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cumanagement.com/video030321



CUES Podcast

Government Measures and Vaccine Rollout Key Factors in Canadian Economy 2021

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YOUR THOUGHTS

HOW IS YOUR CREDIT UNION PLANNING FOR THE NEXT DISASTER?

>> Email your answer to theresa@cues.org.

A Plan for *Everything*

I like to plan. Every Friday, I look at my digital calendar and jot down all the meetings for the next week on my physical calendar. I also note the main tasks I want to accomplish that week in the margins of the calendar.

I like working on strategic plans, editorial plans and backup plans. Backup planning is actually one of my favorite ways to plan. Thanks to a generalized anxiety disorder, I am already thinking about worst case scenarios all the time—especially in the middle of the night! Planning ahead for all possible outcomes is key to keeping my anxiety in check (along with talking to my doctor about an appropriate treatment plan). This goes for work (What's the plan if one of our writers gets COVID-19 and can't complete their assignment?) and life (What's the plan if I get COVID-19 and need to self-isolate in my small house, away from my family?) alike. Last year, I made plans for both scenarios. Was it wasted time and energy because I haven't had to implement either plan? I don't think so. Doing what I need to do for better sleep is never time wasted, and my careful plans may come in handy down the road.

An important part of planning is debriefing. Asking, "What went wrong?" or "What could we improve?" and "What worked well?" will make your next plan even better. This process is especially important for business continuity plans. That is why the time is now for you to reflect on the lessons of COVID-19, whether you're planning for the next pandemic or this summer's severe weather. Read more in "Plan Now for the Next Disaster" on p. 18.

One thing the pandemic reinforced for credit unions is that fraudsters are always going to take advantage of chaos and confusion when they can. In "COVID-19 Feeds Fraudsters" in our special report on security, risk and fraud, contributing writer Glenn Harrison reports that identity theft incidents doubled in 2020 over 2019. Industry experts share insights into the types of fraud that have increased over the past year and steps that credit unions can take to fight back. Read more starting on p. 23.

I'd also like to call your attention to an online article in the March issue of our digital-only *Advancing Women* publication (cumanagement.com/advancing-women). In "From Adversity to Resilience," credit union consultant Bryn Conway, MBA, CUDE, explores how individuals and organizations turn setbacks into growth. She writes about PTG, or post-traumatic growth: "Research on adversity and resiliency shows that when looking at a general population of people who have lived through trauma, a full three-quarters of the individuals will emerge more resilient, demonstrating aspects of post-traumatic growth."

I've written about organizational resilience (cumanagement.com/1220resilient). Now read about individual resilience at cumanagement.com/0321resilience. I'd love to hear how you practice resilience in your professional life. Email theresa@cues.org.

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The Gift of an Apology: *Six Steps to Follow*

BY JAIDEI JACKSON, LPC, CPA

If you struggle with apologizing, fret not. Many people struggle in this area due in large part to not fully understanding nor having an appreciation for an apology, whether giving or receiving.

Since most people believe offering an apology is an admission of guilt—and they do not believe they have done anything wrong or cannot see that they have done anything wrong—they will be reluctant to apologize. It would be safe to say they do not understand the gift of an apology.

I have often wondered if this reluctance to apologize has its roots in childhood forced apologies. Adults, while well-meaning, can forget that children are still learning to navigate the social constructs of individual relationships, and this forced apology can impact a child’s ability to understand the importance of apologizing for one’s transgressions.

One thing that impedes our acknowledging we have done harm is hiding behind our intent. If you have ever heard yourself say, “It was not my intent” or “That wasn’t what I meant,” as a defense, you are standing behind your intentions. In other words, when we rationalize within ourselves that it was not our intent to hurt, not our intent to cause harm or betray a trust, we cannot recognize we have done something wrong.

When we begin to see how our behavior might have been harmful, hurtful or a betrayal, we begin to understand and experience empathy. Empathy is the art of putting oneself in another’s experience to get a sense of what they might be feeling.

START WITH EMPATHY

The first step to apologizing is having empathy for the other person’s experience of what was said or done—for what the other person might be telling themselves about your motive or intentions. Offering an apology is an offer to bring healing. The person who has been injured wants to be healed, wants to regain the connection they had with you before the infraction happened.

The “injury” caused the hurt party to be guarded in their behavior, their words and to withdraw or shut down. They are unsure if you can be trusted with their heart, secrets and opinions. You might be unaware of that harm because sometimes the harm was indeed unintentional.

An apology has the power to heal hurtful, painful experiences. It can restore trust and create an environment of safety. Saying “I’m sorry” or “I apologize for...” breaks down walls and barriers to effective communication, and restores, strengthens and deepens emotional connections.

