

Special Events 101

If you have ever organized a birthday party or had people over to dinner, then you've done a special event. You probably already have all the necessary skills.

Think backwards: Envision your event-is it a campaign kick off, information fair, a presentation with a speaker, luncheon, or a sporting event?

- Where is this event- a conference room, an auditorium, or outdoors?
- Who is there? People within your agency, your building, clients, the general public?
- Are there decorations, music or entertainment, are there door prizes or a raffle to interest people in attending and staying.

Thinking about the event as it would appear helps you organize your thoughts into:

- Purpose of event – entertain, inform, energize, some of each
- Amount of people that could attend, or are targeted to come
- A room/space that can accommodate the purpose and people
- Room appearance
- Details that may increase participation, like entertainment or raffles

Break the event into smaller components:

- Purpose – raise funds, awareness or hands-on info or presentation
- Space – availability, attractiveness, accessibility
- People- who to invite, inform, involve
- Attraction – celebrity, knowledgeable speaker, info fair, food available or other freebies
- Help – are you doing this alone, someone else to help, a group associated with the agency

Examples:

For awareness:

Videofest

Info Fair

Speaker

To try to increase involvement:

open house event, food,

topic of interest presentation

raffle/prize incentives, agency visit/service day

selected special event fundraiser, awards

Important Tips:

**Have back up plans and/or be ready to be flexible;
stay calm (everyone involved keys off of you)
have a sense of humor and enjoy the event**

Special Events 101

Basic Checklist

Determine Date and Time:

- schedule speaker, or attraction theme
- schedule room/space, allow enough time for set up if necessary
- sound systems, video equipment, any special setup – check availability
- permission conflicts- other events, routine meeting/activities that could take attention away

Room/space to be used, amenities:

- proximity to bathrooms
- parking if necessary
- handicap accessibility
- directions, already available? Easy to follow?

Invitation/Notice info preparation, distribution:

- list of invitees, individuals / groups / public
- initiations, announcements, flyers, email or other, make sure you have:
who, what, when, where, how to get more info and rsvp number
- responses to who? How to collect info: just numbers? Names?
- invitations/flyers – how many? inform the dept., floor, building, the public, etc.

Food, raffles, incentives:

- food: caterer, in-house order, outside order to be picked up: purchased or prepared by you and/or others – *determine amount needed and/or establish an RSVP cutoff*
- raffles: prizes – solicited within agency, or maybe crafts, baked items
- vendor donations, local restaurants or merchants
- allow time for solicitation, collection of items

Helpers – recruit for invitation/flyer distribution, raffle/door prize solicitation, collection,

day of event set up, clean up

Decorations – is there a theme, are purchases necessary?

Confirmations: day, time place speaker, special equipment
welcome, event start, introductions, who to do?
photos to be taken, who to do?

Pre- and post- publicity: who to write up or post re: newsletter, photo captions, bulletin boards, coffee room info? Have you contacted the media?

Day of event: set up, oversight of activities, timetable, clean up

Thanks to all involved: notes, calls, emails, photos

MAKING YOUR CAMPAIGN FUN

Making the campaign fun is very important. Making something worthwhile and fun at the same time attracts attention and participation. This produces a successful campaign. Below are some fun ideas.

Think about a teaser campaign the week before to build interest. One agency used the theme "Be a Lifesaver" and left a roll of Life Savers on each desk ahead of time. Another used "Be a Star" and left star invitations to daily UW movies in the cafeteria at lunch.

Be creative! Dunk tanks, pie throwing contests, jails and UW messages taped in bathroom stalls have all been used successfully.

Think "Special Delivery." Hand-deliver invitations to your rally or balloon bouquets for solicitors. Daily recognition for the department who has the best giving record will create interest and support.

Don't worry if your budget doesn't allow for prizes. Many agencies do quite well with prizes that don't cost anything. How about an extra day of vacation or a reserved parking place? Or the company box for a Charleston Riverdogs game? Some firms asked management staff to donate prizes which could include a free dog wash, a homemade specialty or a day at a favorite fishing hole.

Remember to say "thank you." A public presentation of Thanks will go a long way. And don't forget your steering committee. A small token shows that their hard work was appreciated.

