



United Way
of Central Iowa

Campaign Theme/Special Event Ideas

Focus on the Future: “Live with 2020 Vision”

- **KICK OFF:** Put a positive twist on the year 2020 and theme your event around it. Encourage employees to increase their donation by \$20, attend 20 min of activities, volunteer 2 hours or for 20 days post campaign, increase participation by 20%, grow affinity/leadership giving by 20%, etc.
- **SUN/GLASSES CONTEST:** Have employees each wear their favorite pair of sun/glasses and have prizes for different categories. Employees vote with donations. Use this as an opportunity to learn more about United Way’s Vision to Learn program and education goals.
- **BLURRED VISION:** Take photos of iconic images or landmarks around your office and blur the photos. Host a contest to see who can guess the most correctly.

Sport/Fitness: “Life is Not a Spectator Sport – Go the Distance”

- **KICK OFF:** Rally everyone together to discuss
 - “touchdowns” (accomplishments of previous years)
 - “penalties and receptions” (UW community goals – where we started and how we will continue to succeed)
 - “huddles” (activities throughout the week)
- **MASCOT CONTEST:** Departments or individuals can design a mascot that will be used at your company throughout the year (not just campaign season). Mascots can be on paper, three-dimensional, or even life-size. Offer company apparel swag to the designer(s) of the chosen mascot.
- **PUSH UP CONTEST/JUMP ROPE:** Ever want to find out who the strongest person in the office is? Contestants pay \$5 entry fee. Observers pay \$1 to cheer on their favorite contestant. Winner earns a 30 min. massage gift card.
- **5K/BIKE RACE:** Run/bike individually all in one session or break it up per your schedule. Runners/bikers pay \$25. Provide a “race packet” including a tracking sheet, Live United t-shirt, and medal. Share your finish line photos with your company and hold an awards ceremony to recognize the top three individuals with silly/fun awards.
- **HOLD A LOCAL SPORTS TEAM DAY:** For a \$20 donation, employees wear their team gear on a Friday or any game day during the season. Host a tailgate party during the lunch hour and play sports trivia.

Back to School: “The ABCs of Caring”

- **KICK OFF:** Start off the week with a Pep Rally energizing your team for the upcoming week of campaign activities. Encourage employees to wear their school colors, bring their pom poms, and play their band instruments.



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- **SUPPLY DRIVE:** Collect school supplies and work with your UW staff person to identify an agency in need.
- **LITERACY KITS:** Purchase literacy kits from UW for each employee to complete as a team or at home with their family during a virtual snack time – don't forget the milk and cookies. Use this opportunity to learn from UW staff about how their investment impacts education work.
- **SPELLING BEE:** For \$5 per person, hold a spelling bee with managers vs. employees or department vs. department. Contestants must spell the word correctly or everyone on the team must pay \$1. The winner walks away with the coveted "Who Needs Spell Check" award.
- **GRADUATION CEREMONY:** Wrap up the week thanking employees for participating during a graduation ceremony. This is a great time to draw prizes, thank volunteers and announce reaching your goal. Nominate a valedictorian who went above and beyond, participating in events and advocating throughout the campaign. Distribute diplomas and include a fun coupon for a half-day of PTO.

Superhero: "Be Someone's Hero"

- **KICK OFF:** Have senior management dress up in superhero costumes for your rally. When you give your time or invest in United Way, you're making a difference in our community and seen as a hero.
- **MASK DIY:** Give employees a disposable face mask and start the timer. They have 15 min. to create a superhero identity and mask to share with the group. \$5 to participate, \$1 to vote for your favorite.
- **CELEBRATING EVERYDAY HEROES:** Nominate employees, vendors or community members who are heroes, making a difference in the lives of many. Send them a letter thanking them for their commitment to our communities.
- **BE A HERO BINGO:** Create a BINGO card encouraging employees to complete heroic acts – pay it forward in the drive through, pick up litter on your walk, rake your neighbor's leaves, volunteer 3 hours, etc. Completed cards are turned in for a chance to win a superhero themed gift basket.

