

# Special Events Planning Guide

*Have **FUN** and boost company morale while raising money for the community through - United Way of Merced County!*



**of Merced County**

**(Note: These events can be run throughout the year to benefit our community..... and they can also be run while you are conducting the “Annual Payroll Deduction Campaign” at your work site!)**

# Promotion Planning

Promotions are incremental fundraising opportunities that are hosted by the members of your team to raise valuable resources for United Way.

The first step to conducting a successful promotion is planning. No two promotions are alike; however, there are some basic organizational steps to follow that will help you achieve your goals.

## ***FORM A COMMITTEE***

- ◆ The chairman is the key person. Identify someone who has the leadership skills, experience and the time to work on the promotion from start to finish. This person should be someone other than the team captain. The team captain's time should be spent recruiting volunteers for the days of the event.
- ◆ The committee should be well balanced with a good combination of skills. Include people from as many departments, branches and shifts as possible and have enough people to share the workload, but not so many that it becomes unmanageable.

## ***ESTABLISH GOALS***

- ◆ What is the anticipated outcome of the Promotion?
  1. Raise additional money for the team?
  2. Gain publicity for the company?
  3. Create or renew enthusiasm for United Way?
  4. Build a more successful volunteer team?
  5. Recruit new volunteers for your team?

## ***BRAINSTORM IDEAS***

- ◆ Give free reign to the imagination & establish a promotion that is tailored to the team's wants or needs.
- ◆ Write down the ideas that come up.
- ◆ Choose the promotions that will help reach the established goals.

## ***SELECTING A PROMOTION***

- ◆ The dedication and enthusiasm of the workers who plan and organize any promotion determine its success. The promotion chosen should suit the interests and talents of the committee members.

- ◆ The event should fit the size of the group. A committee made up of four people would have a hard time organizing a golf tournament but would be very successful with a bake sale, car wash or canister drive.
- ◆ Will the promotion involve employees of the company only, or will it include employee's families and/or the company's customers?
- ◆ Study promotions that have been done in the past and talk to the organizers of those events.
- ◆ Make sure the promotion has management support.
- ◆ Talk to a United Way of Merced County representative who can provide ideas.

### ***TIMING OF THE PROMOTION***

- ◆ Schedule the promotion for times at which the employees will be most receptive and avoid major holidays unless the event is directly related to that holiday.
- ◆ Competitive promotions sponsored by other organizations could hamper your success. Check with service clubs to ensure that similar events are not being sponsored on the planned date. (Check your company's calendar.)

### ***BUDGET***

- ◆ What are the costs and expected income of your event? Is it worth the event?
- ◆ Establish a goal.
- ◆ Try to get all materials and supplies donated.

### ***PREPARE A WORK CALENDAR***

- ◆ List all the jobs that need to be done and the date by which they should be completed.
- ◆ Allow for extra time to deal with any unforeseen obstacles that may arise.
- ◆ Keep written records of the plans and job assignments and distribute them to the committee members as useful reminders of commitments.

### ***ASSIGN THE WORK LOAD***

- ◆ Form subcommittees to be responsible for each task area of the project.
- ◆ Typical areas for subcommittees are:
  1. Location
  2. Ticket sales
  3. Publicity
  4. Entertainment
  5. Volunteer Coordination
  6. Decorations
  7. Prizes
  8. Budget

- ◆ Subcommittees should meet regularly with the chairman to review progress and plans.

## ***DONATIONS***

- ◆ Every effort should be made to get all items donated for the event.
- ◆ All contributors should be given special recognition for their efforts.

## ***PUBLICIZING A PROMOTION***

- ◆ Getting the word out about your promotion will help insure a successful turnout. Begin early and use as many of the following publicity opportunities as possible:

1. Company or Organization in-house publications
2. In-house TV monitors
3. Flyers to all departments
4. Letters of support from management
5. Flyers on all bulletin boards
6. Company sign-up day
7. Word of mouth
8. Electronic mail
9. Paycheck stuffers

- ◆ All news releases and promotional materials should contain the following information:

1. Name of the event
2. Date, time, location and cost of the event
3. Names of any special contributors
4. Reason for raising money...to be at the Heart of What Matters with Davie County United Way!

