



cu\$trategies

*Partnering with Credit Unions Across the Nation
To Increase Loan Growth, Profitability, and Membership Growth*

cuStrategies e-newsletter – November 2018

*Create a Caring Culture and...
FEEL the Difference*

What does it take to create a caring culture and why is it important? Successful credit unions are always looking for ways to improve member services and the member experience.

The first step in creating a “Caring” culture is understanding that people are your culture, and it all starts at the top and filters all the way to the bottom line. So where do you begin? Well, take a look at what you can do!

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**Tips for creating a Caring Culture so everyone can
FEEL the difference!**

Rethink the way you do business!

Renew your philosophy of people helping people!

Revive your staff to become more engaged and focused on growth!

- **Hire the right people with the right attributes and the right attitude.**
Fifty percent of your success in creating the right culture is hiring the right people. The second piece of the pie is to get your existing staff to embrace the attributes and engage in the right behaviors to help your members and, at the same time, increase loan growth, membership growth/retention, and profitability.
- **Empower your staff by offering them the right training and giving them the knowledge, strategies, techniques, and tools they need to be confident and successful in their role to help your members and build strong relationships that lead to more loan opportunities, increased products and services, and member loyalty.**

I am a strong believer that “GREAT SERVICE” will lead to GREAT results: increased loan opportunities, new members, and increased products and services used by our members. Unfortunately, sometimes leaders get focused on the “Sales” component and that can work against you in the long-run. For example, don’t set up your frontline staff for failure by asking them to engage members with the following questions:

- 1. Do you want our checking account?*
- 2. Do you want our credit card?*
- 3. Do you want to refinance your car?*

These questions open the door to a minimum of 50 percent up to 90 percent chance of getting the response, “No Thanks”; “Let me think about it”; “I need to talk to my spouse”; etc.

Instead ask them to engage your members in a more RELATIONSHIP-FOCUSED manner. For example:

- 1. Mr./Ms. _____, do you mind me asking who you bank with?*
- 2. Mr./Ms. _____, how would you like to get rid of high-interest-rate credit card balances?*
- 3. Mr./Ms. _____, how would you like to lower your monthly payments on your auto loan and any other loan that isn’t with the credit union?*

- ***Establish benchmark goals for your staff to get them motivated.***

It is important to establish benchmark goals for staff which provide clear expectations for their specific job. The benchmark goal basically justifies the salary for the position and it sets the benchmark for the Return on Investment (ROI) on the position and employee. Also, it serves as a great motivator. However, be careful what goals you set because it determines the results you get as well (ROI)

- ***Hold your staff accountable to keep them motivated.***

Once you establish benchmark goals, you must hold your staff accountable—positively and negatively if necessary. Otherwise, your benchmark goals will not serve as the catalyst for the right results.

- ***Develop a strategic plan to attract new members, new money, and millennials for long-term sustainability.***

Remember, HOPE IS NOT A STRATEGY!

- *We hope our employees will engage our members.*
- *We hope our members will come to us for their auto loans.*
- *We hope our members will pay us.*
- *We hope we will increase our ROA.*
- *We hope we will increase loan growth.*
- *We hope we will increase membership growth...specifically Millennials!*

Hope will not reap the results you want to gain; however, the right culture, the right strategies, the right training programs, and the right metrics will lead to success.

Create a CARING Culture by hiring the right people and transforming your existing staff to become leaders of change.

Hire people that:

- *Care enough to embrace change and lead change*
- *Care enough to take initiative...doing the right thing, the right way, and getting the right results without being asked*
- *Care enough to step out of their comfort zone to learn and become more engaged*
- *Care enough to ask the right questions to help members and the credit union grow*
- *Care enough to connect with their members*
- *Care enough to be creative to offer the right solutions; not just simply respond to the request*
- *Care enough to commit to your members and to the growth of the credit union!*

Leaders must:

- *Care enough to invest in your staff to develop them and set them up for success*
- *Care enough to empower staff*
- *Care enough to hold staff accountable*
- *Care enough to get engaged with their employees on a regular basis*
- *Care enough to coach your employees*
- *Care enough to put the right people in the right seats on the bus*
- *Care enough to remove negativity from your culture...Negativity will kill a "Caring" culture*
- *Care enough to reward and recognize employees*
- *Care enough to move people off the bus if they are willing to help drive the bus to success*

If you like what you have read and want to learn more about how you can implement a strategically aligned program to help you achieve the objectives outlined above, please reach out to Celeste Cook at cccook@custrategies.com. We will partner with you to help you achieve greater success like many of our current credit union clients. (Take a look of some of the success our credit unions are experiencing below!) We partner with credit unions to help them achieve the perfect WIN/WIN/WIN Experience for their credit union, and welcome the opportunity to partner with you and your team!

