Educational Campaign Ideas

Use Email:
Distribute “20 Days of Email” to your employees. You can download short statements, along with many other tools, from the United Way website. Check it out at www.yourlocalunitedway.org.

Mystery Hunt:
Clues (sent via email or memo) lead hunters to guess a United Way agency or co-worker who is connected to an agency. You could have a new hunt each week for a month. This is a great way to educate employees about United Way programs and services.

Bagging It:
Designate a day as “Brown Bag Day” every month or every other month. Encourage staff to bring their lunches on that day and bring in a speaker to talk about a United Way funded program. After the lunch, post a brief summary of the presentation on your website, print it in your newsletter, or distribute via email.

Got Games?:
Educate employees about United Way and its partner programs in a fun way by incorporating a game show theme. Use information from United Way printed materials and our partners’ web sites. Play the game(s) at a group meeting, or give everyone the opportunity to play by creating a worksheet or posting questions online.

Start Right:
Make United Way part of your new staff orientation. We have packets of information that will help your new employee learn more about United Way in our community.

Literature Drop:
Help your employees learn more about United Way’s impact in the community. Set up a table and make brochures, newsletters and other materials from United Way and our partner programs available. Posters, table tents and note cards are also great for building awareness.

New Campaign Ideas

Office Games:
Individuals or teams, you can do brackets and advance winners throughout the week. Employees can bid on who might win. Employees can get a raffle ticket for $1 and put it in the bucket of the team they are rooting for. Then the winning team receives some type of fun trophy along with a prize to the lucky winner from the winning teams raffle bucket. Examples can be “Minute to Win it” or Candy Land.
Where is …? (Name of CEO or a person in management):
Create a life-size cardboard person and use a cut-out picture of a staff member (CEO) to put on the cardboard person. Employees can send this to anyone’s office with a note. $1.00 buys you the opportunity to send it, $2.00 will allow you to have it removed, $3.00 to also find out who sent it to you. At the end of the week, the cut out can be auctioned off.

Hat Wars:
Want to see your manager or co-workers in a crazy looking hat? Pay a fee to have someone wear one of these crazy hats for an hour. Person receiving the hat can get “revenge” if they want to by paying a fee for their buyer to wear one of the hats the following day. You can pay for more than an hour if you wish. Be creative with the hats and have fun. You can even use similar rules as the idea above.

Talent Show:
Host a talent show in your break room or cafeteria. Attendees can vote on each contestant by placing purchased tickets into envelopes. The contestants can choose non-profits for their donations to go to.

Pink Flamingo Fundraiser
Purchase a couple of those plastic pink flamingos and place all in someone’s cube/office. In order to remove the flamingos from said person’s cube they must pay to do so at set amount and then they place the flamingos in another person’s cube/office and the idea repeats. You could choose the first person who will receive the flamingos based off top donor, volunteer in the office, manager, etc.

Arts & Crafts Sale:
You may be surprised to find how many employees are crafty. Host a craft fair where employees can sell their creations and proceeds can be donated to their favorite charity.

Internal Garage Sale:
Have employees bring in items to be sold during an internal garage sale. All proceeds can be donated to a non-profit of your choice.

Food Related Campaign Activities– If you FEED them, they WILL come!

Root Beer Float Sale:
This is a welcomed activity for those hot summer afternoons in July and August.

Latte Stand and Giving Example:
For more distinguished coffee drinkers, offer a latte-stand during a morning meeting. Remind them how much a cup of gourmet coffee or tea costs. Give examples of what giving up one cup of coffee, one soda or one candy bar a day can do for a person in need. Ask if they can donate that same amount (or more) each week to United Way.
Bake Sale/Cookie Exchange:
Ask employees to bake their favorite cookies or other goodies. Sell plates of the treats to employees. Charge an additional fee for the recipe.

Baking Contest
Rather than the traditional bake sale, have employee’s pay a fee to enter into a baking contest. Gather judges and the winner of the baking contest would be able to choose their favorite nonprofit to receive the fundraiser total. You can then offer to sell the winner’s recipe for a small fee.

