

Great Special Event Ideas

We'd like to share some of our favorite event ideas. If you have a great event idea that's not on the list, please email it to JolindaG@mankatounitedway.org or GailG@mankatounitedway.org.

- **Casual for a Cause:** Participate in Causal for a Cause. Employees can pay \$3-5 to wear jeans and dress casually for the day. United Way has a sticker template you can print out online under Campaign Resources.
- **CEO Challenge:** Ask your top executives to challenge the employees to reach a specific fundraising goal. Once the goal is reached, host an event where the CEO celebrates the success in a unique way – like shaving, working as receptionist for a half-day, cooking breakfast or washing cars for the department with the largest increase.
- **Music to My Ears:** Hold a karaoke event with a suggestion donation as an entrance fee. Then, turn up the fun by having your co-workers donate to have someone sing (or stop them from singing).
- **You've Got Talent:** Find your company's hidden talent by hosting a talent show in your conference room at lunch or after work. Make sure that the executives are on board – and that they have some good acts!
- **Dunk Tank:** Rent a dunk tank for the day. Your employees will have fun and can donate for a chance to dunk their favorite executive.
- **So You Think You Can Sing?** Hold an "American Idol" contest, where executives compete. Employees can vote for their favorite manager by donating.
- **Casino Night:** What are the ingredients for a successful Casino Night? Excited employees, a few gaming tables and snacks!
- **Go for the Gold!** Bring the Workplace Olympics to your office! Use everyday office items for the competition (like office chair races and wastepaper basketball) and be creative. Don't forget to give the winners medals (you can make them out of paper clips)!
- **Ready "Fore" Some Fun?** Set up a portable putting green. Employees buy chances to hit a hole-in-one. Those who make a hole-in-one are eligible for prizes.
- **Wii Are Ready to Party:** Have employees bring in their video game console and games. People can donate to play. Wii skiing and Rock Band are always good choices!
- **Executive Car Wash:** Employees donate \$10 to have their car washed by the organizations' VIPs. Request an extra donation for a photo to capture the moment.
- **Hoopng It Up:** Hold 2-on-2 interdepartmental basketball tournaments, using a portable basketball hoop in the main lobby. Employees can "bet" on which team will win. Everyone who bets on the winning team can be entered into a raffle to win the hoop.
- **Fashion Hang-Ups:** Employees can bring in unique fashion accessories to affix to one of a group of willing managers throughout the day for \$1 per piece. In turn, a manager can remove any item for \$2.
- **Positive Procrastination:** Show off your skills you developed while procrastinating with office competitions – paper airplane flying, waste paper basketball, remote-controlled boat race (in your company's pool or fountain) and yo-yo contests.

- **Do You Have Game?** Recruit employees to play a chosen board game. Create a pool around the winning team or allow employees to move/acquire a game piece for every returned pledge form.
- **Competitive Eating Contests:** Find your office's competitive eating super star. You can either pick a classic food – like hot dogs, wings or donuts – or get creative. Participants have to donate to enter.
- **Lights! Camera! Action!** Have a Hollywood-themed party. Hold a “Romancing the Scones” bake sale or a “Bowl Durham” bowling party. Let employees donate to wear their favorite celebrity sunglasses or hats.
- **Show Off Your Moves!** Hold a company dance party during lunchtime or after work. It's a great way to unwind and see if your executives have the moves. You can turn it into a disco theme, where employees can wear their favorite 70s accessories. Don't forget the disco ball!
- **Baby, Pet or Prom Picture Match Game:** Invite employees to try their luck at matching baby, pet or prom pictures of employees. Charge employees to vote and award a fun prize to the person with the most correct matches.
- **Tricycle Races:** Set up a challenging tricycle course for executives at the office. Employees can “bet” on the winner.
- **Back to School:** Relive the glory years of school (without all the homework). Collect school supplies for a United Way agency. Hold a spelling bee with managers versus employees or department versus department. Contestants must spell the word correctly or everyone on the team must pay. The winner gets a prize.
- **Comedy Hour:** Ask a local comedian or improv group to donate their services over the lunch hour or recruit your own internal talent. Have employees buy tickets to attend.
- **Joke Books:** Employees submit their favorite jokes and donate \$1 to vote on the worst!
- **Stress Darts:** As a stress reliever, offer employees the opportunity to pay \$1 for three darts. Balloons with paper inside listing a prize serve as targets.
- **Funniest Home Video Contests:** Invite employees to create their own “home” or “work” videos. Charge an entry fee at a viewing party; offer a prize.
- **Put Yourself in Their Shoes:** Ask employees to wear a crazy pair of shoes and enjoy a wild and crazy lunch. The menu: FOOT-long hot dogs, SHOESTRING potatoes, CORN chips, ARCHway cookies, and SOLE music e.g. “Blue Suede Shoes.”
- **Whose Legs are Those?** Line up co-workers for mug shots of their legs in Bermuda shorts, legs only. Encourage employees to pay a small fee (\$1) to guess whose legs belong to which co-workers.
- **United Way 007:** Clues are given to employees in the form of riddles. The department or individual who figures out all the riddles receives a prize at the end of the campaign.
- **Pucker-Up Pig:** For a set donation amount, employees can cast votes for the co-worker who will “kiss the pig” at the end of the campaign. This will also work for other animals.
- **Exotic Locales:** Whether you transform your campaign into a Hawaiian luau, African safari or the Australian outback, employees are sure to have a wild time. Encourage staff and volunteers to dress the part. Host a lunch with theme-related food.

