



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

A

Ask: The easiest way to raise money is to ask your friends, neighbors, relatives and anyone you know to make a donation to the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life event, which you are taking part in. Explain your commitment and why you are involved – maybe because of a loved one battling cancer.

Art Sales: Have preschool and elementary students produce great art and have a show. Parents and friends buy back their budding artists' masterpieces.

Auctions: Many teams are putting together live or silent auctions. Teams can make a whole event out of it- work with an auctioneer who will donate his/her time and hold a live auction. Some teams have had success in hosting silent auctions during their family reunions....while others are putting them together at sports auctions. Collectibles are hot! Auction off the boss- have the boss or department head as your assistant for the day at work.

B

Baby Sit: Do extra baby-sitting and give your pay (or at least part of it) to your team's effort. Or baby-sit as a team during a community event.

Bake Sales: Hold a bake sale at work or at a busy place- a bank branch held a bake sale once a week for several months. Or have a No-Bake sale where co-workers pay so they don't have to bake goodies.

Balloon Day: This is good for students. Sell a Relay balloon with a message attached for \$2 each. The students take orders in advance and then deliver the balloon messages at a later date.

Bank For a Year: Get everyone on your team to put in \$2 each week beginning the week after this year's Relay. In 50 weeks each team member will have his or her \$100. Or try this – 50 cents every day, in 50 weeks you will have collected, from yourself, \$175 – add just two more friends giving you 50 cents each per day and you will now have a total of \$525 in 50 weeks!

Bingo: Hold a bingo night at a local club, church hall or at your place of business.

Birthday Party with a Purpose: Have birthday parties and state that in lieu of gifts make a donation to the American Cancer Society for Relay For Life.

Block Party: Put together an old-fashioned block party in a parking lot, or close off a neighborhood street (with permission). Have a band donate a few hours, have a BBQ, do face painting, offer hay rides etc. Have fun and raise money for your team.

Book Sales: Do it in conjunction with a publishing house that will donate books or have everyone on your team bring in good condition used paperbacks or hard cover books. Set up a table to sell your books. Get permission to have your table set up in a local mall or plaza, or if you work for a large employer, set it up in the break or lunch room.

Boss for the Day: Allow people to bid on being boss for the day-high bid wins.

Bounce-a-thon: Elementary students take a collection envelope home to collect pledges for bouncing a basketball for half an hour. Each class in the school takes turns gathering in the school's front hall throughout the day to bounce their basketballs.

Bowl-a-thon: Some student teams have been holding bowl-a-thons, where they get pledges per pin they knock down.



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

Bowling Chance: \$1 gives you the chance to throw 2 balls (toy bowling set). If you strike your name is entered into a drawing 2 times. If you throw a spare with your second ball your name is entered into the drawing once. Team is to solicit a nice prize for the drawing. This one could be held on site.

Breakfast With: Put together a breakfast with Santa or the Easter bunny. Work with a local restaurant or your team can do it themselves at a hall or club. Have someone in costume.....sell tickets and have pictures taken. This would also work as a breakfast with the mayor or other high profile person.

Brown Bag Lunch Day: Everyone brings in their own lunch and donates the money they would have spent to the Relay For Life fund.

C

Can and Bottle Drive: Set up at a central location and collect cans and bottles. Return for deposit to nearest redemption center. You will need pick up trucks to carry the cans or ask a local redemption center or local store if you can set up in their parking lot so you don't have to carry the cans to be redeemed.

Candle Sales: Sell scented votive candles to fellow employees and friends.

Candy Bar Sales: Sell candy bars at work, or have someone at a business let you set up a little display box (beauty shops, store check-out counters, etc.). You can purchase box kits from wholesale warehouses such as Sam's or ask a candy store to donate them.

Car Washes: This is another good idea for students as well as adults....especially in the spring when everyone wants the mud off of their cars. Try saying "donations accepted" instead of charging a set price.

