

CANVASSER GUIDE

Canvassing for United Way



United Way of Saskatoon &
Area's Mission:

To improve lives and build
community by engaging
individuals and mobilizing
collective action.

UNITED WAY OF SASKATOON & AREA
#100, 506 – 25th Street E.

Saskatoon, SK S7K 4A7

975-7700 (phone)

244-0583 (fax)

office@unitedwaysaskatoon.ca

www.unitedwaysaskatoon.ca

Why United Way? Because it's where we live.



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Three Steps to Successful Canvassing

Step 1 – Prepare

- ❑ **Familiarize yourself with the information in this guide and accompanying material in your package.** It's important to learn about United Way before you ask co-workers for their community investment/pledge. Be ready to answer questions and respond to concerns.
- ❑ **Discuss strategies for increasing donations with your Employee Campaign Chair and be ready to implement these strategies.** Be confident in asking employees to increase their donations. Every gift counts!
- ❑ **Call on United Way supporters first.** Start with donors who have supported United Way in the past. Begin by approaching people with whom you have a good personal relationship. This will build confidence and momentum in your canvassing.
- ❑ **Meet personally with each employee.** Call ahead to arrange a meeting, and meet when it's convenient for them. Tell them you are a volunteer. Book 5 – 15 minutes for each canvass. Respect the time given to you, and stick to it!
- ❑ **Make your own community investment/pledge to United Way.** It is easier to ask others to give if you have considered your own reasons for giving prior to your first canvass.

Step 2 – Meet

- ❑ **Set the tone.** Relax, be positive and thank your colleague for meeting with you. Establish rapport and explain the purpose of your visit. Thank them for their past support (if that information is available).
- ❑ **Present the United Way.** Refer to United Way materials and describe how United Way is building caring, vibrant communities. Tell them why you support United Way. Tell them a compelling fact or message about United Way, one that has a meaning for you and helps to explain United Way.
- ❑ **Ask for any questions.** Listen carefully to any concerns and answer them as honestly as possible. The most frequently asked questions and answers are included in this document. If you are unable to respond immediately, make note of it and tell your colleague that you will get back to them with an answer.
- ❑ **If they have an objection.** Don't get into an argument, and don't take it personally. Objections can be opportunities to inform and provide facts. Listen carefully and provide information. Encourage the person to talk. Let them expand on their concerns.
- ❑ **Ask for the donation.** Give your colleague the pledge package and explain the pledge card. Ask for a donation. Ask previous donors to consider an increase. Promote payroll deduction if it is offered in your workplace. Describe any incentive draws and prizes if appropriate. Take the completed pledge card with you, or arrange to pick it up later.
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- **Say thank you.** Thank everyone for his or her time and consideration, including those who choose not to give. As a volunteer, you are representing United Way. Please help us to convey our appreciation for their time and consideration.

Step 3 – Follow-up

- **Collect all outstanding pledge cards.** Follow up on any questions that you were unable to immediately answer. Return all pledge cards to your Employee Campaign Chair, Canvasser Coordinator or Treasurer within the timeframe of your canvass, including those who don't wish to contribute if possible.

Tips to Remember:

To be successful, you must:

- Retain current donors, and ask for an increase. Most people expect this and plan for an increase in their gift when they realize the impact.
- Recover lapsed donors and encourage giving again. Sometimes people rotate their charitable giving. These donors may be planning to give to United Way this year.
- Recruit new donors. The #1 reason why people don't give is because they were never asked!
- **Ask** everyone to contribute, whatever amount makes sense to them – every gift counts.
- Special Events should take place **'after'** canvassing has happened. This may be a fun way to wrap-up and celebrate your campaign.

Follow up and hand in all your materials to your Employee Campaign Chair or Canvasser Coordinator.

Your job is done – Thank You!

The Top 10 Most Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why would I give to United Way when I can give directly to an agency?

The power of your gift, combined with the gifts of others, is far greater than the power of your gift alone. Unless you make a major gift of tens of thousands of dollars, your gift can't fund a program; but when leveraged with the gifts of others through United Way, it can. We give because we want to help those in need. But step back for a moment to see the big picture.

- If you give money to a panhandler on the street, you might help buy a single meal.
- If you donate money to a single agency, you might help to address a single issue.
- If you invest in United Way, your gift supports the combined efforts of a network of programs that provide the most comprehensive care for an individual or family in need, and helps solve a range of community-wide problems such as homelessness, unemployment, and lack of job skills.

2. How do I know the money I give goes to where it's needed most?

When you give to United Way you can be sure that your donation will be invested with due diligence to account for each dollar. Through our Citizen Review Process, all agency funding applications are thoroughly reviewed by trained volunteers who recommend how best to invest our Community Fund resources according to our community's priority needs.

3. How can I be sure my money is going where I direct it to go?

Both an internal and external audit is performed to certify the correctness of our operations.

4. How much of my contribution actually gets to where it is needed?

Thanks to the work of thousands of volunteers and the generosity of many sponsors, United Way of Saskatoon is able to keep fundraising costs at 15% (the national average is 26%).

5. What are the options with the United Way system of giving?

These choices allow you to consolidate all of your charitable giving through United Way.

- Give to the Community Fund and your investment will produce positive, meaningful outcomes today through the Community Investment Process.
- Give to any registered Canadian charity through our Donor Directed Giving Program.
- Give a one-time donation, monthly, quarterly or through your employer's payroll deduction program.

6. Does organized labour support United Way?

Yes. In fact, in Saskatoon, organized labour was a founding partner of United Way. Unions and their members support the United Way community campaign through volunteering and contributing to workplace campaigns, writing endorsement letters and promoting United Way efforts. Locals also host many United Way training events and meetings at their offices.

7. Why aren't all agencies a part of United Way?

Agencies are encouraged to apply for United Way funding, however the number of agencies or programs receiving funds depends on campaign dollars raised. In addition, some agencies choose not to apply for funding.

8. How does United Way protect my privacy? Does United Way of Saskatoon & Area sell their donor information?

United Way of Saskatoon & Area is committed to protecting your privacy. We do not sell or trade donor information. We take every step to ensure the confidentiality of your information is maintained. The information you or your employer provides to us is used to help us in our campaign to process and receipt your donation and respond to any of your information requests. For a full copy of United Way of Saskatoon & Area's privacy policy, please call 975-7700.

9. Why should I give? I never use agency programs.

Your support ensures that you, your loved ones, and your neighbours have help when it is needed. Your gift to United Way is an investment in the quality of life in the community where we live, work, raise our families, and retire. Your donation will reach one in four people in Saskatoon; one of three is a child. Chances are some one you know has benefited from the work of a United Way funded agency. Sometimes, no matter how carefully we plan or how close our family is, a crisis or accident could mean we may need one or more of the United Way agencies to help get back on track.

10. How do I benefit by giving to United Way of Saskatoon & Area?

You can be assured that you are part of a community-wide effort to make life better for all. Your money is invested well and will reach people in need right here in our community. You can feel especially good because you are part of a community-wide effort to make life better by investing in sustainable solutions to the root causes of issues.