

# Campaign Themes and Special Event Ideas

## Theme ideas:

- LIVE UNITED
- Be a superhero!
- Get in the game
- Lights! Camera! Action!
- Teaming up for our community
- Dare to care
- Under the sea
- Take a walk on the wild side! (safari)
- Hollywood
- Indy 500 or NASCAR
- New York! New York!
- Mardi Gras
- Shoot for the stars
- Hawaiian luau
- Academy Awards/Red carpet
- Mystery theme
- Olympics
- Back to school
- 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s
- The great outdoors
- Grease (The movie)
- Music mania
- United Way 007
- Wild wild west

## Battle of the Sexes

It's the men against the women in the company to see which one gets the highest percent participation. At the kick-off meeting, have a short game show in which two men and two women volunteer to be contestants. Women have to answer questions about topics that men know a lot about, and vice versa.

## Beat the bad habit

Get co-workers to stop being tardy to meetings, popping their gum, failing to recycle, leaving letterhead in the copy machine, whatever! Offenders pay a quarter for their transgressions!

## Biggest Loser contest

Incorporate health into an event and conduct a "Biggest Loser" contest. Charge a registration fee and hold weekly weigh-ins with the biggest loser winning a prize and registration fee donated.

## Building for our future

Offer volunteer opportunities; hold a LEGO or Lincoln Log building contest.

## Sports

Hold a tailgate party. Have a playing field with players advancing towards the goal. "Go the extra yard - Give!" Hold contests between Packers and Bears or Brewers and Cubs fans. Make the loser dress in gear from the other team.



## Tourney Time

Hold a broomball, softball, tee-ball, kickball, tennis, or ping-pong tournament.

## Auction or Rummage Sale

Ask employees to donate an item to be auctioned off or sold. Items can include books, DVDs, or video games, a service (car wash) or handmade item (e.g. baked goods or crafts). Advertise your event well in advance and combine it with a potluck lunch. Have volunteers price, sort and set up display tables.

## Baby/Pet Picture Contest

Post employees' baby pictures and sponsor a contest to guess who's who. Have employees purchase chances to guess. The contest can also be done with pictures of pets.

## Bake Sale or Farmer's Market

Ask employees to bring in baked goods or extra items from their gardens to sell. Advertise well in advance of the sale with posters, flyers and email.

## Casual Day

Casual Days are very simple to run. Make sure you get permission from management. Charge employees \$5 to dress casually on the designated day. Employees can wear a sticker that says they are dressed casually in support of United Way. Request casual day stickers from your United Way representative.

## Only in Wisconsin!

Highlight things unique to the Badger state: build cheese curd structures, Packer party, polka dancing contest, guess what shows/movies take place in Wisconsin, design your own Harley or ride your Harley to work day, Where in Wisconsin is ?

## Penny Wars

This event can last the duration of your campaign. Have departments compete to collect the most pennies. For an interesting twist, non-pennies are worth negative points. For example, a nickel would cancel out five pennies. This allows people to sabotage other teams while raising more money for United Way.



LiveUnitedBR.org

United Way  
Blackhawk Region



### **Potluck Lunch**

Ask each staff member to contribute a dish for a potluck luncheon. Make a sign-up form ahead of time to ensure a mix of salads, starters, main courses, drinks and desserts. Add a multicultural twist by requesting dishes from all over the world. Charge a small fee to eat.

### **Pumpkin Carving Contest**

Set different categories for judging (most creative, scariest, funniest, etc.). Charge teams/individuals to enter or charge people to vote for their favorite.



### **Survivor**

Create tribes (teams) to compete throughout your campaign for prizes. Hold luxury challenges daily where groups compete mentally or physically for a treat such as soda, candy or raffle tickets. Suggestions for luxury challenges include: United Way quiz, office mini-putt game, trivia game or scavenger hunt.

### **Balloon Pop**

Blow up balloons and place a numbered ticket in each balloon. Participants purchase balloons and pop them to win a prize. Balloons can be placed around the building to create a festive atmosphere or put on a cart and taken throughout the office.

### **Barbecue**

A barbecue is a common component of United Way campaigns. To make your barbecue successful advertise the items that will be served and sell tickets well in advance so that you can determine how many hamburgers (or hot dogs, steaks, etc.) you will need. Encourage management to cook.

### **Candy Grams**

Sell candy grams to employees for a small fee and deliver them on the last day of your campaign. Try to pick a treat that ties into your campaign theme.

### **Chili Lunch or Cook-off**

Invite employees to bring in a batch of their best chili, then have co-workers judge each chili based on taste, texture and fire value. Advertise and sell tickets in advance. Provide rolls and salad. Charge an entrance fee and tasting fee.

### **Coffee or Bakery Cart**

Arrange for volunteers to bring a coffee and snack cart through the office. Advertise it in advance. Solicit donations of coffee and snacks from suppliers or ask co-workers to contribute baked goods. If you purchase items, make sure you sell them at a profit.

### **Crazy Olympics**

Employees compete in crazy "athletic" events for silly prizes. Participants donate to enter. Can hold during the noon-hour each day of your campaign. Observers wager bets on their favorite participants. Examples of events: three-legged race, tricycle race, paper airplane-throwing, wastebasket basketball, mini-golf using beach balls, pool cues, etc. Use your imagination! Encourage interdepartmental competition and hold finals in the main lobby so that employees can cheer on their colleagues.

### **Decorating Contest**

Host a decorating contest and charge participants to enter or charge employees to vote on a winner. Items to be decorated could include an office door, a piggy bank, a toy car, a T-shirt or

anything else you can think of!

### **Employee Talent Show**

Hold a talent contest. Charge an entry fee for contestants or for audience members to vote. Award prizes for the top three contestants or for the categories of your choosing (most talented, most creative, best group, etc.)

### **Executive Car Wash**

Ask members of the senior management team to wash cars during the lunch hour. Hold the car wash in the parking lot and charge employees \$3 or \$5 to have their cars washed.

### **Games (Carnival Style)**

Set up old-fashioned carnival games such as a ring toss, fish pond and balloon dart-throw. Award prizes to the winners.

### **Sausage Race**

Hold a Klement's Sausage race! Have designated employees wear the costumes and race around the parking lot. Employees can bet on winners. Make it extra fun by requiring specific sausages to start behind or ahead of the pack (those under 30 step back three paces, person signing all paychecks step up four paces, etc).

### **Pizza party**

Reward the department with the highest participation with a free pizza party

### **Say Thanks!**

Recognition is important. So is saying thank you, often. Make sure to provide United Way with a list of donors so we can also say thank you. Leave a special treat:

- You are a lifesaver! Give a lifesaver candy
- You take the cake! Leave a cupcake with a card
- A toast to a job well done! Fill a champagne or wine glass with jelly beans
- We appreciate our Motivated and Multi-talented volunteers! Give bag of M&Ms.



**See Campaign Toolbox online for additional ideas and to download materials, tools and resources.**