Car Smash: Secure an old car and write in large bold letters CANCER across the car. For a dollar donation you get to "smash cancer" three times with a sledgehammer.

Challenges: Challenge another team to raise more money than you. Some radio stations may gladly put your challenge on the radio.

Change Makes a lot of Cents: Bank and credit union teams post this message at the teller line – Donate the cents from your deposit to the (name of bank) Relay For Life team and help fight the war against cancer. If your check total is for \$187.67 your donation is just 67 cents.

Chili Cook Off: have a Hot-Hot-Hot chili cook off

Christmas Party: Play carols, serve cookies, decorate a tree, have pictures with Santa and charge admission.

Christmas Tree/Wreaths: Ask a local retailer to donate \$1 for every tree and wreath sold to support your Relay team. Or make your own wreaths as a team- use princess pine you find in the woods.

Coffee & Company: Enjoy coffee and a chat with your friends and raise money too! Invite your neighbors to your place for a mid-morning coffee break. You supply the coffee and treats, and ask them to donate to your Relay team. Try having a few Luminaria bags handy so friends can donate and decorate right then and there.

Coin Drive: This is especially good for students to do at schools- have everyone give them their change in the lunchroom. Set up a coin jar at the beginning of the school year and see how it grows. A college put a twist on the coin drive, which would also work at companies with different departments, or at a bank with the different tellers etc. They sent out a flyer explaining: JOIN THE PENNY WARS- drop off your change in the jars at the front of your residence hall. The



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

residence hall with the most points wins a pizza party for its residents. Pennies are worth positive points, silver coins and cash are worth negative points. Sabotage the other residence halls by dropping off your silver coins into their jars!

Coin Toss: Get permission from the local mall to collect all the coins tossed into the fountain for a designated time period. Be sure to have signs state that the coins will be donated to the American Cancer Society Relay For Life.

Comedy Club: Ask a local comedy club to host an evening in support of the Relay For Life and invite all teams to sell tickets. The teams would get the credit for the tickets they sold.

Concession Stands: Set up a concession stand or booth at a community event during the year.

Corner Collections: A familiar site, many of us have seen, is the fire fighters in our community on a popular street corner filling their boots with donations. Some communities sell special editions of their local newspaper at certain times of the year at intersections around the city with donations benefiting various charities. Why not Relay? Consider staking out a popular intersection with signs that say...We Won't Stop Relaying 'Til We Reach Our Goal! or some other creative slogan!

Craft Fairs: Have your team set up a craft table or raffle at a craft fair or festival.

Crafts: In a holiday mood? Craft tree ornaments, stockings or decoration and sell them.

Cut-a-thon: Have a beauty salon or vocational school hold a cut-a-thon for you.

Cutest baby: Have a Cutest Team Baby Contest....either on site or beforehand at your place of work. Place a photo of each team member as a baby on the bulletin board or on a display board. People donate \$1 per vote. You decide on the appropriate reward.

D

Dances: Students can hold a school dance. Adults can put together a dance at a local club or hall. Get a band or DJ to donate their services.

Day of Cleaning Raffle: Team members donate a suggested five hours to spring/fall house clean your home, with tickets selling for \$5 each.

Day Spa: Raffle off a day of beauty, or a for a set fee, provide haircuts, manicures and massages.

Decorating Service: No time to decorate?... holiday decorating service! Also can put Holiday lights up on houses for a fee- this is a job many people would like someone else to do.

Deliver Flyers: See what businesses distribute sales flyers in the weekly paper or through the mail and offer for your team to deliver them within the town (at each house) for a set amount. It costs these businesses a lot to mail them out and they would be able to save money by having you distribute them personally. This is another good idea for a student team. One phone company paid a high school team \$2500 to distribute the new phone books throughout the community.



