

## 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 agencies United Way funds, as well as the people who receive help. 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 every day.** United Way agencies work year round providing needed solutions to problems of hunger, education, income, 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.

### Before you ask

Learn all you can about United Way and the impact of its partner agencies. **Review all materials and become familiar with [our website](#)** so that you can make a powerful statement and be prepared to answer questions. Review the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section on the website.

- Develop a case for supporting the community. Identify reasons to support the community through United Way. Personal stories are best. Click here to view success stories provided by our Partner Agencies.
- Make sure you have made your personal giving decision so when you talk to others, you can ask them to join you in investing in our community through United Way.

### Make the ask

**People give to people. Make personal contact.** 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, talk to the people you know best. This will build your pattern of success.

Position it as an investment in our community, in **their** community (which benefits everyone, including them) **through** United Way instead of as a charitable donation **to** United Way. Their investment in their community is managed and directed by 30± LOCAL United Way volunteers.

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 in the community, which may include friends, family, neighbors of your co-workers.
- Discuss your own observations or first-hand knowledge of the impact of United Way dollars at work. Explain it in terms of actual people and how their stories have changed.

### 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 [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on this website, for answers to some common questions that employees ask. Be familiar with the website, because most answers are there. If you cannot find the answer to a question or adequately respond to an objection, contact United Way 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 investing in our community through 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 neighborhoods stay safe, and helping seniors stay active as important members of our society.

- If the person isn't currently investing, ask them to consider starting with just a small amount per pay period. Break it down to an economic level they will understand and won't scare them: the cost of a Happy Meal, a coffee/latte from Starbucks, a pack of crackers and a drink, etc.
- Emphasize the convenience and affordability of payroll deductions. It is by far, the easiest and most painless way of investing in our community!
- Ask current investors/donors to consider increasing their investments to respond to recent economic turbulence that has increased need while donations have declined. An increase of just an additional \$1, \$5, or \$10 can make a huge impact.
- Remember that giving/investing 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 pledge. Usually they only need a better understanding of where their money will go and how it will help.

Show them how their investment pledge can help 29 needed programs in Glynn & McIntosh counties AND be sure they understand that everything they invests STAYS in Glynn & McIntosh counties.

Be positive and confident, never pressuring or coercing. The best way to get pledges is to inform others about the local programs they can support through United Way 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, our partner agencies, and the people they can help by their investment through United Way. Generally, when concerns are expressed they are not directed against you.

### **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 Campaign Coordinator or United Way representative. We will get the answer! Then be sure to get back to the person.

Community investments through 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.

### **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.

United Way staff is only a phone call away. We are available to meet on-site with you and your committee to plan, do presentations, discuss strategies, and support you in every way. Just give us a call at 265-1850.

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