Construction: "Under Construction: Working Together to Build a Better Community"

- **KICK OFF:** Have hard hats and caution cones available at your rally.
- **BUILDING BLOCKS:** Incorporate volunteering by holding a food can structure building contest. Ask employees to bring in or grab from the pantry, 5 non-perishable food items. Set the timer for 1 min. and see who builds the tallest structure. Set up time to donate the items to a local agency. Ask your UW staff person to talk about essential needs and how it is the building block for health, education, and financial stability.
- **ROAD SIGNS:** Make signs in the colors and shapes of road signs which say "CAUTION: Community-Building at Work"; "STOP Hunger"; "ONE WAY to a Better Community"; "YIELD: Think of Someone Else First." Hang them around the office or in your virtual background throughout campaign. Vote for your favorite for \$1/vote. Winner receives "early out" day.



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- **BUILDING A HOME:** Ask your United Way staff about volunteer opportunities with local housing organizations and initiatives.
- **SAFETY FIRST:** Hold a trivia game reviewing safety precautions within your company/office. Winner receives a grocery gift card.

Las Vegas: “What’s Raised Here, Stays Here”

- **KICKOFF:** Vegas is known for their amazing stage acts. Kick off your campaign with an employee talent show, comedian or entertainment pumping up everyone for the week to come.
- **JACKPOT INCENTIVE:** If 100% of participation is reached, earn extra day of PTO
- **CASINO GAMES:**
 - Bingo card – Create your own, including random acts of kindness, attending special events/educational sessions, pledging, volunteering, etc.
 - Card stacking – Give employees each a deck of cards. Set the timer and see who can build the tallest pyramid.
 - Best hand incentive - For each special event or educational, attendees earn a card. Whoever has the best poker hand at the end of the week is entered to win a prize.

Office Olympics: “Join the Winning Team” or “Living United, We All Win”

- **KICKOFF:** Hold your very own opening ceremony. Divide your employees into teams. Create a range of prizes from 1st to 3rd place for those who raises/participates the most.
- **THE MAIN EVENT:** Set up an obstacle course in the lunchroom, several offices, several floors of offices or outside. One station can be for typing a couple of paragraphs, another station for filing, another for photocopying, etc. The contestants pay an entry fee and the winner gets a ½ day PTO.
- **GAME ROOM COMPETITION:** Does your office have a game room? Set up a single elimination bracket for ping pong, 3-point shoot-out, Wii or four-square.
- **MINUTE TO WIN IT/NAILED IT:** Set each individual up with the resources to compete in a minute to win it/nailed it challenge. Competing virtually? Include your family.

Caring/Community Based: “Campaign that Cares” or “Caring for Our Community”

- **KICK OFF:** Start your campaign with inspirational stories of those who have been impacted by United Way. Ask employees to bring or donate a hygiene item for a local agency. Focus on your goal and the impact it will have when reached.
- **DAY OF VOLUNTEERING:** Work with your United Way staff person to identify volunteer opportunities to offer throughout your campaign.
- **SET UP AN “INTERVIEW CORNER”:** Invite employees to be videotaped explaining why they have pledged, what goal they would like to see their donations achieve or why they have a personal



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connection to the cause. The finished video can be shown at the end of the campaign and will make a great fundraising tool for next year.

- **EDUCATE & INSPIRE:** Educate peers on the community by scheduling talks with local agency partners or public or elected officials to discuss community needs and how employees can make a difference.
- **COMPLIMENT-O-GRAMS:** Employees pay to have messages delivered to co-workers with compliments or encouraging words. Charge \$1, \$2, or \$5 per compliment. Include a gift virtual gift card for a cup of coffee.

NASCAR/Racing Theme: “Driving Results”

- **KICK OFF:** Before the checkered flag waves, remind employees the results and impact their campaign has in communities. Give away a fun car themed basket to attendees.
- **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.
- **DRIVE CHANGE:** Split your office up into teams with a leadership team member leading the pack and host a change drive. Losing teams leadership member washes the winner’s car.
- **PIT PASS:** For employees who give at a leadership level, host a special lunch with them and the senior leaders for exclusive 1:1 time.
- **CAR CONTEST:** Equip employees with a packet of snacks (crispy rice and marshmallow bars, chocolate coated candies, pretzels) set the timer and start creating a car. Best design wins a car detail gift card.
- **EMPLOYEE CAR SHOW:** Have employees submit photos of their personal hot rods, motorcycles, cool cars, or family cars (your 5-year old’s hot wheels count.) Employees donate to vote for their favorite. Give away car wash tokens for different category winners.
- **VIRTUAL SCAVENGER HUNT:** Encourage employees to log on from their car. Whoever finds the most items/most unique item wins a car detail.