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

Die Cut Cards: The suns and moons paper cut outs (available at a minimal cost through your staff partner) can be sold at businesses, companies, or anywhere people frequent. Some teams have used them at holiday time to place a memorial or honor tree. You could also try ice cream cones at local ice cream shops or paper bowling pins line the walls of a bowling alley to “bowl down cancer”.

Dog Walkers: Have your team walk the neighborhood dogs for a donation. Many pet owners would appreciate the opportunity to let someone take their dog for a long walk.

Dog Sit: While the owners are on vacation, saves them from sending Fido to the kennel.

Donut Days: Get donuts donated from a bakery every Friday and sell them at school or the office!

Dress Down Days: Allow employees to dress down for a day if they make a certain donation. This is also happening at parochial schools or other schools that require uniforms. For a specified donation, the student doesn't have to wear a uniform to school that day.

Dunking Booth: Set up a dunking booth at a local event festival, fair, picnic etc. and recruit local celebrities to sit for you.

E

Email: Email your friends and associates for donations.

Envelope at Restaurant table: Restaurant teams generate donations by placing a Relay For Life envelope at every table during a designated time period, stating “Please support our Relay For Life team and the American Cancer Society”. Waitresses check envelopes after each seating and find surprising results. Be sure to have 1-800-ACS-2345 on the envelopes.

Errand Service: Never have time.... Run an errand service!

Event parking spaces: Sell parking spaces for community events near your home.

F

Face Painting: Set up a booth at a local event, fair, or festival. Kids love it!

Fashion show: Work with new or existing clothing stores to hold a fashion show. You could have it at the store, or use a club or church hall. Offer refreshments and your team members can be the models.

Fast Food Restaurants: Ask your local restaurants if they will have Relay day. Either a percentage of meals sold or a certain item on the menu will go towards your team. Your team should be on hand to ask for donations from the patrons as well as be able to talk about the event. Fry Day Friday- on a Friday prior to your Relay, a dime from every order of fries sold goes to your team total.

Flamingo Alert: Place pink flamingos in someone's yard. It will fly away once a donation is made to Relay For Life. Some people have expanded this idea and for a set amount you can designate the next person is should go to....or you can purchase flamingo repellent so it will not land on your yard. Other lawn ornaments could be used.



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

Flower sales: Work with a local florist or wholesaler and sell bouquets, potted flowers or individual stems (carnations or roses) at your place of work or school.

Flower bouquet Raffle: Ask a local florist to donate one bouquet of flowers, one for each month for a three-month period (or go to 3 different florists and get one per shop). This is a good fundraiser for corporate teams with a large staff, especially during the winter months, to take a chance to win some “springtime” for their desk.

G

Game Night: Have a game night- much like a party with a purpose. Everyone comes to your house to play board games, charades etc. Charge an “entrance” fee.

Garage Sales: Work individually or as a team to set up garage sales- clean out your attic and raise money for the American Cancer Society at the same time!

Glow Sticks: Sell glow in the dark sticks that can be worn as necklaces or carried at the event.

Go Door to Door: Go door to door and ask for donations. Canvas your neighborhood.....or work as a team and canvas the town.

Golf Tournament: Have your team put together a golf tournament!

H

Hat (or Cap Day): This is good for schools. For a specified amount, the students can wear a baseball cap to school for the day.

Haunted House: For Halloween, organize a haunted house and charge admission. Or as a team organize a haunted forest. You can also sell refreshments!

Hoagie Sale: Hold a hoagie sale at work or around town, taking orders ahead of time.

Hole-in-One: set up a portable putting green and for a donation; let people try to putt it in. You can do this on site, or at a community event beforehand.

Hot Dog For Cancer: A Principal at an elementary school agreed that if ALL the teachers would raise \$100 each he would dress up like a hot dog and let the students squirt ketchup, mustard, and relish on him.

I

Ice Cream Socials: Plan one at your place of work or for friends, asking for a donation to attend. Sell ice cream for dessert at your place of work.



