



**United Way**  
Oxford

# **United Way Champion Guide**

**Your workplace guide for improving lives locally**



# OVERVIEW

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Thank you for being a United Way Champion and making a difference in your community through United Way Oxford. The role of Campaign Champion takes planning, purposeful communication, and time. Each workplace is unique and although we will provide best practices to follow, you will probably need to customize your Campaign to meet your workplace's needs.

This guide makes planning and executing a workplace Campaign simple. Get ready to begin recruiting your team, planning your inspirational Campaign and ultimately celebrating your lasting impact in our community. Remember, your United Way staff contact is with you every step of the way. Reach out to us! We'd love to hear from you.



"Volunteers help shape how United Way gives back. From providing insight into the community to contributing to events, volunteers have donated their time and effort in a myriad of ways, helping thousands of people living in Oxford County. Thank you for helping us be the best we can be. We can't do it without you!"

**-Morgan Vording, Youth Volunteer for United Way Oxford**

# ROLE OF THE CHAMPION

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Champions are key to the success of every campaign. You are the frontline volunteers who approach your peers in the workplace to raise awareness about United Way's vital role in the community.

You will provide your colleagues with an opportunity to make an informed choice about charitable giving by doing these three simple things:

## 1 Engage

- Explain to your colleagues the benefits United Way brings to our local community.
- Describe how a donation to United Way provides flexible, stable funding that supports a diverse network of social service agencies across the community.
- Promote how their donation will make a difference.
- Promote your campaign and any activities or special events you host.
- Invite your United Way Representative to share the needs of community, their work and the impact of United Way.

## 2 Ask

- Ask your colleagues if they would like to support the work of United Way by making a donation.
- Collect completed pledge forms or direct employees to your online giving page.
- Follow up by answering questions and visiting colleagues who were absent or undecided.

## Thank and Celebrate

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- Thank your colleagues for their time and participation.
  - Send out personalized thank you cards or emails.
  - Celebrate your achievements with the team!

**Thank you for volunteering your time to canvass your colleagues.**

By asking for donations to United Way, you will help people in your community who need it most, by ensuring that there are resources and supports available for them to thrive.

# 4 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

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1 Prepare

2 Engage

3 Ask

4 Thank

## 1 Prepare

### **Connect**

Connect with your United Way Staff Contact— your most valuable resource to help you with your Campaign. Together, review campaign results from previous years, strategize and brainstorm, and begin to develop a plan for the upcoming Campaign. Plan for a campaign that resonates with your team and what's important to them.

### **Recruit and Train Your Campaign Team**

Now it's time to recruit your United Way Campaign team. Recruiting individuals from different departments, levels, and locations is key. With your team, take this time to learn more about your community needs and how United Way helps support community strategies to end complex issues like homelessness and poverty.

### **Plan Your Campaign**

Having a plan is vital for a successful Campaign. An impactful Campaign timeline, a communication strategy aimed at inspiring and mobilizing employees, and a detailed work plan all make running a successful campaign easier.

### **Kick Off Your Campaign**

Launch your campaign (consider a kick-off event) and inform your colleagues about activities, incentives, and goals. Invite workplace leaders (CEO, President, GM, Labour Leaders, etc.) to speak and endorse the campaign. Include informative presentations, impact speakers and awareness messaging to help colleagues understand the local need and the incredible impact they can have with their investment.

# 4 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

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## 2 Engage

**Engage your colleagues in a variety of ways including:**

### **United Way Oxford Events**

United Way Oxford engages our community through various events and activities. Having your workplace take part in one or more of our activities can enhance your Campaign. Reach out to your United Way Staff Contact to learn more about upcoming events such as Day of Caring or Tampon Tuesday.

### **Workplace Special Events**

From trivia to chili cook-offs, Workplace Special Events are a great way to create awareness, energize your workplace, provide team building opportunities and highlight community issues. They can be used to raise money, but more importantly, they create momentum for your annual United Way Campaign. Remember that special events can also be done virtually.

### **Seeing is Believing Tours and Impact Speakers**

There is no better way to understand the United Way programs at work in Oxford County than through a Seeing is Believing Tour, (either in person or virtually), or by having an Impact Speaker share their story. Your team will be immersed in the work that United Way's partner agencies do to create long lasting social change and gain a better understanding of United Way. Learning how we collaborate with volunteers, donors, organizations and others to make a difference for thousands of people in our community. Donors will hear the personal stories of agency staff, volunteers, and program participants to truly understand the impact of their investment.

Connect with your United Way Staff Contact to learn more about current 'In-Person' and 'Virtual' Impact Experiences. Opportunities are constantly changing.

### **Product Drives**

The impact of product drives are profound. When families can worry less about meeting their basic needs, they have a better shot at living their best life. Collecting winter boots or school supplies for a United Way product drive is also a fun and rewarding team building opportunity for your workplace. Connect with your United Way staff partner to learn more about the different opportunities and which items are currently in high need for our community partners.

