



Running a Virtual Campaign Kick-off

As you begin your United Way workplace campaign, a virtual kick-off has many benefits.

Ready, Set, Go! A virtual kick-off clearly marks the start of your United Way effort creating a sense of urgency and a timeline for colleagues. Campaigns with kick-off events have proven to raise more dollars in support of our community!

Inspiration The kick-off provides employees with an opportunity to hear about the impact of their donations and be inspired, so they can make an informed decision about giving.

Team Building This is a great chance to bring employees together in a common cause of caring and build morale, which is especially important in a time of social distancing.

Stage Setting It demonstrates the passion your organization, your senior management team and your colleagues have for the campaign and supporting our community.

Your United Way staff partner is here to support you and can help you plan and customize your kick-off event. We have created tools and resources to support you in hosting one your kick-off virtually.

Key Considerations and Planning

Helpful Hint: Reference the Virtual Kick-Off Planning Schedule for a 5-week timeline that can help you get things rolling.

Technology Platform

Confirm the online web conferencing platform that is approved by your workplace and learn about the platform's functionality, so that your United Way staff partner can help you build your kick-off agenda and activities on the platform. If you cannot host your kick-off on your own technology platform, speak to your United Way staff partner.

Senior Management Support

Support from your Executives is critical to showing your organization is behind the campaign. Book their time so they can participate in your virtual kick-off, or see if there may be existing meetings you can piggyback on. See Appendix B for suggested talking points and presentation content that your senior management team can personalize.

Consider your Audience

For best results, we recommend a kick-off event is scheduled for no longer than 30 minutes. If your employee base is large, you may consider hosting a series of kick offs (e.g. by department) throughout the day, or across a few days. While there is no ideal, you want to strike a balance between being able to reach all your employees, and helping people be comfortable enough to ask questions and interact.

Determine the Meeting Host and Other Company Speakers

It is best if the Employee Campaign Chair (ECC) acts as facilitator to ensure your kick-off sticks to the agenda. If the ECC needs support, your United Way staff partner can act as co-host. Invite your CEO or other executive(s) to take part and speak, too, as their leadership can inspire others and demonstrate support of United Way from the top down.

Make it Interactive

Engage your colleagues during the kick-off. Consider interactive activities like online polls or quizzes to keep their attention online. Your United Way staff partner can help you build this activity.

Raise Awareness about Impact

United Way has speakers that can join your virtual meeting and online awareness activities like our online poverty simulation [Makethemonth.ca](https://www.makethemonth.ca), online tours, and campaign videos can help share the impact of donations and inspire people to give. Your United Way staff partner can help you select the best awareness-building activities for your agenda.

Set Clear Action Steps

Let people know how they can donate and/or how they can get involved in the campaign. We recommend sending your donation link immediately following your kick-off event, so people can take action while they're feeling inspired.

Need a UW Speaker for your event? Please contact your UW staff partner and submit your booking request at least 10 business days prior to your event.

APPENDIX A

Recommended Agenda

We welcome you to make use of the following template agenda as you plan your event.

Virtual meeting login in details: [include details here]	
<p>Opening – 5 mins</p> <p>Time: XXX am/pm CEO/ECC/Sr. Leaders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome• Value of UW & Company partnership• Importance of United Way now• Encourage all to get involved with campaign activities• Interactive poll or quiz to get people engaged
<p>United Way Awareness activity – 7-12 minutes</p> <p>Facilitated by United Way</p>	<p>Activity examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Makethemonth.ca online poverty simulation• UW & Company quiz• Group whiteboard sharing (e.g. “Why I care about community.”, “Which #UNIGNORABLE issue resonates with me?”)• UW videos• Guest speaker from United Way
<p>Closing remarks – 5 mins</p> <p>CEO/ECC/Sr. Management</p>	<p>CEO/ECC to thank participants, and reiterate importance of United Way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call to action/donate now• Share company fundraising/participation goals• How to give• Instructions on next steps – donation link to come, who to contact with questions, etc.

APPENDIX B

Key Points for Speakers

The below can be customized/personalized to meet the needs of the speaker(s) at your virtual kick-off.

Opening remarks

Introduction

- Welcome attendees, and thank them for joining the call
- My Name is.....
- Before we begin, I would like to welcome two very important guests who are with us this morning (introduce UW and UW Speaker).
- As many of you know, I am a strong believer of United Way's work and I am proud to be a part of <COMPANY'S> United Way Campaign.
- We all know that poverty is hurting our community and undercutting what we stand for. This is even more evident now during this very challenging time of Covid-19 - our most vulnerable community members are even more at risk.
- We have seen demand for community services sky rocket since the beginning of the crisis here at home. The need for access to food, mental health counselling, and employment supports has increased by nearly 45% due to this pandemic.
- And that need will continue to climb as we help people get back to work and settle into a new normal for our community.
- What inspires me is that as a nation, we have all pulled together and looked to how we can help during this pandemic. Everyone is stepping up and doing what they can to help to ensure no one falls through the cracks.
- But we have to look to the future, and what our role will be in our long-term community recovery. These issues we have seen in the last few months (food access, senior's isolation, job security) they are not new and will continue to need to be addressed long after we settle into our new normal.
- That is why we partner with United Way; they have been on the front line of address these issues. They provide a vital continuum of care for people and families who need support.
- I want to take a moment to recognize and thank each and every one of you in this room for stepping up to support United Way every year. Our collective commitment demonstrates <COMPANY'S> leadership in communities across Canada, raising over X\$ for United Way.
KEY POINT ABOUT LAST YEAR'S CAMPAIGN (your UW Staff Partner can help provide some information if needed)
- IF THE SPEAKER HAS A PERSONAL STORY ABOUT UNITED WAY OR SOMETHING THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED, ADD HERE
- Thank you again for your personal leadership and generous support of United Way.
- Introduce the next section of the event <e.g. audience poll, speaker, UW activity> and turn over to the activity facilitator



Closing Remarks

- Thank you, < GUEST SPEAKER>, for joining us today and speaking. United Way plays such an important role in our community, investing in a critical social safety net in the GTA. This vision ensures we are lifting our region up and that regardless of background and circumstance – everyone can thrive.
- Our annual United Way campaign starts on <DATE>. We have an amazing team that has worked hard to make this year's campaign even better. Thank you, <CAMPAIGN VOLUNTEERS> for your leadership in the campaign.
- <By now, a donation link should be in your inbox. I encourage you to make a gift now. Let's demonstrate our commitment to our staff before we officially launch the campaign on the DATE.> **Optional if there is a multiple kick off situation and you send out link early**
- Our firm's donations to United Way are part of how we are building a stronger community and creating legacy across our communities.
- Thanks everyone.

Virtual Kick-Off Planning Schedule

