

Your Guide to Making the Ask

Thank you for joining the United Way team at your organization. As a United Way team member, your job is vital to the success of this year's campaign. Through your eyes, your fellow employees will see the value of the many agency programs that are funded by United Way dollars. This Guide will help you succeed in your company campaign. **Remember, every person and every pledge counts.**

Even though you provide people with all the information they need to make an informed decision about supporting United Way, it's important to actually ask them to give. Here are some suggestions for making the "ask."

Getting Started

Many people have difficulty getting started with solicitation because they are uncomfortable asking for donations. This is natural.

Remember, you are not asking for donations for yourself, but for a cause which benefits others in the community every day.

United Way agencies work year round providing programs that provide services that address homelessness, substance abuse, emergency services, hunger, education and health issues. When you ask a fellow employee to make a United Way pledge, both of you are helping make our community a better place to live and work.

Emphasize that all donations stay in Licking County.

Before you ask:

- Learn all you can about United Way and the impact of the programs its partner agencies provide. **Review all materials and become familiar with our website** so that you can make a powerful statement and be prepared to answer questions.
- Develop a case for supporting the community. **Identify reasons to support the community through United Way.**
- **Make sure you have made your personal giving decision** so when you talk to others, you can ask them to join you in supporting United Way.

Make the ask

Make personal contact. People give to people. Set up a face-to-face meeting to ask for a pledge. **Don't leave the pledge forms on desks.** Surveys tell us the **number one reason people do not make a contribution is because they were never asked!** When you start, call the people you know best. This will build your pattern of success.

Handling Objections

Listen to the objection.

Strive to see the objection from the other person's point of view, not your-own, even if you feel that point of view is misinformed.

Remember that questions and objections are not personal.

Ask questions to clarify concerns.

Answer all objections.

Refer to Common Questions in the training materials, for answers to some common questions that employees ask. If you cannot find the answer to a question or adequately respond to an objection, contact your United Way representative for help.

Be sure that you respond to all objections and answer all questions, even if you have to get back to the person.

Encourage discussion. Every discussion is an opportunity to promote the message that giving to United Way improves the community for all of us by helping kids stay in school, helping families become self-sufficient, helping disabled residents lead independent lives, helping our neighbors in emergency situations, and helping seniors stay active as important members of our society.

Identify the donor's interests in the community. Find out if he or she volunteers for any charitable organizations in the area, or has in the past. **Discuss your own portfolio of giving (time, money, other means of support) and listen for signals that the donor identifies with those activities.** Connect the United Way impact to those interests when you ask for contributions.

- Remember that you're asking for those in need of assistance in the community, which may include friends, family, neighbors or your co-workers.
- Discuss your own observations of the impact of United Way dollars at work.
- **Let them know that their donations stay in Licking County.**
- Emphasize the convenience and affordability of payroll deductions.
- Ask previous donors to consider increasing their gifts to respond to recent economic turbulence that has increased need while donations have declined.
- Remember that giving is a personal decision. **Thank the person for their time regardless of whether or not they give.**

You Can Do It!!

People on your list may express their concerns or questions about United Way. They may have hesitations about making a charitable pledge. **Usually they only need a better understanding of where their money will go and how it will help.**

Be positive and confident, never pressuring or coercing. The best way to get pledges is to inform others about the local programs United Way supports and offer them an opportunity to participate in solving community problems.

Listen Carefully.

Most people will simply ask a question. For others, what may have been expressed as a concern or objection may also be a question. If necessary, ask for more information to clarify what they need to know. **Above all, encourage the person to talk, and acknowledge their need for answers.**

Every question or comment, even if it is negative, is an opportunity to communicate and share the positive aspects of our United Way, its agency programs and the people it helps. Generally, when concerns are expressed they are not directed against you.

One Method that Works

If the person has a concern, no matter how insincere or illogical it may sound to you, it is valid for them.

The “**feel....., felt....., found....**” technique is a powerful tool you can use to answer questions or concerns of your potential contributors.

Try saying something like this: “_____ (use their name), I can understand how you can feel that _____ (restate their objection). As a matter of fact, others have felt the same way. After they reconsidered, they found _____ (state the fact or benefit).”

Using this phrase lets you gain empathy with the person, helps you clarify their concern and lets you give a benefit statement that addresses their concern.

A United Way representative is only a phone call away. We are available to support you in everyway. Call Jo Fedor at 740-345-8741 for assistance.

State The Facts.

If you have the answer at hand, tell the person. Again, if you are not sure of the answer, be honest and say so. Then contact your United Way representative. We will get the answer! Then be sure to get back to the person.

Gifts to United Way are voluntary. Whether a person gives to United Way or not may depend on factors other than the worthiness of the charity. Once your prospect is educated about United Way and understands how it will help others, you have done almost everything you can to influence his/her decision. ***The ultimate decision is up to them. Always respect that and thank everyone for his or her time.***

