ Incentives
- ▶ Entertainment
- ▶ Inspiration
- ▶ Facility
- ▶ Budget
- ▶ Communication

Asking vendors and partners for donations is a great way to minimize costs and raise more money for your United Way campaign.

## Tips for a Successful Event

- ▶ Be creative.
- ▶ Events should be strategically scheduled throughout the campaign to be most successful.
- ▶ Make it easy for employees to participate.
- ▶ Secure the support of upper management.
- ▶ Involve a team in the planning and implementation process.
- ▶ In addition to raising additional funds, your event can build morale, promote volunteerism and/or create greater understanding of United Way.
- ▶ Remember, when planning special events, please stress that the support for the event is in addition to the individual campaign pledge.
- ▶ Special events can be held at any time throughout the year. In fact, the most successful events are often held outside of the campaign. This will enhance your campaign and elevate United Way as a year-round presence.
- ▶ Your relationship manager is here to help plan and support your special events.





# LOW OR NO COST EVENTS

## Baby/Pet Photo Contest

Employees enter their favorite baby or pet photo for a fee. They can enter as many pets as they want. Post photos online or in a break/lunch room or other common area. Coworkers vote for the cutest pet.

## Balloon Pop

Employees donate prizes for this event – a variation of a traditional raffle. Before filling a balloon with helium, put a note inside with the name of the prize. Employees pay \$1-\$5 to buy a balloon and pop it to find out what they've won.

## Basketball ShootOut

Charge participants a fee for a chance at three free throws. If they make all three they can move on to the next round. The shoot-off continues until the last player is standing. The winner receives a prize or bragging – rights you decide!



## Bingo

Sell bingo cards to employees. Ask local stores to donate prizes for the winners.

## Book Sale

Advertise for employees to bring in used books. Hold a book sale at discounted prices. Donate any remaining books to a local United Way impact partner.

## Bowling Tournament

Participants get sponsors to pledge a certain amount of money for the number of pins knocked over.



## Campaign Incentives

Offer different incentives for participation in campaign events like paid time off, a long lunch or casual day. (See the end of this book for incentive coupons or create your own.)

## Candy, Balloon, Cookie, Cupcake, Compliment or FlowerGrams

Pick one of the above and have employees purchase to send to their colleagues. The item is delivered with a card with a special message like "thanks for all you do." or "I appreciate you!"

## Cake Walk

Have employees bake cakes and hold a cake walk.

## Chili Cook-Off Contest

Employees cook their favorite recipe and enter it into a cook-off contest. A panel of "chili experts" selects the Official Chili Champion. Charge an entry fee and a fee for sampling the chili. Talk to a hotel representative about donating a weekend stay at their hotel for the winner.



## Coin War

Got change? Most people do! Why not enter it into a friendly competition that goes to charity? Each department has an empty water jug. Employees drop in spare change: quarters, dimes, and nickels are considered positive; pennies and dollars count as negative. Employees can sabotage another department's jug with pennies and dollars that are subtracted from their totals. The department with the most money in their jar wins!

## Craft and Bake Sales

This popular activity gives everyone a chance to share their crafting skills or special baking talents. All crafts or baked goods are donated and a fee is charged to purchase items.



## LOW OR NO COST EVENTS *(continued)*

### Department Breakfast or Lunch

Department members purchase and cook the food and charge coworkers to eat. Ideas include a pancake or waffle breakfast, and a taco bar or spaghetti and meatballs for lunch.

### Dessert Cart/Bakery Cart

Wheel a cart of bagels, doughnuts, danishes, cookies, brownies, cake, etc. through the office, collecting United Way donations in exchange for the goodies.

### Dress the Boss Day

Employees pay \$2 for the boss to wear a particular article of clothing. (Hats, feather boas, capes and funny ties have been used.) If he has a meeting he has to pay \$2 to take it off, or one of his staff can take pity and bail him out for \$2.

### Duct Tape Challenge

This can be an individual challenge or department reward. For the individual challenge, charge employees per piece of tape used to duct tape their supervisor or other company executives to the wall. Or, challenge your departments - whichever one raises the most money gets to tape the boss to the wall at the end of the campaign.