- ◆ *All written publicity should have the logo for the United Way of Merced County on it – see your United Way representative for that item.*

## ***COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSLETTER***

- ◆ United Way of Merced County keeps volunteers and supporters up-to-date through Community Impact, a newsletter circulated to over 350 families, companies and key local leadership. Please send the following information about your team promotions to:

Theresa Tapetillo  
c/o United Way of Merced County  
P.O. Box 2026, Merced, CA 95344

or email [Theresa@unitedwaymerced.org](mailto:Theresa@unitedwaymerced.org) We want to share your success with others!

1. Name of event
2. Description of event
3. Dollar amount raised

## **MISSION TRIANGLE**

◆ The mission triangle is composed of three elements:

1. Payroll Deduction dollars
2. Promotion dollars
3. Sponsorship dollars

Trends show that the teams who utilize all three of these methods are the most successful at meeting or exceeding their goals. Teams that utilize two of the three methods are second, followed by the teams that choose to only utilize one of the three methods.



The EVENTS...

## **BOSSSES CAN HELP BOOST YOUR BUCKS**

### **ADMINISTRATORS FOR SALE**

Employees purchase raffle tickets to win an administrator for the day. The administrator agrees to work for the winning employee or department that raises the most.

### **ARREST THE BOSS**

See how much money co-workers can raise to get the boss “out of jail” or keep the boss “in jail!”

### **DUNKING BOOTH**

Pay said amount of money for three chances to dunk the boss or other favorite targets in the company.

### **GO HOME EARLY**

The boss collects a set amount of money at the front door from every employee who wants to leave work early that day.

### **EXECUTIVE TAXI SERVICE**

Co-workers pay to guess which executive will win the race.

### **KISS THE PIG**

Managers and supervisors are given funny names, (i.e. Ham Bone Jeff, John Chittlin, Bacon Bill, Suee-ieee Sue, Tammy Tenderloin) and employees can donate a dollar to vote for their favorite. Updates are given by intercom at least daily or whenever a big turnover in total has occurred. On the last day of the contest, the “winner” kisses a pig at a planned time and place.

### **POWER LUNCH**

Pay said amount of money to have lunch with an executive. (auction or fixed price)

## **HOLIDAY EVENTS**

### **FLOWER SALES**

Sell flowers for Secretaries’ Day, Valentine’s Day, corsages for Easter, green carnations for St. Patrick’s Day or chrysanthemums for Christmas.

### **CLOVERGRAMS**

Sell 4-leaf clover-grams for St. Patrick’s Day.

### **EASTERGRAMS**

Wrap Easter Baskets and deliver them for a price.

### **GIFT WRAP**

Solicit a local business to donate boxes, bows and wrapping paper and wrap holiday gifts for a fee.

### **STOCKING STUFFER GRAB BAG**

Charge a set amount for employees to grab a company trade item from a stocking or bag.

**VALENTINE’S DAY** – Sell homemade candy, suckers, brownies, cookies or anything chocolate.

## **CONTESTS**

### **ADORABLE BABY CONTEST**

Post pictures of employees’ children or grandchildren. Co-workers must pay a set amount per vote for the most adorable child. Ballot box stuffing is encouraged!

### **PET PHOTO CONTEST**

Employees post a picture of their pet(s) on the bulletin board. Co-workers pay a set amount per vote for the cutest pet, most unusual pet, ugliest pet and funniest pet. Award all winning pet owners a prize for their pets such as cat food, dog bones, etc.

### **POKER RUN**

Motorcycle riders can raise funds for United Way by driving to designated locations and playing a round of poker at each spot.

### **PUTTING GREEN CONTEST**

Construct a putting green in your lobby and charge a fee for employees and/or customers to putt for prizes.

