



POLAR PLUNGE

2020 TEAM CAPTAIN PLAYBOOK

**Special
Olympics**
Wisconsin



THANK YOU FOR ORGANIZING YOUR TEAM TO RAISE FUNDS SUPPORTING SPECIAL OLYMPICS!

Since 1999, plungers and their supporters have raised over \$20 million for Special Olympics Wisconsin athletes. Donations support the 19 different Olympic-type sports offered year-round, including National and World Games, as well as free health care screenings to ensure optimal health and performance during competition. The outcome? The opportunity for nearly 9,000 individuals with intellectual disabilities to experience joy, pride and respect. Pretty amazing, huh?

Let's Set a Fundraising Goal!

How many team members do you want on your team? _____

What should their individual goal be set at? (The average Polar Plunger raises \$205!) \$ _____

Number of Team Members x \$ Per Person = _____

Now add a team fundraising activity, like a bake sale or social event: \$ _____

Include your company's contribution supporting you Freezin' for a Reason! \$ _____

Add it all together and there's your team goal!

Individual Fundraising + Team Fundraising = Team Goal \$ _____

Matching Gifts - Double Your Donations

Matching gifts are a great way to increase your total fundraising dollars for the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics Wisconsin. Find out if your employer has a matching gift program. Some companies will also match gifts made by spouses and/or retirees.

Other Ideas

- Casual Day: With the support of your company's management hold a "Dress Down for Special Olympics" day. Those who donate are given the opportunity to wear jeans to work.
- Penny Wars: See which department or floor of your office can raise the most by dropping all of your extra change into jars. Make it fun with a prize for the winning department.
- Team Fundraising Party: Host a party at a local restaurant or bar. Ask team members to invite their donors and potential supporters. You can require an admission fee for attendees, ask for Lucky Ticket entries, or ask the business to donate a portion of that night's proceeds to your team.
- Contest for the Most Raised: Is there a prize you can give away to the team member who raises the most money? There are plunge incentives for team members raising as much as \$2,000!

TEAM CAPTAIN POLAR PLUNGE TIMELINE

8-12 WEEKS (or more) BEFORE

- Register your team online at PlungeWI.org
- Personalize your team page by adding pictures that share your personal story
- Contact and recruit team members; Members can choose their registration type: Polar Plunge, Too Chicken to Plunge, or Super Plunger
- Set a team goal
- Begin soliciting donations! (see our helpful tips on the next pages)

4-8 WEEKS BEFORE

- Keep your team motivated by updating them on the team's progress as well as individual team member's fundraising achievements
- Have a team building fundraiser
- Host a bake sale at a local event, penny wars in your office, or a casual day at work. Go a step further and have a dinner and silent auction with items donated from local businesses
- Use social media!

2-4 WEEKS BEFORE

- Stay in touch with your team; encourage them to continue fundraising and recruiting new members
- Follow up with potential donors and send out thank you notes to those who have already donated
- Plan your team's plunge day fashion! Get sizes and order team t-shirts; or organize a team costume!

WEEK OF THE PLUNGE

- Send out an email with all of the event information to your team. Special Olympics will be sending out plunge day information as well, but it is good for team captains to communicate directly with their team members
- Set up a meeting place with your team and go over the event day schedule
- Remind team members to thank those who have donated to their personal pages

AFTER THE POLAR PLUNGE

- Send out a reminder letting people know how much was raised and that they can still support your team by making a donation
- Thank all of your team members and donors
- Host an event wrap up party and go over how your team would like to participate next year

TIPS TO SUCCESSFULLY RAISE FUNDS ONLINE

- Set a great example and make your own donation! People are more likely to give when they have seen you made a gift as well.
- Set a personal fundraising goal.
- Mention your goal in your messages and update people on your status (How much have you raised? How many donors do you have? How close to your goal are you?)

Email is where it's at! We know social media can be fun and easy to use, but it's still playing second fiddle to email when it comes to soliciting online donations.

How to Write an Email to Your Friends and Family (Sample Email Attached)

Start by explaining your connection to the cause and why it is important to you. Describing how the cause has touched your life is probably the most important element of your message.

- In a sentence or two explain the good work of Special Olympics and why it is important to your family and others
- Be clear to potential supporters about what you are looking for; make a direct ask for financial support
- Include a link to your fundraising page
- Thank your contacts for their time and support

How to Write to Your Closest Contacts

- You know your closest contacts better than anyone does. Don't feel like you have to stick to a predefined formula.
- If a one-line message is going to work, go ahead and do that. If a longer personal message will work best, that's fine too!
- Just make sure you include a direct request for support and a link to your fundraising page at the end of your message.