### Dunk Tank

Rent a dunk tank for the afternoon (especially great during the summer months) and charge employees to dunk the CEO and other top executives.

### Employee Cookbook

Collect and group recipes into a customized cookbook. Employees' children create illustrations for the cookbook, including cover. If possible, ask a local business to provide free printing and binding services. Sell the cookbook to employees and friends.

### Employee Raffle

Ask employees to contribute something special for a raffle prize:

- ▶ Homemade pies
- ▶ One-day vacation
- ▶ Lunch with a co-worker
- ▶ Prizes donated by vendors
- ▶ Car wash
- ▶ Tickets to a special event
- ▶ Employee parking spot

Employees make contributions using pledge forms. Employees turning in pledge forms early receive three raffle tickets. Employees turning in pledge forms after the "early" date, but before the Campaign's final event, receive one raffle ticket. Employees who make a certain dollar pledge receive two additional raffle tickets.

### Executive Auction

Get the executive staff to donate half a day to United Way. Auction each executive off to the employees. The executive must take over the employee's job for half a day.

### Executive Chair Race

Set up a relay course for executives to go through sitting in chairs. Use a stopwatch to time contestants with the best time winning a prize. Observers wager on their favorite contestants and the winners receive a prize.



### Flowers

Work with a local florist to donate flowers that employees buy for a reduced price. For a special touch have a couple of employees deliver the flowers in tuxedos.

### Ice Cream Social

Have executive serve ice cream to show their United Way support. Try to get ice cream donated by local vendors and charge for each bowl. Everyone loves a good ice cream social!

### Jeans Day

Have employees pay a set amount to wear jeans to work for one day. Charge a higher amount to wear jeans for the whole week.

## LOW OR NO COST EVENTS *(continued)*

### Jump Rope Contest

Contestants pay a \$5 entry fee. Observers pay \$1 to wager on who they think will last the longest.

### Karaoke

Employees pay to vote on the executive they want to sing karaoke. If the executive does not want to sing, they can pay a fee to pass the task to someone else. Or, hold a karaoke contest during lunch with employees paying a fee to participate.



### Luau

Invite employees to a mini luau. They can buy pineapple upside down cake, ham and other goodies. Give prizes to employees wearing the most outrageous Hawaiian attire.

### Lunch Box Auction

Have each participating employee pack a special lunch. Encourage them to get creative and make deluxe sandwiches or wraps. Include delicious treats like brownies or chocolate chip cookies. Auction them off before lunch.



### Name that Tune

Employees pay \$5 to participate. Contestants then go up against each other to test their knowledge of songs.

### Office Olympics

Employees form teams and are charged an entry fee to participate. Teams compete in different events (office chair relays, company trivia, archery (with rubber bands), finger skating (typing), coffee cup relay, etc.), spaced over several days or all at once. The winning team takes home the "gold medal" and office bragging rights.

### Order Up!

Take orders for lunch for an area restaurant. Charge a delivery fee.

### Paper Horse Race

Employees purchase a paper horse, name and decorate it. Each day they receive one draw and the horse moves based on the draw. If an employee doesn't like the draw, they can purchase a new draw. Limit redraws to one per day to make the game last longer.

### Pick an Egg, Any Egg

Fill plastic eggs with prizes or cash, charge for the opportunity to pick an egg.

### Pie in the Face

Employee pays \$5 for a pie to be thrown in the face of the executive of their choice.

### Popcorn Sales

Sell popcorn to employees. Who can resist the smell of fresh popcorn popping?



### Pot Luck Luncheon

Participating employees bring a hot-dish, appetizer, salad, side, dessert, etc. to be shared. Paper products are also needed. There is no sign up for this event. Items brought are completely random. Employees pay \$5 to fill their plate.

### Push Up Contest

Contestants pay a \$5 entry fee. Observers pay \$1 to wager on who they think will do the most push ups. The winner is the one that does the most push ups.

