



**United Way**  
Winnipeg

# Special Events

## Putting the Fun in Fundraising

Special Events are a fantastic way to create awareness, infuse your workplace with energy, and boost employee morale. They certainly can raise money, but the real value in special events is the excitement and momentum they create for your annual United Way workplace campaign.

Nothing inspires people to action like a compelling story of lives changed as a direct result of their support for the campaign. There are many passionate volunteers ready and willing to share their stories of triumph over adversity on United Way's Speakers' Bureau. Or consider playing our campaign videos to raise awareness about the work United Way does in our community thanks to workplace campaigns just like yours.

There are hundreds of innovative ways to raise awareness and create excitement about the United Way campaign. We've listed a handful of proven special events that you might consider:

<b>Agency Speaker</b>	Arrange for a member of United Way's Speakers' Bureau to attend a departmental meeting or coffee break. Most presentations take about 10 minutes.
<b>Agency Tours</b>	Arrange for your workplace committee, canvassers or small groups of employees to tour United Way agency partners see first-hand the work they do in our community. Tours take as little as 30 minutes.
<b>Auction</b> (Services)	Auction off your employees' special talents as prizes. Guitar lessons, cook dinner, valet parking, or buying & delivering coffee everyday for a week for example.
<b>Auctions</b> (Silent or Live)	Employees and or departments can donate baskets or prizes to the auction. Employees write their bid on a bidding sheet (silent)), or have a Guest Auctioneer and use paddles to bid (live).
<b>Bake / Book Sale</b>	All proceeds donated to United Way.
<b>BBQ Lunch or Breakfast</b>	Executive Chefs serve breakfast or lunch to kick off your campaign.
<b>Bowling</b>	Spend an evening with your colleagues while Bingo Bowling.
<b>Carnival / Mardi Gras</b>	Employees pay to play a variety of games with proceeds to United Way.
<b>Car Race / Horserace</b>	Build a large display of a racetrack with cars or horses representing each department. Cars/horses will advance around the track as dollars &/or participation rates increase in each department.
<b>Car Wash</b>	Executives and volunteers wash cars in the company parking lot over the lunch hour to maximize employee participation. Charge a flat minimal fee.
<b>Casual / Jean Days</b>	Charge \$1-\$2 to wear jeans on Friday or free when you return your pledge form. "I'm Dressed This Way for United Way" stickers easily identify participants.
<b>Celebration</b>	Hold a Celebration at the end of your campaign to thank all your volunteers and donors and celebrate your success!

<b>Chili Cook-off</b>	Coworkers compete for bragging rights for best chili recipe! Charge a small fee per bowl and include rolls for lunch.
<b>Coffee Cart</b>	Executives and/or Canvassers hand out free coffee &/or donuts as they distribute pledge forms and brochures. This event is great for workplaces that employ shift workers or those who can't leave their desk for traditional events.
<b>Cookbook</b>	Compile a cookbook of employee recipes and sell to raise money for United Way.
<b>Crossword Puzzle</b>	To create awareness, generate a crossword puzzle using clues and answers from United Way's website. Award United Way merchandise to the person who answers all questions correctly.
<b>Cupcake Day</b>	Order a dozen delicious cupcakes for \$15 and Cupcake Corner will donate \$7.00 to United Way.
<b>Dance Lessons</b>	Talented employees offer to teach dance, yoga or aerobic lessons for a small fee with all proceeds to United Way.
<b>Day of Caring</b>	Help out at a United Way agency partner during the week or on a weekend. Jobs may include painting, building a fence, planting gardens, BBQ's, etc.
<b>Dress Up Days</b>	Wear RED for United Way or dress according to a specific theme to build energy and excitement.
<b>Dunk Tank</b>	Employees pay a small fee to dunk their favorite Executive!
<b>Elevator Toll</b>	Charge a toll for anyone using the elevator on a particular day of the campaign. Hand out "tickets" with United Way facts to create awareness while raising money at the same time.
<b>Garage Sale</b>	Organize a collection drive, donate used goods or volunteer to work a table for Winnipeg's Biggest Garage Sale at the Winnipeg Convention Centre
<b>Jail &amp; Bail</b>	Employees pay a small bail to free their favorite Executive from "jail"! Advertise all proceeds to United Way.
<b>Lunch</b>	Executive Chefs serve lunch to kick off your campaign.
<b>Lunch &amp; Learn</b>	Leading up to your campaign, offer free information sessions during the lunch hour. Arrange for an Agency Speaker to present. Encourage employees to bring their own lunch.
<b>Office Olympics or Mini-Golf</b>	Schedule noon hour events each day during your campaign to promote team spirit and encourage inter-departmental competition. Charge a flat fee per team and donate proceeds to United Way.
<b>Piggy Bank Challenge</b>	Groups decorate piggy banks. Have a best dressed pig competition or fattest pig with the most dollars. Piggy banks then used for employees to drop-off their change during campaign. Alternately, have collection jars beside cash registers or vending machines and collect donations all year long.
<b>Pie Throwing Competition</b>	Pay to throw a pie in your favorite Executive's face!
<b>Pizza Night</b>	Free pizza for that 2am shift. Arrange an Agency Speaker to raise awareness (yes, even at 2am!).
<b>Potluck Lunch</b>	Promotes team spirit.

<b>Scavenger Hunt</b>	Schedule during the noon hour to promote team spirit and encourage inter-departmental competition. Charge a flat fee per team and donate proceeds to United Way.
<b>Shoe Shine</b>	Executives shine shoes in exchange for a small donation.
<b>Spelling Bee</b>	Employees vs. Management. Use United Way words (messaging, agency names, etc), to create awareness and promote team spirit.
<b>Talent Show / Karaoke</b>	Encourage employees to compete for the title of "Workplace Idol". Executives or Local Celebrities can guest judge.
<b>Themed Events</b>	Coincide your campaign &/or event with the current season or holiday (Back to School, Thanksgiving, Halloween).
<b>Trivia</b>	Include questions about United Way and your own workplace campaign to create awareness. Award United Way merchandise to the person who answers all questions correctly.
<b>Ugly Sweater Day / Ugly Tie Day</b>	Employees can vote on their favorite (or "ugliest"), use as a fun event.
<b>Urban Exchange Day</b>	Schedule an "Urban Exchange Day." Encourage employees to complete the online or paper-survey. Have laptops available in the lunchroom and committee members helping answer any questions.
<b>Video Game Tournament</b>	Individuals or teams pay to play faves like Guitar Hero, Rockband and Wii Olympics. Teams can dress the part.

Offering free admission or charging a minimal fee for special events is a great way to ensure employees still have the capacity to support the annual campaign and help you reach your pledge goal.

Special event dollars play a vital role in helping United Way of Winnipeg continue its work in the community through activities like:

- Market research and development to ensure United Way understands and responds to the needs of both donors and the community;
- Upgrading or purchasing of fixed assets like computers to ensure we can keep up with technology and the needs of our clients;
- Participation costs in United Way of Canada that allow us to work collaboratively with other United Ways, developing innovative programs and sharing knowledge and best practices.

**Got questions or need someone**

**to bounce ideas off? Give us a call.**

**Your Sponsored Executive is a great resource**

**to help ensure your campaign is a huge success!**



United Way of Winnipeg  
 580 Main Street  
 Winnipeg, Manitoba. R3B 1C7  
**PHONE** (204) 477-5360  
**FAX** (204) 453-6198  
**EMAIL** [uway@UnitedWayWinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:uway@UnitedWayWinnipeg.mb.ca)  
**WEB** [www.UnitedWayWinnipeg.mb.ca](http://www.UnitedWayWinnipeg.mb.ca)