Kick off your employee campaign with an ice cream social or a pot luck luncheon. Have senior management serve the food. Take a coffee and donut cart around the office and extend personal invitations to attend the rally.

Have a garage sale of items donated by employees. Departments can compete against one another for the most money raised. Remember--one man's moth-eaten moose head may be another's prized trophy.

Don't forget your camera. Snap pictures of employees touring agencies. Take pictures of bare feet and run a contest to see who can identify them. Or have everyone bring in a baby picture and use those for your contest. Pictures of employees who volunteer for TUW are great for bulletin boards or to accompany feature stories in your newsletter. Remember, one picture is worth a 1,000 words!!

Publicizing Your Campaign –

- Run executive's campaign first in order to start the momentum and set the pace for your regular employee campaign.
- Send messages on e-mail or in-house computer system.
- Publish articles in the employee newsletter.
- Post information on agency bulletin boards.

"Hey You" – It's TUWTime!

- Publish a calendar of campaign events.
- Hang TUW posters, banners or thermometers in heavy traffic areas.
- Publicize specific charity programs that your employees' contributions support. (e.g., American Red Cross- disaster services, CPR training, first aid American Cancer Society- education and screening programs).
- Announce information on the loudspeaker.
- Send memos or letters from the agency head and/or Union President to all employees.
- Put flyers on car windshields.
- Place door hangers on office doorknobs.
- Decorate the elevators, stairwells, and inside of restroom stall doors.
- Give out chocolate kisses or fortune cookies with TUW message.
- Ask department heads to talk about the campaign at staff and safety meetings.
- Have the agency head or an executive staff person walk through the work place wearing a sandwich board advertising TUW.

Developing a Theme – “From Raiders to Raisins”

Establishing a campaign theme to help build awareness is an important step. Your campaign theme should be determined early in the planning process. It then becomes a unifying force which will act to coordinate all other parts of the campaign such as: printed materials, group meetings, letters of endorsement, objectives, etc.

- Involve your steering committee when establishing a theme.
- Brainstorm possible ideas.
- Be sure to formulate a written statement of your campaign's purpose.

Stress past accomplishments, why the community needs your agency's support and how funds will be allocated. This “case” then substantiates your campaign goal; it translates dollars into services and allows you to formulate a theme, which will communicate how your organization links your agency's involvement with community needs.

Your theme should reflect the interests, needs and concerns of your employees. Use employee surveys as a source for this information. A recurrent theme will help build awareness of the campaign.

Awareness building is part of a year-round effort. During campaign time the steering committee simply raises the level of interest in the UW by providing employees with additional information of how TUW works and the groups in partners with. After the campaign, keep interest levels high by maintaining regular features in your agency's newsletter, arranging monthly agency tours, etc. Focus on referrals to sources of help, volunteer programs and other services that will benefit employees. Then when campaign time arrives the following year, employees have a basic understanding of and interest in TUW - “awareness”. The campaign simply heightens this interest.

Successful themes used in previous campaigns start on the next page:

Campaign Themes. . .

The Big Shot

As a variation on the standard thermometer graph to monitor agency progress, use a hypodermic-needle design. Great for hospital themes.

Raiders of the Lost Heart

Using a heart thermometer, each department represents a piece of the heart. You have met your goal when the entire heart is filled in.

UW Cookie Caper

Each pledge card is passed out with a cookie and the slogan "TUW Cookie Caper-Help us bring in the dough."

Hawaiian Theme

Each person turning in a pledge card gets a plastic lei. At the end of the campaign, have a Hawaiian potluck where employees wear their leis and dress in Hawaiian shirts. Have a limbo contest. Use a palm tree as your thermometer.

1960s Theme

Dress up the '60's garb. Sell headbands, smiley face pins, tie-dyed shirts.

Holidays

Tying your campaign to a holiday (e.g., Labor Day, Halloween, etc.) is an easy way to make CFC relevant to employees. Get them involved in a project such as a pumpkin carving contest or hold a Halloween costume contest. For Labor Day serve a "picnic style" lunch and charge admission.

Mardi Gras

Everyone loves a party, so why not model your campaign after the biggest party in the world-Mardi Gras. Invite a jazz band to play at

your kickoff event. Hold a parade, float contest or sell bead-o-grams (beads with thoughtful messages attached.) Host a Canjun potluck.



