

STEPS FOR ENGAGING YOUR CO-WORKERS

This section will prepare you and your campaign committee to engage your co-workers in the work of United Way and encourage them to contribute to creating a stronger community. Educating your employees about the value of United Way is the most effective way to gain their support. United Way has developed 10 action steps that will help you organize effective engagement strategies.

1. INFORM CO-WORKERS ABOUT RAPPAHANNOCK UNITED WAY.

Inform your co-workers about Rappahannock United Way's community-impact goals and strategies. Utilize campaign tools such as the RUW Campaign Corner on the website, toolkit, success stories and more. Many people recognize United Way but are not fully aware of what we do. You are our primary vehicle to spread the message that Rappahannock United Way meets the needs in our region. Please utilize the key messages provided in the "Reasons to Support United Way" section with your co-workers throughout your campaign activities.

2. SELECT YOUR ENGAGEMENT APPROACH.

Employees can be engaged individually or as a group to discuss their support. Each method has its advantages and many organizations use both. Taking time to engage potential donors is key to obtaining their support.

BENEFITS OF GROUP SOLICITATION

(Approach co-workers with a sense of team)

- Executives and employees are notified in advance of a group meeting at which they will be asked for their contribution.
- Allows you to present "annual RUW" messaging uniformly.
- Can be added as an agenda item to existing meetings to accommodate schedules.
- Audiences may have the opportunity to hear a Rappahannock United Way story from a United Way staff member or a fellow employee, which has substantial impact on their engagement.

BENEFITS OF INDIVIDUAL ENGAGEMENT

(More personal approach)

- Allows you to tailor the United Way message to individual employees.
- Gives you the opportunity to speak to a prospective participating employee about their personal giving options.

PARTICIPATE IN OTHER UNITED WAY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Visit www.rappahannockunitedway.org/seasons to participate in our quarterly volunteer opportunities and collection drives. Offering your employees a hands-on experience to give back helps them to see the impact of their donations firsthand.

3. PLAN AHEAD FOR YOUR EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SESSION(S).

- Select a date(s), time(s) and location(s) for your session(s) to accommodate the majority of your employees.
- Contact your United Way representative to assist in planning and participating in the session(s).
- Send out event information to employees well in advance.
- Have audio and/or visual equipment available, if necessary.
- Ask senior management to be present/speak (LEADERS LEAD!).
- Secure enough materials for everyone.

4. HAVE A STORY TO TELL.

Share your personal experience about United Way or identify someone in your organization to share their experience (i.e. receiving help from United Way or a United Way funded program, participation in a Day of Action or event, etc.).

5. CREATE AN EXPERIENCE. HAVE FUN!

We've seen companies really roll up their sleeves to have fun while fundraising! Create an experience for your organization – one that depicts RUW's story and the importance of supporting our work.

6. PROVIDE REASONS TO GIVE.

Share United Way's impact and results. No other organization can create leveraged impact like United Way. Conveying the importance of this and the value of supporting RUW is crucial to a successful engagement strategy. Be sure to familiarize yourself with United Way facts and be prepared to answer any questions your co-workers may have.

7. MAKE THE ASK.

After educating your co-workers about RUW and their role in the community, inform them once again of the personal benefits of giving. Be sure to explain the pledging process to your audience.

8. MANAGE FEEDBACK.

You may receive feedback or questions from your colleagues about supporting RUW. Remember to listen to what is being said and establish rapport with the person. Objections are not personal and should be used to begin a conversation. By asking questions, educating and talking through their concerns, it may lessen or eliminate objections all together. Regardless of the employee's response, always thank them for their time. As always, you can refer to or enlist your United Way representative to respond.

9. STAY CONNECTED AND FOLLOW YOUR UNITED WAY DONATION.

Rappahannock United Way has many opportunities for you and your fellow employees to stay engaged in our work and the impact of your donation.

10. CONSIDER THE MANY WAYS YOUR ORGANIZATION CAN PARTNER WITH RUW.

- Donate in-kind resources
- Join Rappahannock United Way committees
- Participate in engagement efforts (i.e. Days of Action throughout the year)
- Create shared value through a strategic partnership