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

J

Jail & Bail: For a donation employees can be arrested. For an additional donation they can post their own bail, or employees have a bounty placed on their head, are arrested and are not set free until the entire bounty is raised (\$100 or more per inmate) This activity can also be done on site.

Jewelry Sales: Work with a wholesale company to sell jewelry they don't wear anymore and have a jeweler clean it up for you, then have a sale.

K

Kiss a Pig Contest: Recruit a local celebrity to kiss a swine when a certain amount of money has been raised. Also has been done as a contest. Put the face of all the teachers or employees one on each jar, and who ever raised the most money must kiss the animal (could also be a team mascot, goat mule, dog etc.)

L

Lawn Service: While you are mowing your lawn, mow someone else's- for a donation.

Letter Writing: A great way to ask for donations without asking in person. Send letters out to your friends and family explaining what you're doing and why, and asking for a specific amount (more than you want) seems to work best or leave it up to them. Write them your personal goal and ask for their help. Some people are writing letters on behalf of their pets or babies adding a little humor.

Line Dancing: Work with a local club or facility to offer a night of line dancing. Get a DJ to volunteer his/her time to play music and get someone to teach a couple dances. It's a fun way to spend a night while collecting donations.

Longaberger Basket Bingo: Work with a Longenberger basket sales rep to hold a bingo party. Get the use of a hall, sell tickets ahead of time and sell refreshments at the party. Most groups are selling 200-250 tickets for \$15-\$20 each, which entitles the ticket holder to 20 games. Each game winner will be awarded a Longaberger basket. The rep could also help with selling extra games or special rounds and raffles.

Lunch with the CEO: Auction off lunch or maybe a round of golf with the CEO or president of your company.

M

Massages: Offer massages for a donation at the event.

Matching Gifts: Ask your company to match what you raise. Some companies have a matching gift policy, check to see if your does. If they don't ask them anyway.

Money Jars: Set up money jars or coin boxes at your place of work. This is good for banks, diners/restaurants hairdressers, and stores. Check back to empty frequently.

Mother's Day: The second Sunday in May will be here before you know it. So beyond making your personal Mother's Day plans, consider a way to honor mom and support the fight against cancer. Is it a Mother's Day brunch fundraiser?



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

Partnering with a dress shop to stage a fashion show and tea? A flower sale? Ladies-only golf tourney? The possibilities are endless! The key is to start planning for it soon.

Movie night: Invite your friends over for a night at the movies. You provide the popcorn and soda and charge admission. Or have a movie week during lunch hour at work. Charge admission and invite employees to eat their lunch while they watch.

N

Nonalcoholic cocktail party: have a nonalcoholic cocktail party at the Relay and ask for donations. Or have a moving one, where each team has different appetizers and drinks available so people go tent to tent. Be sure to have your donation cans next to the refreshments. You could also do this a team and move from house to house on different weekend nights.

O

Odd jobs: Call on your neighbors and ask to do some odd jobs, such as fixing a rain gutter, shoveling their driveway, paint a fence, or rake their leaves.

Open House: A fitness center held an open house with a variety of toning and aerobic classes offered throughout the day. They also included a silent auction and babysitting. Ask for donations.

P

Pancake Breakfasts: Hold a pancake breakfast at a hall or church or at work on specific days.

Parking Space Auction: College students can auction off the presidents parking spot, or company employees can auction off a prime spot.

Payroll Deduction: Employees can make their own contribution by having it deducted directly from their paycheck. A little each week, can grow into a large amount by Relay time.

Penny Wars: Compete against another Relay team or between departments in your workplace to see who can collect the most pennies for Relay. All silver and paper money in the penny jars count against the total number of pennies, so each team tries to sabotage each other's jars with bills and large coins. Plus they raise more dough in the process!

Percentage of Sales: Designate a percentage of one day's sales or proceeds and let the public know so they will buy more.