### **BED RACE**

This is a great activity for your local medical school or hospital. Each department, (radiology, pediatrics, MRI, etc.) forms a team to push the department head in a bed along a designated course. Participants raise funds by collecting pledges or paying an entry fee.

### **BEAT THE BAD HABIT**

Get co-workers to stop being tardy to meetings, popping their gum, failing to recycle, leaving letterhead in the copy machine, whatever! Offenders pay a quarter for their transgressions!

### **DANCE CONTEST**

Enough said!

### **DRAWINGS/RAFFLES**

Secure a donated prize such as certificates for dinner, weekend stay at a local resort, movie passes, concert tickets, professional/college sports games, museum passes, etc. Sell tickets and draw the winning ticket at a designated time and place. This can also be done in half- &-half fashion where half the proceeds are given away as the prize. The other half of the proceeds - benefit United Way.

### **RACES**

All types (use your imagination!) - Running, Walking, Typing, Eating, etc.

### **GUESS THE WEIGHT OF THE DEPARTMENT**

Build camaraderie by inviting co-workers to pay a set amount to predict the total weight of the department.

### **QUARTER SHOT GLASS CONTEST**

Fill a large jug with water and put a shot glass at the bottom. Invite co-workers to drop quarters through a slot cut out in the lid. Provide prizes to those who drop their quarters in the shot glass.

### **SLIM INTO SHAPE**

Hold a two-month contest at work for everyone who wants to lose weight. Each person pays a set amount for every pound lost or gained. Secure donated prizes for those who attain their weight loss goals.

### **TALENT CONTEST**

You never know what talents you may uncover.

### **UNLOCK A CHEST OF TREASURES**

Encourage co-workers to buy a key for a set amount. One key will open a treasure chest of prizes.

### **WHO'S THE BABY CONTEST**

Ask co-workers to bring in their baby picture. Each week feature a new group of pictures on the bulletin board. An employee then purchase chances to guess which baby picture is their co-workers.

## **ENTERTAINMENT SPECIAL EVENTS**

### **BENEFIT DANCE**

Organize an outing with co-workers and spouses to enjoy music, dancing and fun. Ask for a cover charge.

### **DOWNTOWN DECK PARTY**

Coordinate a party on top of the parking deck of a local hotel or airport hanger. Arrange for food, refreshments and music. Ticket prices should include food, refreshments and music as well as a donation to United Way.

### **FASHION SHOW**

Work with a local designer to showcase the new seasonal or children's fashion line. Sell tickets to co-workers.

### **FUN DAY**

Booths can be assembled for all kinds of fund-raising activities including a dunking booth, arcade games, children's games, train ride, pony rides, face painting, basketball free-throw challenge, food and drinks.

### **NIGHT AT THE MOVIES**

Sell tickets to a screening of vintage movies and cartoons.

### **TWO-STEP LESSONS**

Here is your chance to learn those line-dancing steps. Coordinate recreational dancers to teach interested employees how to do the "two-step". Lessons can be sold for \$10.00 per couple for singles and for children 13 or under you can charge a reduced rate.

### **WALK FOR WHAT MATTERS!**

This is a fun-filled experience for the employees and their families who collect donations to walk a short course around the parking lot (or a city park) on a Saturday. Prizes, clowns, balloons, music and a petting zoo can be arranged for their entertainment.

## **FOOD EVENTS**

### **BAKE SALE**

This one's for all the bakers on staff in your company. To encourage participation, you might have a "Bake-Off" and give prizes to the best bakers. Here's a hint, hold your bake sale on payday!

### **BREAKFAST BREAK**

Pick up donuts or muffins and sell them to hungry co-workers.

### **BROWN BAG LUNCH**

Encourage employees to bring their lunch. The money saved from not going out to lunch is donated to United Way. Add an interesting twist and have everyone switch lunches on one day.

### **CAFETERIA DONATION**

Ask the cafeteria to donate a percentage of its sales for a day.