Tailgating / Homecoming: “Show Your Caring Spirit”

- **KICK OFF:** Invite a local sports celebrity to help kick off your campaign and share why they believe in supporting our communities.
- **“SHOW YOUR SPIRIT” DAY:** Encourage employees to show their school spirit by digging into their closets and pulling out their letterman jackets, team jerseys and old uniforms. They may also wear their children’s jackets and jerseys. On that same day, host your United Way educational session or a special event, allowing employees to interact and share.
- **BAGS TOURNAMENT:** Set up your elimination bracket for a socially distant tournament.
- **TAILGATE PARTY:** Hold the party in the parking lot. Serve hot dogs, chips, soda, and peanuts and charge a \$5 entry fee. Host a football punting contest for prizes.

Mystery/Detective: “Detecting Progress”



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- **KICK OFF:** Grab your best detective gear and announce your goals, events, and activities as a riddle for employees to solve.
- **007 DETECTIVE:** Have a 007 and Sherlock Holmes themed week. Send out announcements at meetings with riddles and have a “scavenger hunt” like game around the office. Employees who find the clues at the end of the week win a prize.
- **MYSTERY PACKAGE:** Employees bring a gift in a brown bag to be sold or auctioned during lunch hour or at the lunch auction sight unseen. The gift should be inexpensive and can be something interesting, humorous, and/or useful. Employees describe gift with 3 words and let the bidding begin.
- **TREASURE HUNT:** Sell daily clues to a mystery location where a treasure is hidden. The first employee to guess the location wins the treasure.
- **CAMPAIGN CLUE:** Clue is the name of the game. Create a United Way mystery in the office. Create the game around employees who are willing to participate and have some fun. Whoever can guess who committed the crime wins a prize. Or set up a live Clue game with a billiard room, candlestick and more.

Games/Activities: “United in the Game” or “GAME changers”

- **UNITED WAY TRIVIA:** Use pre-made questions to quiz employees on United Way’s work in the community.
- **M&M/JELLYBEAN JAR:** The famous “guess the number of beans in the jar” cannot be forgotten. Buy a guess for 50 cents. The person who guesses closest to the number in the jar, wins the jar of candy.
- **BALLOON POP:** Before filling a balloon with helium, put a note inside some of the balloons with the name of a prize. In other balloons, put a note with a campaign fact. Have employees purchase and pop the balloons.
- **COIN WAR:** Supply each department with an empty two-liter bottle. Invite employees to drop in spare change. For a fun twist, designate dollars as sabotage amounts and encourage competing departments to drop greenbacks into each other’s bottles. At the end of the campaign, count coins and subtract dollars. The department with the most money wins.
- **EMAIL BINGO:** Sell bingo cards leading up to the day you will hold email bingo. Throughout the day, send out numbers using email. The first three to get bingo win a prize.
- **OFFICE SCAVENGER HUNT**
- **MATCH THE BABY FACE CONTEST:** Employees bring photos of themselves as babies. Other employees buy ballots listing the photos by number and guess which baby is who. The employee who correctly identifies the most babies wins a prize.
- **OFFICE CONTESTS:** Let your peers show off their talents. Plan a talent show or pageant. Performers should perform for prizes and their talents should inspire giving. Let performers collect dollars while on stage to be given to the campaign.
- **FLAMINGOS:** Employees may pay \$X amount and the obnoxious birds will appear in their choice of department or someone’s office. The only way for a person or department to remove the birds is to pay a “flamingo removal fee.” They may then choose at that time where the birds are



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going to be relocated. People may also purchase “flamingo insurance,” this prevents the birds from landing in their office.

- **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 co-worker’s desk.
- **PUPPY LOVE:** Ever hear that a lot of pets look like their owners and vice-versa? Test this theory by having employees pay for a chance to try their luck at matching a pet picture to its correct owner. Award a prize to the contestant with the most correct answers and maybe provide gift certificates to a pet store for the owners who look the most like their pets.
- **BRING YOUR PET TO WORK DAY:** Invite employees to bring their favorite furry animal to work for a day. Ask employees to donate \$5 to participate.