Personal Bake Sale: Bake some extra delicious, extra gooey brownies and sell them for dollars a piece- make the slices large. Bake a different dessert each week for your co-workers.

Pet Fashion Show: Have a pet fashion show where you give everyone's pet the opportunity to flaunt its favorite outfit. Charge admission and vote for awards such as best outfit, matching outfits (owner and pet), wildest outfit etc.



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

Photos: Have your photo taken with a local celebrity for a specified donation. Or use one of those realistic cardboard stand-in's. Do this at work or in conjunction with a local fair or festival.

Pie in the Face: Hold a Pie in the Face contest at school. Students and faculty vote by placing money in a container with a teacher's name on it. The teacher in each grade level with the most money gets a pie thrown in their face by their students. Teachers volunteer and even campaign for their competitors.

Pie Sales: Much like bake sales, these are also popular...especially around the holidays. Take orders or set up a table at a busy grocery store or shopping center.

Pizza Sales: Work with a pizzeria to give you a percentage of the pizzas you sell. Take orders and deliver them....or put pizza kits together yourself. Also can work with a wholesaler to get pizzas at a reduced price or donated is even better.

Place a "Plea" in your employee bulletin or newsletter: Place a plea in your employee newsletter letting them know that you are contributing dollars plus at least 12 hours of your life to the Relay For Life. Place a picture of the person your team is working in honor or memory of in a highly visible place to remind team members of the importance of their participation.

Plant Sales: Like the flower sales, work with local florists or wholesaler and sell potted plants. A nursing home team did this and painted the flowerpots, repotted the plants and added a bow with a card. They sold a number to friends, staff and family members of the patients.

Pot Luck Lunches: Designate every Wednesday as Relay For Life Pot Luck Day, where team members take turns making chili, salads, desserts, etc and offer to employees at a set price or donation.

Q

Questions for a Buck: One team raised money by having their boss, who was constantly being asked questions by everyone to start charging a buck for each question. Word spread throughout the company what he was doing, and everyone started asking questions and paying up.

Quilt Raffle: Have your team make a quilt to be raffled off. Or if you have that creative seamstress on your team, have her hold a quilting class or just a quilting night. Quilters like to sew in groups, so make a night out of it and ask for donations....or they can make the quilt for your raffle.

Quoits Tournament: hold a quoits or horseshoe tournament.



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

R

Raffles: There are so many different types of raffles you could have. Make up theme baskets where everyone on the team brings one item to go in the basket- Summer fun basket could include sun screen, paperback books, sunglasses, bottled water, magazines etc, - Easter basket could be made up of candy, chocolate bunnies, stuffed animal etc. Night out packages could include gift certificates to the movies, or tickets to a play, concert or sports event. Be creative...but make sure to check your local state laws on Raffles before proceeding!

Recurring Gifts: Did you know that your Relay online site allows your donors to set up recurring gifts? Recurring gifts are donations that can be spread out over a length of time, such as quarterly or monthly. Did someone give you \$100 last year towards your Relay efforts, but this year, they said they can only give you \$50? Ask them if they would be willing to give you \$20 a month for 5 months! You don't need to do anything special to set it up, just tell them to head to your Relay Online page and make a donation!

Roll those pennies: Roll those pennies sitting in a jar on your dresser. While you're at it roll the rest of your coins you have been collecting.

S

Sell employee Services: For example, get the best gourmet chef on your team to agree to go to someone's home and prepare a meal (for a fee of course). Get your VP to commit to wash an employee's car, or several if willing. Have the company photographer take a family photo for a certain amount.

Shave your head: Have someone agree to have their hair shaved once a certain amount of money has been raised.

Shoe Shines: Shine shoes for donation- enlisted men would love it.

Shutter bug mania: Into photography? Take candid shots around the community, schools, etc to sell to subject. Or take photos of a friends wedding, anniversary party, or birthday.