| Credit Union | HELP Members | Employees |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased quality loans • Increased profitability • Increased membership • Increased retention/loyalty • Staff engagement • Staff enthusiasm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help raise their credit score • Eliminate high-risk credit card balances • Lower monthly payments on loans with other financial institutions • Protect against predatory lending | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intangible reward of making a difference in people's lives • Engagement • Enthusiasm • Tangible rewards: incentives, surPRIZES, recognition, etc. |

Mobiloil Federal Credit Union, one of cuStrategies' clients, has and continues to experience phenomenal success! Mobiloil Federal Credit Union has been one of our clients for over 5 years, and they have a dynamic, engaged team who have a passion for making a difference in their members' lives, and they are reaching out into the communities to reach more people through their dynamic business development team! They partner with their members to help them find solutions that will RAISE their credit score, LOWER their monthly payments on loans with other financial institutions, and ELIMINATE high-interest-rate credit card balances to help them achieve FINANCIAL FREEDOM!

| Key Performance Metric | Mobiloil Federal Credit Union 2017 | Credit Union Industry 2017 |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Capital Ratio | 12.89 | 11.0 |
| ROA | 1.43 | 0.77 |
| Loan Growth | 12.34 | 10.0 |
| Membership Growth | 11.38 | 4.1 |
| Delinquency Ratio | 0.67 | 0.81 |

More Credit Union Success Stories

- One of cuStrategies clients increased loan growth from 14% to 26% in one year with mostly direct auto loans using cuStrategies' Program and maintained a low delinquency ratio and charge-off ratio (Chris Corkery, CEO, Advantage One Credit Union)

- One of cuStrategies clients increased loan growth by 33% in one and sustained that growth for a minimum of three years while maintaining a low delinquency ratio and charge off ratio (Sue Rodriguez, CEO, Baker Federal Credit Union)
- Another credit union client captured a \$170,000 mortgage one day subsequent to cuStrategies Training Program with their first Credit Score Analysis (CSA) (Kathy Karner, CEO, T&I Credit Union)
- A loan officer closed \$90,000 in new secured loans in one day subsequent to cuStrategies Training Program from the last five unsecured loan requests that had been denied recently using cuStrategies CSA Lending Program and strategies (Joy Watts, CEO, Nova Credit Union)

Nothing is more exciting than to see staff engaged to help their credit union grow by creating positive member experiences to build loyalty; bringing in more quality profitable loan opportunities; and working hard on the frontline to prevent loan losses by building strong relationships.

Credit unions who have used cuStrategies' programs and services have experienced a transformation in their culture with enthusiastically engaged employees, enhanced leadership, positive synergy amongst teams, and raving fans from their membership as a result of their member experiences!

cuStrategies proudly partners with credit unions across the nation to help them experience increased loan growth, membership growth, profitability, and member retention. Many of cuStrategies' clients have experienced great success.

cuStrategies offers strategic planning; an array of training programs; lending strategies; marketing strategies; a business development program; a performance goal program; compensation and reward program, lending assessment program; and other services. *For more information on how to create and maintain a strong and vibrant sales and service culture for growth, please contact Celeste Cook, CEO/Founder of cuStrategies, today at cccook@custrategies.com or 404.783.5898. Her website is www.custrategies.com.*

Celeste C. Cook

Speaker, Consultant, Trainer

Bringing you her credit union experience, expertise, proven strategies, positive energy, and passion for service!!!

Celeste Cook is founder and President/CEO of cuStrategies LLC. As a **credit union industry strategist, Celeste provides strategic planning services, experienced consulting services, and expert training programs to the credit union industry.** In addition to being a consultant and trainer, she is a keynote and motivational speaker with a dynamic and engaging style that have made her highly sought after within the credit union industry. Celeste has also served as an industry expert as well as a motivational and keynote speaker for credit union associations and leagues nationwide.

Along with being CEO of cuStrategies LLC, she has been involved in the credit union industry for more than 20 years and a professional speaker and trainer for 15 of those years – also working for a \$1.6 billion credit union in Atlanta, Georgia, and working as a consultant and trainer with Rex Johnson of Lending Solutions Consulting.

Celeste's expert training programs/schools in lending, marketing/business development, leadership, and sales and service for credit unions have helped credit unions with assets ranging from \$20 million to \$2 billion. She brings her credit union expertise, experience, and **proven strategies**, which have fostered her credit union clients' increases in loan growth and profitability. For instance, one credit union experienced 33% loan growth in 12 months using cuStrategies' lending strategies. Celeste also increased loans by 215% in nine months through SEGs during her tenure in Business Development at MAX Credit Union in Montgomery, Alabama.

Celeste has a degree in business management and a Certification in Sales Leadership Strategies through the Credit Union National Association. She has been a contributor to industry publications such as CUinsight, Credit Union Executive Society, Credit Union Times, and Credit Union Journal as well as **Branch Managers Letter**, a national publication. Celeste is also writing a book on leadership and service.