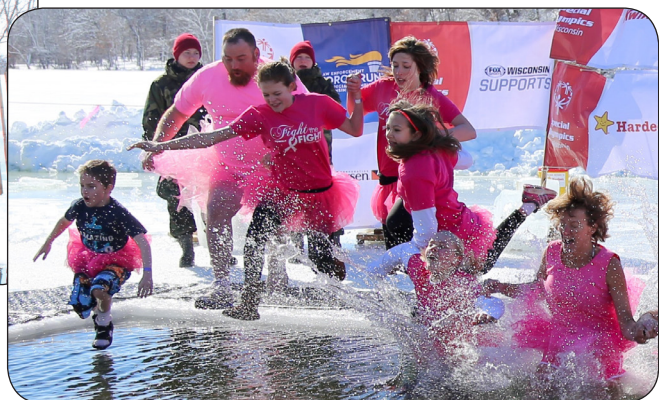


How to Respond to People Who Don't Respond Initially

- While there will be responses to the first email, a good portion of donors don't respond until the 3rd or even 4th message. Don't be afraid to send out 3 or 4 messages.
- Reach back out to non-responders when you're approaching one of your internal goals. If you set a few internal goals, you can plan on sending a couple follow up emails. Remember people can easily miss or skip over your initial outreach!
- Include progress updates in your follow up message (how much have you raised, how many people have donated, what are your goals) and consider including any inspiring stories or personal anecdotes you have about Special Olympics.

How to Use Social Media

- Social media is a great complement to email communications. It is a softer medium for communicating with your contacts and it's more acceptable to frequently post update in those channels.
- Get started on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and/or LinkedIn by tagging the people that have already donated to you and thank them for their donations. When you tag someone, your post gets shared in your activity feed and the other person's activity feed too. This also sets the frame that people are already donating to your page (remember success breeds success!).
- Set internal goals (e.g. 200 dollars by the end of week two, 400 dollars by end of week four, etc.). Use your social media accounts to give updates of your progress towards each goal and ask for people to help you get over the next hurdle.
- Consider offering your own gifts to friends and family who help you reach your goal. It doesn't have to be anything extravagant, just a token of your appreciation.



SAMPLE EMAIL

Email is an incredibly effective fundraising tool, reaching people all over the world with the click of a button. It is a great way to spread the word about your Plunge participation, and to ask others to join your team or pledge your cause. Group emails will always work, but don't forget to send individual emails, a one on one message works best.

- #1** It's gonna be frigid! This winter I will be taking the Plunge to support Special Olympics Wisconsin. You might be asking yourself what this Plunge is? Well, I will be raising money so I can jump into a frozen body of water. The Plunge into the water may be a little frigid, but I don't mind because I am supporting the amazing athletes of Special Olympics Wisconsin.
- #2** To Plunge, I have set a personal fundraising goal of \$\$ (amount), and I need your help to reach it. I'm hoping you'll make a donation to Special Olympics Wisconsin on my behalf and support my Polar Plunge. Don't you want to see me be freezin' for a reason?
- #3** You can support my Plunge several ways - The best and easiest is to visit PlungeWI.org and pledge online. My personal page can be found at (personal url). You can check this page to see my goal, pledges raised and a photo of me after the Plunge! If you prefer not to donate online, you can also give your donation directly to me, or mail it in to Special Olympics Wisconsin at the address below. Please make sure to include my name with your donation so I receive credit for the pledge. Special Olympics Wisconsin 2310 Crossroads Dr, Ste 1000 Madison, WI 53718
- #4** If you can't support my Plunge through a donation, why not consider being bold in the cold and join me in taking the Plunge? You can join my team online now! To learn more about the Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Wisconsin, visit PlungeWI.org.



SOCIAL MEDIA SAMPLE POSTS

Brain freeze got your mind blanking on how to share about your Polar Plunge on social media? No worries! We've got you covered with some sample social media posts that you can easily copy, paste and post to your favorite social media site(s).

- Help me support the nearly 9,000 athletes who participate in Special Olympics Wisconsin. Please donate to my Polar Plunge team! #PlungeWI <insert link to team page>
- THE POLAR PLUNGE IS HERE! Please help me reach my fundraising goal by donating to my Plunge team. It'd be pretty COOL if you did. #PlungeWI <insert link to team page>
- It's winter in WI, so why don't we jump into an icy lake together? LET'S DO IT. Support Special Olympics WI & join my Plunge team! #PlungeWI <insert link to team page>
- YOU can make a difference! Help me reach my fundraising goal as I Polar Plunge for Special Olympics WI. BRRing it on! #PlungeWI <insert link to team page>
- I'll be freezin' for a reason at the 2020 Polar Plunge! Help me support Special Olympics WI by making a donation to my Plunge team #PlungeWI <insert link to team page>

Be sure to include a link to your Plunge page at the end of each post!



HELPFUL TIPS

- Get creative! Feel free to edit and personalize these posts however you like.
- Add a photo or video! Have an awesome picture/video of you Plunging last year? Cool. Use it in your social posts!
- Share it! Twitter? Check. Facebook? Check. Instagram? Check. Spread the word about your Polar Plunge on ALL of your social media pages!

THE 2020 PLUNGE LINE-UP

Feb. 1 - Kenosha

Feb. 1 - WI Rapids

Feb. 8 - Menomonie

Feb. 8 - Whitewater

Feb. 9 - Muskego

Feb. 15 - Madison

Feb. 15 - MKE Zoo

Feb. 15 - Oshkosh

Feb. 22 - Oconomowoc

Feb. 22 - Wausau

Feb. 23 - Eau Claire

Mar. 7 - Green Bay

Mar. 7 - La Crosse



LET'S GEAR UP TO MAKE THIS THE BEST YEAR EVER!