Sign Relay Shirt: For a donation of \$5 (or amount designated by you) the contributor can write the name of the cancer patient they are honoring or in memory of directly on your Relay T-shirt. You will walk/run representing the cancer patients listed.

Skunk Them: Place a stuffed skunk on a coworker's desk. They need to pay a donation to your team to have him go away or they need to pay to be de-skunked. See Flamingo alert for other ideas.

Soup Sales: Take orders from your coworkers and have a soup day at work. Offer it to other offices throughout the community- take orders ahead of time and have an evening of team soup making.

Spaghetti Dinner: Have your team put together a spaghetti dinner at a local hall or club. School teams have also done this with the help of their parents. The students take the tickets wait and clear tables.

Sports Tournaments: Teams organize bowling, hockey, basketball, soccer, and other sports tournaments.



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

Story Time Reading: Have an organized story time reading. Hold it at your place of work where employees can bring their children, work with your local library to have a special time.

Student/Faculty Basketball Game: Set up a benefit basketball game between students and faculty, or put together an alumni game. Challenge a local radio or television employee team.

Super bowl party: Have a super bowl party and ask everyone for donations when they get there. It is certainly worth it after all the trouble you go to organize the party and provide the refreshments. The same can be done for the NCAA Championship basketball game, Indy 500, Masters final round etc. Great idea for the team member with a big screen TV!

T

30 x 30 x 30 Campaign: Try to get 30 people to donate \$30 each on the 30th of the month. That's \$900 in one day! This can be done individually or as a team --- if you have 15 members on your team, ask each member to ask 2 people for \$30. Perhaps the next month, you can do 20 x 20 x 20. Imagine the possibilities if all your team members participated in this campaign.

Tupperware party: Have the profits from a Tupperware party benefit your team.

Turkey Raffle: Great way to raise money during the holidays! Get a grocery store to donate a turkey for you to raffle off. You could also do the same with a ham at Easter time or a BBQ package for Memorial Day. Food is always a good item to chance off.

"Cold Turkey" Subs: Encourage sub/pizza shops to donate a set amount (50 cents) from each cold turkey sub sold to benefit your Relay team. This would be a great idea to get all sub shops to participate during the Great American Smoke Out-the third Tuesday in November.

U

Ugly Bartender Contest: Get all the bartenders in town to agree to be in your "Ugly Bartender Contest." At \$1 per vote, a lot of money can be raised for your team with the winner getting some sort of reward and being asked to become an honorary team member.

V

Vacation Day Drawing: Have a drawing for an extra vacation day or day off with pay. Get your company to agree to let you raffle off with the money raised from the chances to go to your team.

Vending machines: Coordinate with your vendor to add .05 cents to the cost of a snack or soda prior to Relay, with the extra nickel going to your team total.

Vendors: Solicit your vendors for cash donations or goods you can raffle or auction off.

Video Sale: Hold a video sale at work and have each team member bring in videos they don't watch anymore...especially kid videos their children have outgrown. Other employees with younger children would appreciate this.



Relay For Life

A - Z Fundraising Ideas

W

Wait Tables: Work with a restaurant that will let you designate a specific night to benefit your team. Pizza Hut has been known to do this as well as others. Your team would be the waiters for the evening and would collect all the tips as well as possibly a percentage of that evening's receipts.

Wear Company Logos: Tell companies that you will walk around wearing their hat or t-shirt for half an hour for a \$25 donation.

Wrap Presents: During holiday time (Christmas or Mothers Day) set up a booth at a local mall, plaza or busy department store. Have your team members donate the paper and tape and raise money while helping out the holiday shoppers.

X

Xylophone concert: Hold a music concert or recital. Pass refreshments and ask for donations or sell tickets in advance.

Y

Yard Sales: Just like the garage sales, work together as a team, or have one individually.

Z

Zoot Suit Party: Swing music is in. Hold a swing dance party and give awards for the best zoot suit there.