Employee Cookbook:
Encourage employees to donate their favorite recipes to be collected, published and sold in a company cookbook. A variation of this theme is to sell books on golf, gardening, etc. Request employees’ children provide illustrations.

Candy Grams:
Sell candy with your company or United Way’s logo on it. All proceeds go to United Way or a non-profit of your choice.

Eating Contest:
Who can eat the most in a given amount of time (hot dogs, pie, crackers, pickles, etc.)

Chili Cook-Off:
Employees cook their favorite chili. Organize a panel of “expert” judges to decide on the best recipe. Charge employees to sample and eat lunch or even have the employees vote.

Potluck Payoff:
Organize a potluck lunch and have everyone bring a favorite dish and charge employees to have lunch.

Bakery Cart:
Wheel a serving cart through the workplace and sell bagels, doughnuts, cookies, Danish, coffee and juice, with proceeds going to United Way or a non-profit of your choice.

Campaign Activities & Events

Basket Auction:
Ask each department in your organization to sponsor, create and fill a theme basket (spa, chocolate, golf, cooking). The baskets are then auctioned off.

Dress Down Day:
Sell employees the right to dress casually or silly for a day. Variations include: “Silly Hat Day”, “Sport Team Day” or “Ugly Shoe Day”. Or have employees donate a certain amount through payroll to qualify.
Survivor Game:
Each participant pays $5 to join and has to do something each day to stay on the island. They have to: bring an item for the silent auction, bring in baked goods for the bake sale or wear a certain color. Winner receives paid time off.

Coin War:
Set up large empty water bottles for each department in a central location. Employees drop their spare change into the bottle. Coins are positive while paper money is negative. The group with the highest point value wins. All cash collected is donated to United Way or a non-profit of your choice.

Rummage Sale: Great for Donation Drives
Ask employees to donate old items (books, CDs, videos) for a company or department-wide sale. Unsold items may be donated to a local shelter.

Campaign Games & Contests

Who Is It?:
Gather baby pictures of co-workers. Have a contest to see who can correctly name the most co-workers. Contestants pay a fee to take part. Give an award for the most correct matches.

Office Olympics:
Make up your own “Olympic” games having a team admission fee. Brainstorm new ideas– roll the egg (not hardboiled) with your chin across the finish line without breaking it, relay race handing off a full glass of water on a tray using one hand spilling as little as possible, office chair races, waste basket free throw, paper airplane toss (use hula hoop as target). Use your imagination!

White Elephant Sale:
Have items in storage you don’t use? Gifts you never returned? Donate them to the sale or conduct a gift exchange. Your trash is someone else’s treasure!

Other Ideas…
Carnival Games, Dunk Tank, Cake Walk, Musical Chairs, Guessing Game– How many M&M’s in the Jar, Singing/Poetry/Songwriting Contest, Pizza Party, Popcorn Sale.

Incentives & Prizes

- Traveling trophy for department with highest participation
- Sleep-in-late or leave-work-early pass
- Bonus vacation days
- Prime parking spaces/free parking
- Gift certificates donated by local merchants
- Mugs, t-shirts, key chains, etc., with company logo
- Movie passes
- Casual days
- Department pizza party
Day off to do volunteer work
- Cafeteria coupons
- Lunch or dinner with CEO
- Gift baskets or goodie bags
- Early dismissal on Friday
- A two-hour lunch break

Saying Thank You
During and after a successful campaign, it’s important to say “thanks” to all the employees who volunteered their time and energy.
- Host a “thank you” breakfast or luncheon at a local restaurant or have management cook food on office premises.
- Develop a bulletin board featuring your employees’ efforts: hang a giant thank you card, post a thank you from an agency or develop a collage of photos of your employees doing volunteer work or helping with the campaign.
- Insert “thank you” notes with pay checks or pay stubs.
- Distribute candy with a personalized note from management.
- Display thank you messages on computer screens, bulletin boards, voice mail, etc.
- Spend a few minutes at the next staff meeting during which your CEO can congratulate employees and acknowledge campaign workers.
- Partner with kids from a United Way agency and have them draw “thank you” cards for employees.
- Run a thank you ad in your company newsletter