Lights! Camera! Action!

Have employee's dress up as their favorite characters from game shows. (e.g., "Who Wants to be a Millionaire, Jeopardy, etc.) Ask questions regarding TUW. Have departments pick teams and pay a small entry fee. The team who wins will receive a prize.

Wild West Theme

Employees dress in Western clothes. Use a cactus as your thermometer.

Counting on You

Fundraisers featuring counting. Count the eye colors in the office. Count jelly beans in a jar. Pay to enter the counting contests, the winner gets a prize. Use Count Dracula's cape as a thermometer (great around Halloween).

Shoot for the Stars

Be a star, give to TUW Use a star as a thermometer.

Raisin Money

Use the California Raisins as a thermometer theme. Pass out boxes of raisins to people as they turn in pledge cards.

An Hour of Power

Use a stopwatch as a thermometer. Publicize what services are provided from a one hour's pay donation.

Exotic Locales

Whether you transform your campaign into a Hawaiian luau, African safari or the Australian outback, employees are sure to have a wild time. Encourage staff and volunteers to dress the part of locals. Host a lunch with theme-related food. Organize a hula-hoop contest.

2001- A TUW Odyssey

Try an outer space theme or the world in the future.



Employee Meetings

“How to get'em there and get'em in the spirit”

- Invite the agency or department head to say a few words of endorsement for the campaign.
 - Provide refreshments.
 - Publicize charity speakers' names in advance.
 - Have employees turn in completed pledge cards (whether they donated or not) at the meeting. Draw one or several of the cards and award prizes to those employees. Make sure this is publicized in advance.
 - Give away gifts like balloons, footballs or sun visors to attendees.
 - Take the meeting to the employees. Instead of meeting in a conference room, why not go right out into the work area.
 - Arrange to have employees share their experiences with charity services or tours at the employee meetings.
 - Combine the TUW meeting with a regularly scheduled staff or safety meeting.
 - Hide a prize under one seat. Have everyone check their chair to see if they've won.
 - Make your own videotape showing your key persons visiting charities in your area.
 - Use your Loaned Executive. They are well-versed in commonly asked questions about TUW.
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Planning Your Campaign Special Event

Planning an event is a great way to bring employees together and raise more money for your agency campaign. Careful planning is the key to making sure everything goes off without a hitch. The following are some helpful tips:

1. Recruit a committee with representatives from all lines, levels and locations in your agency.
2. Choose an event that's appropriate for your work environment.
3. Select a date and location. Consider an easily accessible location.

4. Develop a detailed plan and timeline.
5. Assign roles and responsibilities: publicity, prizes, decoration, audiovisuals, food, volunteers, etc.
6. Have a run-through prior to the event.
7. Evaluate your event, report results to employees and TUW
8. Send "thank you" notes or make telephone calls to everyone who helped in the planning and implementation of your events.

Lets look at some ideas:



Sporting Events "For all kinds of office athletes"

Sporting Events and competition are great ways to raise money and to create increased team building within the company. See the Incentive Section of this book for prize ideas.

Aerobic-a-thon

Employees get pledges for the length of time participating. Set this up during a lunch hour or after work in the employee lunchroom.

Bike-a-thon

Charge an entry fee. Participants collect pledges for the number of miles they ride.



Bowling Tournament

Get a bowling alley to reduce normal fees. Charge participants the regular price with proceeds going to TUW. Participants can get pledges for the number of pins knocked over.

Croquet Tournament

Set up a croquet course on a nearby lawn. Charge an entry fee and provide a prize for the winner.

Executive Chair Race

Set up a relay course for executives to go through, the executives are either sitting in a chair or on tricycles. Let observers "bet" on their favorite contestants.

Fun Run

Charge an entry fee to compete and provide a prize to the winner.

Golf Tournament or Putt-Putt Contests

Work with a nearby golf course to get reduced rates. Charge players the regular price with proceeds going to TUW. Humorous prizes can be handed out later at a potluck dinner (e.g. shortest drive, highest score, etc.) Set up a miniature golf course within your office, lobby, or work area. Charge each player to play and award a prize to the player with the lowest score.