SIX STEPS TO AN EFFECTIVE APOLOGY

Though it may look or sound simple, do not underestimate the power of an effective apology. It has been shown to mend a broken heart, restore faith and renew hope. According to Lauren M. Bloom, J.D., the author of *The Art of the Apology*, there are six essential elements for an apology to be effective.

1. The first element of any apology is being sincere in saying you are sorry. This is where empathy comes in handy, allowing you to tap into what the other person is feeling and allowing you to express your regrets about your actions, words and deeds. Be authentic.

2. The second element is to be willing to be responsible for what happened, to take ownership of your part in the event. Refrain from blaming, deflecting or minimizing what happened. If you engage in any of these actions, it gives the appearance of not owning up to your actions. Plus, it is not authentic apologizing. If there were mitigating circumstances, now is not the time to bring them up.

3. Making amends, the third element, can be a handwritten note, a gift or spending time doing something the other person enjoys. Before you apologize, give some thought to what you would do to amend for your transgression.

4. You might not realize the importance of expressing appreciation. This element is often neglected, left out or overlooked. According to Bloom, “expressing appreciation for the other person lets him or her know that you’re apologizing because you value your relationship, and not just because an apology is expected.”

5. Listening is an important element of an effective apology. After apologizing, you have a responsibility to listen, and most importantly, to listen without becoming defensive. Ask clarifying questions, if needed, but don’t listen in order to formulate a response. Instead, listen to learn.

6. Finally, resolve to do better before the next situation occurs where you might hurt another person. You should resolve to figure out your weaknesses in the meantime and change any behaviors that may cause you to keep making the same mistakes. If you keep repeating the same mistakes, people will disregard your apologies and rightfully think that you are not concerned about their feelings.

By combining all six of the aforementioned elements, you now have the makings for the gift of an effective apology.



JaiDei Jackson is a licensed professional counselor, National Certified Counselor, Prepare Enrich Facilitator and, because she wasn’t busy enough, a certified public accountant. She has been extensively trained in cognitive behavioral, solution-focused and EMDR therapy. She loves to work with people struggling in their intimate relationships, including birth or blended families, and work or other life relationships by providing a space where healing can take place. She specializes in male-friendly life coaching and individual counseling that is goal-oriented, focused on solutions, collaborative, direct and actionable. Reach her on her website (youareworthy.org) and at Instagram @JaiDeiJackson.



Successfully Building the Confidence to Grow a Career

BY JESSE JACOBS

On Jan. 1, I stepped up into the newly created role of EVP at my organization, \$158 million Campco Credit Union, Gillette, Wyoming, which is now celebrating its 50th anniversary serving members. Starting with the credit union as a teller in 2013, I've also served as human resources director, AVP/lending, and VP/operations.

Joining Campco CU and the movement overall ignited a passion in me that I hadn't previously had in my life. I was raised by a strong woman to believe that I could do anything. Through hard work and determination, my mom rose into the executive ranks in a male-dominated industry. But despite this, I initially lacked full confidence in myself. Learning and networking helped me turn my newfound passion for credit unions into a career of leadership and service. Both attending CEO Institute (cues.org/institutes) and being a CUES member have helped me experience the kind of learning and networking that energizes leaders.

CEO Institute offers top-notch classes that allow business professionals to receive academic perspectives. I will complete all three segments by participating in my last one this fall. The experience

has opened my eyes to the overall operation of a credit union. Not only are the financials critical, but now I will have skills to help negotiate contracts, retain staff and properly place talent, and create strategic plans or visions for the credit union.

In addition to giving us opportunity to learn from the world-class faculty members, the program demonstrates that this movement is full of talented individuals who genuinely want to see others succeed. The networking has been remarkable. When I started CEO Institute, I was AVP/operations and, before my third year, I was able to achieve EVP. I'm really excited to receive my Certified Chief Executive designation later this year. This spring the program will be online, and it shows the value of the program that so many people are continuing no matter the delivery channel.

One of my favorite things about being a CUES member is CUESNet™ (cuesnet.cues.org), the CUES members-only forum, which I have used for years to ask HR, member experience and loan questions. CUESNet has helped me formulate new ideas, collaborate with others and build confidence in my position—even as my organizational roles changed over time.

Throughout the tenure of my CU experience, I have always felt my purpose was to help others find self-confidence, develop and mentor leaders, serve members/community, and view things outside the box. My goal as EVP is to help provide a satisfying work environment that attracts talented professionals who have the passion to help members achieve financial goals. From a strategic perspective, I hope to view products, member experience and services in a unique way to help push the industry forward.