# 4 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

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## 3 Ask

### What's your why?

Before you make an ask, it is important to ensure you can explain why the United Way is important to you and your community. If you have a personal reason for volunteering to be a United Way Champion, sharing your 'why' will inspire others to reflect on their own reasons for giving. If you aren't comfortable sharing a personal 'why', you can use the stories of community members found in our campaign materials to help you prepare what you want to say.

### Know your ASK

Be specific and be genuine! Work with your United Way Staff Contact and your committee to determine your ask. For different workplaces or different departments, the ask may need to come from a specific person or utilize specific language to have the most impact. Remember that when asking for donations to United Way Oxford, you are helping those who need it most, connecting them to the resources and support they need to thrive.

### Try phrases like:

"Join me in giving back to our community, to have meaningful impact where it's needed most."

"Did you know? \$2 per pay provides 100 healthy & nutritious snacks to students in Oxford County, preparing them to learn!"

### Leadership Giving

At United Way, Leaders are people who are driving change, willing to set a powerful example, and are able to inspire action. It begins with a personal annual gift of \$1,200 or more. Leadership Giving is an essential part of United Way Workplace Campaigns and it is important to raise awareness about this incredible giving opportunity. The impact of leadership giving is doubled through the Leadership Giving Program, sponsored by Friends of United Way Oxford. The Leadership Match will generously provide up to \$25,000 to match all new \$1,200+ Leadership gifts, as well as any increases in current Leadership Giving. Connect with your United Way Staff Contact to learn more.

# 4 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

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## **Payroll Giving**

Many workplaces participate in the payroll deduction program, which allows employees to opt to deduct a regular amount from each paycheck to fulfill their annual pledge to United Way over the course of the year. Payroll deductions begin the following January and their donation will show up automatically on the employee's T4 at income tax time. Different workplaces use different tools to collect these pledges—both online and paper pledge forms. Employees can also make a one-time gift through payroll giving. It provides a convenient and manageable way for employees to give. If there is an opportunity to offer incentives, such as prizes, for employees to sign up for payroll giving, that may help motivate them to take action and donate!

## **Corporate Matches**

A number of workplaces offer a Corporate Match for the gifts made by employees through the workplace Campaign. If your workplace offers a match, this can be an important part of your ask as it can increase and enhance the impact of each donor's gift.

## **Follow Up**

Track your progress and follow up with your donors. Sending company-wide communications may be useful when providing updates on goals, but you may need to connect directly with your colleagues to support them in giving. They may be confused about how to give or have other questions they were too afraid to ask. Work with your United Way Staff Contact to determine who has given and who may be outstanding.

## **Addressing Questions**

Making a decision on charitable giving can be a challenge for some individuals. They may have questions and as the one who made the ask, it will be up to you to answer them. Please refer to our FAQ document for support. If you still require clarification, don't hesitate to connect with your United Way Staff Contact.

You can also learn more about how donations are distributed and how they are used by visiting [unitedwayoxford.ca](http://unitedwayoxford.ca).

# 4 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

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## 4 Thank

### Celebrate Success

**Your Campaign is complete and it's time to celebrate!**

### Show Impact

Now that you have reached the big finale, we recommend that you share the final total fundraised along with the impact that donations will have in our community with your workplace. Work with your United Way Staff Contact to help put faces and stories next to the dollars raised, to truly understand the difference you've made in Oxford County!

You might consider including the following in your wrap-up event:

- Video/ Slide Show of your Campaign activities
- Cheque Presentation
- United Way Video

### Show Appreciation

It is important to say thank you to all those who have donated or were involved in your campaign. Personalized letters, emails, or in- person/video thank yous are all great ways to let them know they are appreciated. Your United Way Staff Contact has resources available to help assist with this should you need guidance.

### Reflect

Before closing the book on this year's Campaign, gather your committee together for a debrief meeting. Engage in dialogue about your Campaign in order to prepare and inform next year's committee. Invite your United Way Staff Contact to this meeting so they can begin preparing to support your next Campaign.

What went well? What would you change? What's something new you want to try next year?

**Thank you for being an amazing Champion!**

## Tips

- The number one reason **people don't give is because they were never asked** - be sure to ask and include the importance of how the community benefits from their support.
- **Be yourself.** Your enthusiasm and commitment will motivate others to give.
- **Be fearless!** You are not asking for yourself - you are asking for the community. Remember that lives are being changed because of you!

# OUR VISION

A caring, inclusive and resilient community where everyone lives with dignity, belonging, opportunity and hope.

# OUR MISSION

Addressing Oxford County's social needs today, and reducing the needs of tomorrow.

# OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

Each year, United Way's efforts to build a better community are supported by thousands of people across Oxford County. We deeply value the trust you place in us. We work to ensure your gift to United Way is making a difference in our community. Your investment supports local programs and initiatives that help youth, individuals, and families — both today and in the future.



**United Way**  
**Oxford**

**Main Office:**

447 Hunter St.  
Woodstock, ON. N4S4G7  
Tel 519 539 3851  
TTY 1 877 280 1391



[unitedwayoxford.ca](http://unitedwayoxford.ca)