Office Olympics

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 prize.

Ping Pong-a-thon

Charge an entry fee and have team elimination. Reward winning team with a prize.

Slam Dunk Contest

Charge a fee to compete and provide a prize for the winner.



Super Hoop

Have an organized basketball tournament with employee teams. Charge admission to the game or collect pledges for baskets scored. Give away prizes at half-time. Get a local radio station to emcee.

Team Sports Competitions

Form teams between departments, divisions, branches or regions and get pledges for goals scored, baskets made, etc. Provide refreshment stands.

Tennis or Racquetball Tournaments

Charge admissions and an entry fee to participants. The winner gets a prize.



Tricycle Races

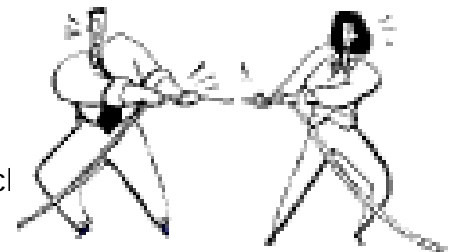
Before the race, employees pay to have sandbags or rolled pennies tied to opposing department managers' trikes. Hold the race in the lunchroom or outside. The first one to the finish line wins a prize for the department (e.g., pizza party, afternoon off, etc.).

Tug-of-War

Have employees against executive staff or interdepartmental competition. Each team pays a fee to enter.

Volleyball Tournament

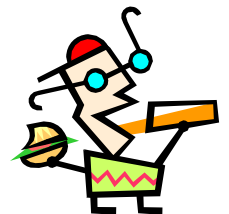
Organize employee teams for inside or outside fun. Collect pledges for points or for the longest volley.



Walk/Run/Jump-a-thon

Employees get pledges for distance walked or for each

There is not a more impulsive or fulfilling purchase than food and sweets. As a fundraising idea, it's usually the easiest item to solicit and the quickest to sell.



The following are just a few ways to a donor's heart.

Bake Sales

Ask employees to bring their favorite cakes, cookies, or breads. Even a small office can raise a lot of money with minimal effort. Sell per item or by the dozen.



Candy Bar/Popcorn Sale

Purchase or make your product and sell to your staff throughout the campaign week.

Cheesecake Sale

A favorite sweet you can sell per slice or whole.

Chocolate Bonanza

Sell chocolate bars with your campaign theme printed on them.

Ice Cream Social

Charge per scoop.

Lunch Time Meals

Sponsor a lunch of spaghetti, chili, barbecue, or another favorite food. Charge a flat fee for all you can eat, enough to cover expenses and a small contribution.



M&M/Jelly Bean Jar

The famous "guess the number of beans in the jar" cannot be forgotten. Buy a guess for 25 cents. The person who guesses closest to the number in the jar, wins the jar.



Pancake Feed

Start the day off right by having a pancake breakfast. You can make your own or *Chris Cakes* can come and do all the work for you. This company can come to your agency to help you with this fundraiser. A flat fee can be charged for each person.

Picnic Basket Auction

Both the baskets and their contents are enticing at this unusual auction. The perfect setting is a park or the agency's green. With the addition of music from the band shell, (boom box) the picture is complete. The baskets and their contents are donated by employees or local deli, restaurants and fast foods.



Pie eating Contest

Each participant pays to enter to win a prize, but everyone gets to enjoy this event.

Potluck Dinner

This is a great money maker. Have everyone bring a dish for lunch and charge a small fee to eat.

Octoberfest

Celebrate by barbecuing or making sausage lunches.

Salad Luncheon

The meal is easy to prepare. The salad luncheon, when held in a central location, can be a popular money maker. The luncheon should cost a flat price, perhaps three dollars. With the salad offer donated home made bread or cake.



Sweets Booth

This booth can include a wide variety of baked goods or candies for sale.

Tailgate Party

Create a tailgate party in the parking lot or company cafeteria with all the usual football fair: hotdogs, chips, soda, peanuts, etc.



Wine Drawing

Raffle off chances to win a collections of wines from several different wineries.

