

WORKPLACE CAMPAIGN FUNDRAISING IDEAS

GIVE. WHERE. YOU. LIVE.



Casual Day

Employees pay a small donation typically \$1-\$5 to wear jeans or dress in a fun theme. United Way of Bemidji Area can provide you with Casual Day stickers! Contact us to get yours before your campaign kicks off.

Chili Cook-Off, Soup Competition, or Bake-Off

Employees enter their best dish and co-workers pay to taste and vote for their favorite. Set an entry fee for contestants and a small tasting fee for voters. The winner earns bragging rights and everyone eats well for a great cause.

Potluck Lunch

The "ticket in" is a dish to share plus a dollar donation. Low-cost, easy to organize, and great for team bonding. Pair it with a theme (comfort food, cultural dishes, holiday favorites) to keep it fresh year to year.

Ice Cream or S'mores Social

Set up a donation jar and let everyone serve themselves. Low-lift, high-energy, and it works for any team size. A great option for a warm-weather kick-off event.

Unlock the Box

Fill a clear locked box with fun gifts or gift cards and sell numbered keys to employees. Only one key number unlocks the box. You'll know which number wins, so the drawing reveals the lucky winner. United Way of Bemidji Area has a clear lock box and keys available on a first come, first served basis. Contact us to reserve the box!

Online Silent Auction

Host a virtual auction using a free online platform. www.32auctions.com is a free based on the number of items you list. To stay within the free tier, consider hosting separate auctions on different days or weeks rather than one large event. Solicit donated items from employees and community partners: experiences, gift baskets, PTO days and services tend to do especially well.

Trivia Night

Choose a theme that gets your team excited: The Office, Friends, local Bemidji history, sports, or pop culture. Host it in person or via Zoom. The emcee reads questions and contestants race to answer first. Award points for correct answers and prizes for the top finishers. Charge an entry fee per person or per team, and consider a small fee to "buy" a lifeline during the game.

Online Bingo

Use www.myfreebingocards.com or visit another Bingo card creating website. Players pay to participate, and winners can earn prizes donated by local businesses or contributed by staff.

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Dress Up Contest

Pick a fun theme 80's, holiday, cartoon characters, decades, or movie characters and charge contestants an entry fee to participate. Hold a parade of all contestants at the end of the day for one last round of voting. Award the winner based on the highest number of votes or the most dollars raised through voting. Encourage spectators to donate to cast their vote for a favorite.

Department vs. Department Challenge

Track participation rates by team and award the department with the highest percentage of participants a fun prize a traveling trophy, a silly title, or a catered lunch. Friendly competition boosts engagement and makes the campaign feel like a team sport.

Raffle

A gift basket raffle built from staff or community donations is easy to organize and always generates excitement. Each basket can have a theme spa day, local favorites, game night, coffee lover. Sell tickets individually or in bundles. A 50/50 raffle is an even simpler option: half the pot goes to the winner, half goes to United Way. Scalable for any team size.

Ticket or Gift Card Giveaway

Use free tickets to local events or services as incentives for pledging. Give passes to every employee who meets a set pledge threshold. Enter the names of all employees who turn in a signed pledge form during the first hour of your campaign kick-off into a special early-bird drawing. It rewards commitment and creates urgency right out of the gate.

Steps or Miles Challenge

Run a one- or two-week challenge where individuals or teams track steps or miles and collect pledges per mile walked or run. It's healthy, competitive, and inclusive. Works great in person or remotely participants just log their own numbers.

Simple, Everyday Asks

These take almost no planning but can add up fast: a spare change or dollar drive with a collection jar in common areas, a "guess how many" jar game where people pay \$1 per guess, a "buy your boss's playlist" day where the office music is controlled by donation votes, or a "pay for a long lunch" flexible Friday incentive. Even a staff cookbook compiled from employee recipes and sold for a small donation is a keepsake people use.