So, what's my advice for leaders who might need a little confidence boost to propel their careers forward? I have three thoughts:

1. **Never stop learning!** There are so many options for continuing education. Immerse yourself in magazines, CU schools, college, books, podcasts or LinkedIn articles.
2. **Remember, you are always interviewing for your next position.** Luckily, I learned this very early in my career. Even if you are not sitting in a formal interview, your "tribe"—co-workers or potential managers—are all noticing the way you carry yourself, your actions, strengths and improvement areas.
3. **Be comfortable with being uncomfortable.** The only way to grow is to stretch your limits.

CUES member **Jesse Jacobs** is EVP of \$158 million Campco Credit Union (campcofcu.com), Gillette, Wyoming.



Subordinated Debt: A New Path to Raising Capital for Credit Unions

The National Credit Union Administration for the first time now allows federally insured

credit unions with more than \$500 million in assets and without a low-income designation to raise capital outside of retained earnings through the issuance of subordinated debt.

Beyond increasing regulatory capital levels, a subordinated debt issuance could be used by credit unions to finance strategic growth

initiatives, such as acquisitions of banks, branches and fee-based businesses, to boost earnings and increase membership, reduce high member business lending concentrations, provide balance sheet protection and enhance liquidity.

In a free whitepaper, CUES Supplier member Luse Gorman (luselaw.com), a Washington, D.C.-based law firm, describes what CUs should know about the final rule, and what they should consider doing before and after it takes effect on Jan. 1, 2022. Find the whitepaper at cumanagement.com/debtwhitepaper.

Mobile Banking: *What's Not To Love?*



ANALYTICS AND WORD-OF-MOUTH HIGHLIGHT MEMBERS' FAVORITE FEATURES—AND WHERE THERE'S WORK TO BE DONE.

BY STEPHANIE SCHWENN SEBRING

After years of being a relatively uninspired self-service add-on, mobile banking has become a primary means of engagement for credit unions. Moving beyond transactional convenience to a critical channel throughout the pandemic, it's how credit unions will stay relevant and connected into the future.

As mobile growth continues, what can credit unions do to enhance this point of connection? Focus on members' most-loved app features.

"Not surprisingly, traditional transactions like balance inquiries and transfers have remained a staple—partly for peace of mind, partly for convenience," reflects Mark Geason, VP/electronic services for \$7 billion Citizens Equity First Credit Union (cefcu.com), Peoria, Illinois. "It's not just an added perk. Today, members expect and demand immediate access to balance information and the ability to transfer between accounts. They're looking for solutions.

"And for us, it's about aligning mobile budgeting tools, so we can help members dive deeper into their account relationships," Geason continues. "These tools allow members to create budgets and track expenses, which helps us live our mission of understanding and serving our members' individual needs."

Being a community credit union, CEFU serves

members in vastly different places in their financial journeys. "Some use our mobile platform multiple times a day for remote check deposit, linking accounts and budgeting tools," says Geason. "Some make daily balance inquiries and transfers, while others log in only monthly for loan payments.

"The common denominator is that these members all have different needs, which requires delivering a unique experience for each, leading to greater adoption," notes Geason.

COMMUNICATION FEATURES SHINE

Balance preview (tinyurl.com/alliantcu-mobile) is a top mobile feature for members of \$13 billion Alliant Credit Union (alliantcreditunion.org), Chicago. This functionality enables members to check account balances without logging in. In 2020, more than 19 million balance previews occurred, with 100,000 members activating the feature.

"While the numbers are significant, more importantly, it means reassurance is only a moment away for our members," reflects Chris Hill, director/digital banking for the credit union.

Other popular features include the app's messaging tool, which lets members converse with a live rep via a secure in-app message, mobile deposit and an ATM locator feature.

“Using their location within the app, we help members filter options within our large network of ATMs,” explains Hill. “Over the last year, we’ve seen 38% growth in ATM searches on mobile.”

Stats are important, but Alliant CU members aren’t shy about sharing their feelings, either:

“Love that I can see my balances without logging in. Also, the message feature has been something I’ve used multiple times to talk to customer service reps about questions I’ve had. And the mobile deposit feature works seamlessly. Way better than my other bank’s app. Really well-done, Alliant!” – Jessica P., Member, Google Play Store review

“All of my regular banking needs are very easy and convenient, the ATM locator auto-updates with my phone’s location, and the ATM fee refunds are almost instantaneous!” – B.D., Member, Google Play Store review

Putting members first is the driving force behind mobile success, says Jeremy Sterner, VP/IT for \$100 million Heritage Valley Federal Credit Union (heritagevalleyfcu.org), York, Pennsylvania. “Mobile deposit, bill pay and P2P (peer-to-peer) have been the most-used features of our Banno mobile banking app powered by Jack Henry,” he reports. “However, the app’s new ‘conversation’ feature (banno.com/conversations) is growing in popularity, and since the pandemic, questions have gravitated to this [channel].