More Bazaar Food

Decide what other foods you would like to sell according to your theme, the weather, and your facilities. If you have an outside barbecue, you can cook hot dogs or bratwurst. If you have a kitchen, you can also sell corn on the cob, tacos, pizza, omelets or whole dinners. If you don't have a kitchen, you can sell sandwiches and candy. You can also sell coffee, hot chocolate, lemonade, soft drinks, or fruit juices.

The major consideration is how much money you will make on each item. Remember, your bake booth is 100 percent profit, so you want most of your food sales from there. If you also sell donuts, you will only make 5 cents on each donut and detract from your bake booth sales. Keep the food as simple as possible and plenty of waste containers around.

Other “Fun”draising Ideas “Almost anything goes.”

Baby/Pet Picture Match Game

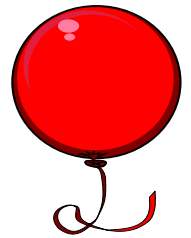
Invite employees to try their luck at matching baby or pet pictures of management. Charge employees to vote and award the entry with the most right answers with a fun prize.

Baby Shower

Have a baby shower for newborns to six-year-olds to go to a CFC agency.

Balloon-o-grams

Employees have messages tied to helium balloons delivered to designated co-workers. Charge per balloon.



Balloon Pop

Have businesses donate prizes. 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 CFC fact. Have employees purchase and pop the balloons.

Billable Hours Equation

It's easier for some people to relate their TUW donation in a way that is specifically related to them. Attorneys bill their time in 6 minute increments or .1% hour. Fair Share should be communicated as less than .1% hour or 6 minutes a day.

Bingo

Sell bingo cards to employees, ask local store or vendors to donate prizes.

Blue Light Special

Host daily or weekly "Blue Light Special" rallies throughout the office. Serve food and have a TUW agency speak on a particular topic.



Boogie for Dollars

Throw a dance or even a dance-a-thon. Charge admission, entry fees, or have entrants get pledges for time danced or for number of dances.

Book, Music and Video Sale

Have employees donate old books, CDs and videos for an agency or department wide sale.

Car Wash

One of the more popular events. Employees pay to get their cars washed in the parking lot during the work day.

Children's Drawing Contest

Give employees "official photographs" of one or two top executive's to take home for their children to draw or have children draw a volunteer activity of someone helping someone else. Charge a fee for each entry, have employees vote on the winning entry.



Coins for the Community

For the campaign period ask employees to donate change for the cup of coffee or donut that may be free during the rest of the year.

Coin War

Set up large empty water bottle ¹⁵ each department or floor in the cafeteria. Have employees drop their spare change into the bottle. Coins are positive while paper money is negative. Employees can sabotage other bottles by dropping paper money into them. The group with the most money wins, with the money going to CFC



Cola Drive

See which department can raise the most by collecting cola cans.

Coloring Contest

Use the CFC Logo. Have children of employees participate.



Comedy Hour

Ask a local comedian or improv group to donate their services over the lunch hour. Have employees buy tickets to attend.

Compliment-o-grams

Make up special forms and sell them to employees as an anonymous way to give a compliment to someone in the office. Compliment-o-grams must be delivered by a trustworthy employee sworn to secrecy. Charge per compliment.

Cookbook Sales

Have employees donate recipes and put them together in a cookbook. Give away samples of food while selling the cookbooks.

Craft Sale

Have employees showcase their talents and sell their goods to fellow employees.

Cruise for Donors

Organize a local boat cruise. Sell tickets for a ride.



Dead Flower Bouquets

This is a great Halloween idea. Get flower shops and restaurants to donate dead flowers. Employees pay to have a dead-flower bouquet with a message sent to another employee. Charge per flower message.

Dog Wash

People bring their dogs on a leash to an outdoor location with several water faucets. Dog washers shampoo and rinse the animals. Only towel "drying" is used so the dogs leave the wash in a damp state. Charge \$3 for small dogs and up to \$10 for larger dogs.

Dress Down or Up Days

Employees pay to wear casual clothes on a specific work day during the campaign period. Each employee that participates get a Dress Down Days button or sticker. Variations include "Silly Hat Day", "Sport Team Day", or "Ugly Shoes Day".

Dunk Tank

Set up a dunk tank in the parking lot. Have executives take turns on the "hot seat." Charge 50 cents per try.