- **Employee Cookbook:** Have employees donate their favorite recipes to be published in a company cookbook. A variation of this theme is to sell suggestion books on golf, gardening, etc. Have employees' children provide illustrations.
- **Ice Cream Social:** Set up an ice cream bar with a variety of favorite toppings. Charge employees by the scoop.
- **Lunch Box Auction:** Have employees create gourmet lunches to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. Give prizes for the most creative, nutritious, elegant or humorous meals.
- **Tailgate Party:** Create a sports theme party to coincide with football season. Hold the party in the parking lot. Serve hot dogs, chips, soda and play a game of flag football.
- **"Breakfast of Champions":** Decorate the conference room with athletic gear, flags and banners and divide departments into teams to compete in table football. Serve Wheaties for extra energy!
- **Wine Tasting:** Hold a wine tasting and have employees donate to attend. All attendees can rate the wine – and don't forget the cheese!
- **Waffle/Pancake Breakfast:** Sell tickets and have people sign-up for their choice of pancakes or waffles. Cook breakfast in your company cafeteria. Don't forget bacon and sausage!
- **Mini-Indy 500:** Rent or borrow remote controlled cars and set up an "Indy 500" race. Use office supplies to make the track more interesting. Teams can be sponsored to compete and spectators can "bet" on the winner.
- **Summo Mania!** Call a local company and rent the Summo Wrestling package. Have employees and executives pay to play.
- **Pumpkin Carving Contest:** Encourage each department to carve their own pumpkin. Employees can donate \$1 to vote for a winner.
- **Funny Stunts:** Have jars out in break room for each stunt that an employee suggests for a supervisor. The manager will do the one that collects the most money. Reasonable stunts only, of course.
- **Employee Trivia:** Collect unusual facts about employees, for example, "Name the employee who appeared on the David Letterman show?" Each staff member submits their guess. There is a \$5 donation per trivia sheet. Other themes could include music, organizational history, sports, etc.
- **Midnight Breakfast:** If your organization has a third shift, invite employees to donate for a midnight breakfast served by executives and other day employees.
- **Door Decorating Contest:** Hold a door decorating contest to raise awareness of the United Way campaign. Employees can vote for their favorite by donating \$1. The winning decorators win a pizza party.
- **Game Show Mania:** Divide your staff into four teams that compete in a game modeled after "Family Feud" or "The Price is Right."
- **24-Hour Bake Sale:** Hold a 24-hour bake sale so employees during a later shift can participate.
- **Well Wishers:** Put a wishing well in your lobby where people can drop their spare change.

- **“Buy a Big Shot” Auction:** Get executives to donate a half-day to your campaign. Auction off each executive to the highest-bidding employee or department to work for them for a day.
- **Fashion Show:** Have employees ham it up and model items, such as sweat shirts, hats and jackets with your company’s logo. Employees donate to see the show.
- **Penny Wars:** Start a competition with different floors in your office for a free breakfast. You may discover some fun-spirited cheating and late night penny bottle stuffing – with additional donations.
- **Mardi Gras:** Everyone loves a party – so why not model your campaign after the biggest party in the world? Invite a jazz band; hold a “float” contest using regular office supplies, sell beads and/or host a Cajun potluck.
- **White Elephant Sale:** Ask employees to bring in a wrapped “white elephant” gift...an unwanted, but usable (although not necessarily useful) object from their home. All who donate can receive a raffle ticket and when their name is called, they can choose one of the mystery items.
- **Book, Music and Video Sale:** Have employees donate old books, CDs and videos for a company or department-wide sale, with proceeds earmarked for United Way.
- **Ugly Tie or Earring Contest:** Ask employees to wear their worst ties or earrings to work. People can vote on the winner by contributing a dollar.
- **Get “Real”:** Host your own reality show themed party. You can even extend the theme to your campaign with daily “challenges” for employees.
- **Hoppin’ for Donations:** Invite employees to a “Fifties Style” party. Give prizes for most authentic dress. Hang posters that describe what fifty cents more per week can do for our community.
- **Academy Awards Night:** Have employees dress as their favorite celebrities. Create video movie “skits” using your favorite movies.
- **Bon Voyage:** With a traveling theme, you can host a “bon voyage” party as a victory celebration. Everyone who gives through United Way gets a “passport” to get into the party.