



United Way of Central Illinois

## INCENTIVES & SPECIAL EVENTS

While your campaign goals should focus on payroll deduction, it's also okay to have fun! Many companies incorporate extra events into their campaign to encourage participation and boost results. Take advantage of the following ideas as incentives for employees to turn in pledge cards, ways to increase gifts and participation, or tools to educate and inform.

### Incentives

Campaign coordinators can use incentives to encourage the return of pledge cards, increase participation, or increase giving. Some popular incentives include:

- Birthday Off
- Casual Day
- Day after Thanksgiving Off
- Gift Certificates
- Half-day on Friday
- Long Lunch Pass
- Movie/Sporting/Theater Tickets
- Prime Parking Space
- Snooze Cruise
- Trade Offices with CEO
- Warm Up My Car on a Cold Day Pass

### Special Events

**Backyard/Parking Lot Bar-B-Q:** Make sure you have plenty of meat and fixings, buns, drinks, paper products and of course a grill! You may also want to set up a volleyball net, Frisbee game & music to set the mood.

**Bakery Cart/Coffee Bar/Slushie Bar/Lemonade Stand:** Wheel a cart through the office in the morning for a breakfast treat, or a cart of coffee & sweet treats in the afternoon.

**Carnival Day:** Have games, prizes, and don't forget the cotton candy, hot dogs & lemonade shake-ups!

**Casual Day:** Charge employees \$5 to wear whatever they're comfortable in: jeans, tennis shoes, flip flops, sweats, etc.

**Chili Cook-Off :** Employees cook their favorite chili recipe and enter it into a cook-off contest. Charge employees a fee to try the chili. A panel of chili experts can select the Official Chili Champion – be sure to offer a prize to the winner.

**Penny War:** Each department/floor/division has an empty water cooler bottle. Employees drop spare pennies and nickels in the bottles. These coins are counted as positive. Quarters and dollars count as negatives. Employees can “sabotage” another group’s bottle by dropping a quarter into their bottle. At the end of the Campaign, all positive and negative monies are counted, and the group with the most money raised wins a prize.

**Ice Cream Social:** Provide several flavors of ice cream and all the toppings needed to make a sundae! Offer hot fudge, caramel, strawberry sauce, chopped nuts and whipped cream – don’t forget the cherries!

**Lawn Games:** Have a Volleyball, Croquet, Horseshoes, or Bags Tournament.

**Lunch Box Auction:** Have each participating employee pack a special, homemade lunch. Encourage them to get creative and make deluxe sandwiches or wraps. Include delicious treats like decadent brownies or monster chocolate chip cookies. Hold an auction before lunch time, allowing co-workers to bid on the fancy lunches.

**Office Olympics:** Set up a relay course for executives to race through sitting in chairs or riding tricycles. Use a stopwatch to time contestants, with the fastest person winning a prize. Observers donate or wager \$1 on their favorite contestants.

**Pizza Party:** The department with the best participation (most returned pledge cards) is rewarded with a pizza party, lunch with the CEO or other incentive.

**Plate Sale:** Charge \$5 for the plates, but the food is free!

**Scavenger Hunt:** Employees participate in a scavenger hunt that requires them to find unusual items from around the neighborhood or office building, as well as demonstrate community knowledge. You can place items at specific locations for the hunters. Teams of four pay a group entrance fee you set ahead of time. If each team member has a different job title, automatically award them 10 bonus points. Teams have a set time frame to accumulate as many points as possible. The entire team must be present at the end of the time period. If any member arrives late, assess a penalty of six points per minute, for example. Work with local businesses for gift certificates or other items as rewards for the winning team.

**Silent Auction:** Gather gift items and create bid sheets, being certain to provide a minimum bid for each item.

**Talent Show/Lip Sync/Karaoke Contest:** This has the potential for being a BIG fundraiser and a GREAT team builder! Participants pay \$2 to enter and are given a list of songs and a pledge sheet in advance. Participants ask employees to support them by pledging an amount of money. At the event, have a big box of funny hats, feather boas and other costume items available for participants to use. Pass the hat at the party to receive even more pledges.

**Vacation Day:** Have an in-office version of a staycation. Have everyone wear their vacation shirts and don’t forget the Mocktails!