### Pumpkin Carving or Decorating Contest

Plan a Halloween theme and hold a pumpkin carving contest. Find a local business willing to donate pumpkins for your organization to sell to your employees. Employees buy pumpkins for their families, their staff or to use in the contest. Employees enter carved or decorated pumpkins individually or by group. Charge \$5 to enter and \$1 to vote. Award prizes in various categories such as:

- ▶ Best traditional pumpkin
- ▶ Most creative pumpkin
- ▶ Best effort by a group
- ▶ Best effort by an individual



## LOW OR NO COST EVENTS *(continued)*

### Put Your Best Foot Forward

Line up senior managers and/or other employees for some unique mug shots – shoes only! Hold a contest before your campaign kicks off to see if employees can figure out who's who.

### Silent Auction

Gather gift items and create bid sheets, being certain to provide a minimum bid for each item. Put together a book that shows all items so that everyone is able to see the items available, or create on your company intranet. Tap employee's talents and resources for themed baskets.

### Slipper or Shorts Day

Have employees pay a set amount to wear their slippers or shorts to work. (Great for call centers.)

### Sucker for a Buck

Pay \$1 and get a sucker and a prize that goes with it (color code the bottom of the sucker; certain color=certain prize).

### Talent Show

Put on a talent show during lunch time. Have contestants pay a \$5 entry fee. Observers pay \$1 to attend the show. A panel of judges determines the winner. Offer silly prizes or awards.

### Team Jersey Day

Have employees pay a set amount to wear their favorite sports team jersey or T-shirt.

### Tricycle Races

Create teams with three or four riders. Teams are named and publicized in advance, allowing employees to make pledges or bets on the winning team. Team members ride large tricycles (rent or arrange to borrow from a cooperating store) through a predetermined course; inside or outside depending on your space availability. Mark the course with signs or tape on the floor. Fans are able to watch and cheer from different areas. The race is designed as a relay. Team members pass off a flag, pinwheel, teddy bear or similar item to their succeeding team member.

### Ugly Lamp

Have employees decorate a lamp and make it as ugly as possible. Employees will have to pay \$5 to have it removed from their desk and be able to put it on another coworker's desk.



# MAJOR EVENTS

## 5K

Pick a location, date & time; establish cost to participate; advertise with emails and posters. Charm City Run (or other local running clubs) can help with the timing and establishing of the event.

## Carnival

Invite employees to an old-fashioned carnival, complete with cake walks, bake sale, food and contests. Hold a hula-hoop contest and hoop shoot to really give it that carnival feeling. Set up a dunk tank with all your executives. Throw pies at all your favorite executives. Have a bean bag toss. Charge participants a fee to enter the contests and play games.

## CEO/Executive Car Wash

Employees donate \$5 to have their car washed by the boss. Charge extra for special services like cleaning the interior or polishing the rims. Charge for pictures of the employee with the boss washing their car.

## International Food Day

Employees team together to create tasty treats from around the world. Employees decorate their own booths/tables and dress in appropriate costumes. Hold the event over the lunch hour, allowing employees to purchase tickets redeemable for food at the booths. A panel of "celebrity" judges awards prizes.

## Casino Night

You will need:

- ▶ Blackjack tables
- ▶ A roulette wheel
- ▶ A poker table or two
- ▶ One bingo table
- ▶ Food and drinks

Invite employees and their families. Local businesses can donate prizes and items for winners. Many party rental stores have gaming tables that give casino night a real Vegas-like experience.

## Golf Tournament

United Way of Indian River County has lots of experience with charity golf tournaments and has someone on staff to assist you and your Relationship Manager. There are only two really critical things you have to do to make it a success. Recruit a tournament organizing committee that has a big, fat collective Rolodex! You need people to help you that know lots of people who can help and aren't afraid to ask them to do so. Trust the golf pro at the golf course you hire for direction in planning.





Thank you for helping people  
through our United Way campaign.

# Call In Well

Use this coupon and take a day off.  
It's a small way of saying thanks for your pledge.



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# Casual Friday

Use this coupon and wear jeans for a day.  
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Thank you for helping people  
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# Flee @ 3

Use this coupon and get off work early.  
It's a small way of saying thanks for your pledge.



Thank you for helping people  
through our United Way campaign.

# Flee @ 3

Use this coupon and get off work early.  
It's a small way of saying thanks for your pledge.



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Thank you for helping people  
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# Sleep in late

Use this coupon and hit that snooze button a few extra times!  
It's a small way of saying thanks for your pledge.



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