### **CANDY SALE**

Now you have the perfect excuse to buy and eat candy! "It's for a good cause!"

### **CHILI COOK-OFF**

Charge an entry fee for employees who want to cook up their best recipe for chili, pork, poultry, beans or barbecue. Sell samplings to hungry co-workers.

### **COFFEE DAY PROMOTIONS**

Encourage a local restaurant to designate breakfast specials that include coffee. The regular coffee price is donated to United Way.

### **COOKBOOK**

Collect the favorite recipes of co-workers. Compile the recipes into a booklet and sell to co-workers. You could also compile recipes on 3x5 file cards and sort the recipes by appetizers, soups, salads, main dishes and desserts. Then you could sell the recipes in groups.

### **FATTENING FRIDAY**

Employees bring fattening desserts each Friday and sell the pastries by the slice.

### **HOT DOG STANDS**

Get hot dogs donated and sell with a beverage and chips for a set amount.

### **ICE CREAM FLOATS**

Cream soda, root beer, or other carbonated beverage plus two scoops of ice cream - a popular item to sell to hungry co-workers. Try to get ice cream and soda donated to increase the profit.

### **JELLYBEAN COUNTING CONTEST**

For a donation, co-workers can guess how many jellybeans are in that jar. This can also be done with M&M's, Skittles, Lifesavers, etc.

### **PIZZA SALE**

Get the boss to buy a few pizzas. Have the pizza delivered to the office and sell it by the slice. Many co-workers will appreciate not having to leave the office for lunch.

### **POTLUCK/SPAGETTI SUPPER**

Coordinate office volunteers to bring a potluck lunch. Charge a set amount for an all-you-can-eat, home cooked breakfast or lunch.

### **VENDING MACHINES**

Raise the cost of vending machine items by a set amount for a designated month.

### **LATTE STAND**

For the more distinguished coffee drinkers, offer a latte stand during a morning rally. Remind them how much a cup of gourmet coffee costs. Give examples of what giving one cup of coffee, one soda, or one candy bar a day can do for a person in crisis. Ask if they can donate that same amount (or more) each week to the United Way of Merced County.

### **LUNCH BOX AUCTION**

Have employees create gourmet lunches to auction off to the highest bidder. Give prizes for the most creative, nutritious, elegant, or humorous.

### **BUILD YOUR OWN SUNDAE**

Create a sundae bar with assortments of ice cream and a wide range of toppings. This can also be a thank you event!

### **BAR-B-QUE**

Have a good ol' fashion barbeque – it can also have a theme (Western, Hawaiian, Surf & Turf, etc.) – employees can buy tickets for their meals – this can also be used as a “thank you” after the campaign.

## **SALES ACTIVITIES**

**ALUMINUM CANS** - Recycle aluminum cans and add the proceeds to your team totals.

### **BOOK SALE**

Ask employees to bring in new books they have recently read. Sell the books during lunch.

### **BASKET AUCTION**

Each department creates a gift basket of donated items. Baskets have themes and may include anything from trinkets to trips! Display baskets and then auction or raffle them off.

### **CHANGE CANS**

Attach short messages to empty, clean paint cans and distribute them in high traffic areas. Example: “Reason #1 to Drop Your Coins in the United Way Change Can – 28 families saved from loosing their homes in 2004.” “Reason #2 to Drop your Coins in the United Way Change Can – 43 service projects completed for citizens in need.” “Reason #3 to Drop your Coins in the United Way Change Can – CALL the United Way of Merced County office at (209) 383-4242 to help you find the assistance you need.”

### **DREAM SEASON**

Secure donated season tickets (possibly box seats) for local sporting or Arts Council events. Sell raffle tickets for each event.

### **GARAGE SALE**

Have a big parking lot garage sale of items that employees have brought from home or inventory your company would like to discard.

### **RESERVED PARKING**

Sell raffle tickets or auction the best parking spot. The winner can park in the spot for a week or a month.