Executive Shoe Shine

The agency executives set up a shoe shine stand in a heavy traffic area. The executives shine employee shoes for a CFC donation.

Employee Mixer

Organize a social mixer for employees. Have a restaurant or club donate space, drinks and appetizers. Invite employees to attend for an entry fee.

Flower Event

Have a local florist donate flowers. Sell the flowers at the office to employees. This is great in conjunction with Secretary's Day or Valentine's Day.



A Key Club

Employees purchase a key from a container full of keys that will hopefully open the lock affixed to a valuable prize. Purchasers should not be allowed to see if their keys open the lock until the end of the (evening) week when many keys prior to the closing of the key club can be auctioned off as a package.



Las Vegas Games

Set up a miniature casino in your office playing with fake money for prizes. There are rental shops that can make the atmosphere as real as possible.

Look – a – Like Contest

Employees dress up like famous personalities such as Marilyn Monroe or Elvis. Employees pay to vote on the best costume. The contestant receiving the most votes gets a prize.



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. A prize goes to the employee who correctly identifies the most babies.

Most Humorous Photo Contest

Employees bring humorous photos to work. Employees vote with quarters for the funniest. The winning photographer gets a prize.

Wii Care

Set up a couple of Wii's and have an Archery, bowling, basketball, skiing etc tournament.

Off and Running

Many agencies like to have big kick off events, such as continental breakfast, to open their campaigns. This is a great time for the agency head to give an endorsement of CFC and talk about upcoming campaign activities like employee meetings and fundraisers.

Penny Jar

Each department has a jar and each penny equals a point. Anything else equals its value in negative points. For example, a dime is minus 10 points. The department with the most positive points at the end of a week wins a prize. Beware of espionage from other departments.

The Promise Tree

Small index cards, each with a promised service printed on it, along with the name and telephone number of the donor and the price of the service, can be hung or tied to a tree with ribbons. The purchaser pays the required amount, takes the card, and later calls the donor to arrange a time for the service to be fulfilled. CFC gets the money, the buyer gets the service, and the donor contributes the promised service as one way of helping raise money. Everyone wins.



Raffles

Some companies like to hold their own lottery during the week of their campaign. Lottery tickets were sold for \$2 each or three for \$5 for prizes for all kinds of prizes including days off. Everyone's name stays in a drum while gifts are drawn daily or after each time a specific dollar amount is reached.

Spelling Bee

Organize a spelling bee with participants paying an entry fee. Have other employees pay to place bets on the winner. Award the winners with a special incentive.

Soak the Boss

Employees pay to throw a wet sponge at an executive staff member.

Mission Accomplished

Once your agency has reached its campaign goal, have a finale party. Invite all employees and have your United Way staff give a thank you presentation. Serve refreshments and have prize drawings.

Saying "Thanks"

After a successful campaign, it's important to say "thanks" to all the employees who volunteered their time and energy. Here are some ideas to convey your gratitude:

- ◆ Hand out pens, hats, t-shirts, or notepads with the CFC logo on them.
- ◆ Hand out balloons or flowers.
- ◆ Insert "thank you" notes with paychecks or pay stubs.
- ◆ Host a "thank you" breakfast or luncheon at a great restaurant or have management cook food on office premises.
- ◆ Pass out candy with a personalized note from management.
- ◆ Host a cake or ice cream social.
- ◆ Organize a kids parade by having children from a CFC agency walk around your office distributing candy.
- ◆ Partner with kids from a CFC agency and have them draw "thank you" cards for employees.
- ◆ Pass out toys or teddy bears in the name of a donor to children being served by a CFC agency.
- ◆ Start the day on the right foot by delivering coffee and pastries to each employee's desk.



Prizes and Incentives

Prizes and incentives can be big or small- -people just like to be recognized and appreciated. If you don't have a budget, contact area businesses for donated goods. The following is a list of well received enticements:

- Plants
- Free hotel stays
- Free oil changes
- Gift certificates to local stores
- Lottery tickets
- Open soda machine
- A department pizza party
- Parking Space
- Restaurant gift certificates
- "Sleep in Late" awards
- Time off-either a day, or a couple of hours
- Vacation packages
- Movie or video passes
- Agency Head takes the winner out to lunch
- Tickets to sporting events