### **SILENT AUCTION**

Donated items such as dinners for two, a weekend get-away, handcrafted items and more are displayed for a full day. Slips of paper are filled out with a bid, name and phone number. At the end of the day, the highest bidder gets to buy the items. Purchase amount of item benefits United Way.

### **WINDSHIELD CLEANING SERVICE**

Employees and their families take turns on a designated Saturdays to clean car windows at bank teller drive-up windows, fast food drive-ins, gas stations, etc. Donations given benefit the United Way of Merced County.

### **CAR WASH**

You probably did this in high school. The difference is, now you can charge more. All you need is car washing soap and water and a few hard-working volunteers. Bank parking lots are great for Saturdays.

## ***SPORTING/ACTIVITIES EVENTS***

### **AEROBIC-A-THON**

Secure a local health club chain to sponsor a three or four hour aerobic dance session. Participants collect sponsorship to get into shape!

### **BOWLING**

Coordinate a company bowling outing. Each person has to pay a set amount for missing a pin.

### **CAR BASH**

Find an old battered car and allow employees to pay to take a swing at the car.

### **CELEBRITY BAGGER PROGRAM**

Imagine the grocery shoppers' surprise to find the mayor, a surgeon, radio personality or district attorney bagging groceries at the checkout stand. These celebrities raise a pre-determined amount before they arrive at the grocery store. Then they bag groceries for an hour to raise tips any way that they can.

### **EXERCISE FOR MONEY**

Fill in a mileage log for miles walked, run or cycled. Secure a company contribution for total miles covered. Company T-shirt is given for those participating two times a week for one month.

### **FISHING TOURNAMENT**

Charge an entry fee and award prizes for catching the largest fish (by weight and total catch by weight, limit eight fish) Food and soft drinks can also be sold.

### **MALIBU RACE OF CHAMPIONS**

Challenge your competitors on the track. This three-lap race in miniature cars pits representatives of different teams against one another. Each team has three members who take turns competing for the fastest times. Individual team trophies are presented to the first, second and third place teams.

### **MINIATURE GOLF**

This is a fun outdoor activity for all teams. Four person teams compete for donated prizes in such contests as hole-in-one, highest score, lowest score, etc. Separate entry fees are a set for adults and children under 13.

### **MINIATURE GOLF NIGHT**

Ask the local miniature golf location to donate a set amount of money for every round of golf played on a designated night or weekend.

### **OFFICE OLYMPICS**

Create your own office games to include such contests as: most creative voice mail, cleanest office, fastest typing, guess the number of steps from the copy room to the mailroom, etc.

### **SUPER BOWL PARTY**

Invite guests to pay a set amount for each of the following predictions: quarter score, half-time score, final score, number of fumbles, touchdowns, etc.

### **TOURNAMENTS**

Challenge other companies to a Saturday softball, basketball, darts, golf, or bowling tournament. Charge an entry fee and invite each company to sell refreshments.

### **WHEELCHAIR-A-THON**

The youth raise money by strolling senior citizens in their wheelchairs.

## **READY TO GO EVENTS**

### **CASUAL MATTERS BLUE JEANS DAY**

Declare a “Dress Down Day(s).” Sticker designs are available from the United Way of Merced County office. A five-dollar donation is given in exchange for a sticker which, when worn, will allow them to wear jeans to work on the designated day(s). This can be done as many times as management will allow leading up the end of the company’s campaign (i.e. every Friday). Proceeds benefit United Way.

## **SPONSORSHIP**

Boost your team dollars through company sponsorship of each of your volunteers. Your committee can set sponsorship opportunities at any level. Your company can also choose to sponsor any United Way of Merced County special event to help support all facets of the United Way. Contact the United Way office for more information on all sponsorship opportunities available.

## **Your UNIQUE SPECIAL EVENT**

If any of your events that you run aren’t listed please send in your event description – we will gladly share your ideas and event with the other campaign groups AND give you the recognition you deserve!

Thanks for all your efforts!

## ***CONTACT INFORMATION***

For more information on any of the ideas in this publication please contact:

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