“Part of the reason is its omnichannel functionality that includes text messaging within a secure mobile platform,” Sterner explains. “A member can start the conversation in mobile and continue it within online banking while remaining in an authenticated mode.”

Amidst positive feedback from members, use of the conversations function rose 40% from June 30 through Dec. 31, 2020, he notes.

STATS TELL THE STORY

Tracking key usage statistics can help credit unions understand and improve the member experience. For example, CEFUCU monitors the number of members enrolled in bill pay compared to active bill-pay users, the number of monthly bills paid, average dollars moving through bill pay per member, loan applications closed and DocuSign (docuSign.com) items handled.

“During 2020, we followed patterns of the most popular days and times for mobile transactions—including the number of times people logged in daily and peaks with their deposits,” adds Sterner. “Over six months (June 30 through Dec. 31), remote deposits increased 30%. And somewhat surprisingly, late-night activity across the board peaked during the pandemic.”

While mobile banking usage stats have grown for all features, there is still functionality members could use more. For Alliant CU, it’s two-factor authentication.

“Immediately after logging into online or mobile banking, we send the member a code via text,” explains Hill. “This way, we can

confirm that the member is the only one accessing their account.

“Two-factor authentication is more secure than using security questions to log in and, at the same time, makes the account more accessible. It’s also easy to forget the answer to a security question, which drives member care center calls.

“Two-factor authentication is a win for the member and credit union,” stresses Hill. “Yet we still find members resistant to enroll.”

At Heritage Valley FCU, members aren’t taking full advantage of mobile bill pay. “We strongly encourage the convenience of bill pay,” says Sterner. “Whether online or mobile, it’s a sticky product [once members enroll], and we’d love to see more. However, it can be challenging to convert these payments, primarily because members use many platforms to manage their personal expenses.

“We’ve utilized awareness campaigns through our bill-pay provider to educate members on the benefits,” he continues. “The way Banno integrates bill pay into the member experience has also increased usage.”

While the credit union’s previous mobile offering included a bill-pay feature, the functionality was confined to a separate area of the app. Today, bill pay is more visibly integrated with other functionality throughout the Banno app, explains Sterner. “We feel the approach of integrating bill pay into the members’ mobile and online experience has increased usage because many times they do not even know they are using bill pay. For example, if they tap on ‘pay a person,’ the member does not necessarily know (or care) that they are now using a feature that is part of bill pay.

“That said, we still only see a monthly usage rate of 12% for active monthly Banno users.”

GROWTH THROUGH PERSONALIZATION AND SECURITY

To gain more traction with members, credit unions should watch for new, emerging features that will enable members to make the mobile banking experience entirely their own, notes Brian Scott, chief growth officer for CUESolutions Bronze provider PSCU (pscuc.com), St. Petersburg, Florida.

“Watch for features that give a 360-degree view of the member’s entire financial portfolio and other personalization tools,” says Scott. “For example, through our DX Mobile platform (pscuc.com/digital-experience-products), credit unions can customize the digital experience with features that enable the member to choose a personal call center ambassador, customize screen icons, upload personal photos or manage personal financial goals. People want to see their own style and will use the app as another way to flex their digital presence.”

Luis Landivar, VP/business solutions group for CUES Supplier member Temenos Infinity (temenos.com), New York, concurs that tailoring the experience for the individual so that it’s embedded in

“How can you energize your site so members can’t wait to check it every day? What unique ways can you engage with and maximize your members’ financial lives?”

– Brian Scott

the way they live life is essential for any mobile app. “For mobile banking, that can mean fast, seamless and secure login features, like fingerprint scans, face ID, push notification-based login or other biometrics. The goal is to add enhanced security features while minimizing the friction they may bring.

“Because fraudsters never sleep, the demand for mobile features to address or prevent fraud will continue to rise,” Landivar notes. “Deploying automated fraud detection software to protect members proactively is important, but no technology is infallible, and nobody wants to spend even five minutes on the phone over a fraudulent transaction dispute. The Temenos Infinity Digital Banking platform (tinyurl.com/temenos-infinitydb) can initiate and track disputes, allowing the member to start a dispute directly within the app in the context of the transaction in question. The back-office portal enables staff to handle the inquiry and assign the dispute to the appropriate internal group for review.”

Security alerts are also gaining adoption, says Landivar, and it is clear members want card-control options accessible directly within their mobile app. “To illustrate, we’ve seen over 120% growth in the use of card-control features when included within the application versus members having to download an additional application to manage their credit or debit cards.”

In addition to fraud prevention, making human connections with members via mobile is a priority.

“For instance, watch for relationship banking features to become prevalent—with chatbots replaced by a member’s chosen representative,” explains Landivar. “Members will select their member service rep ... based on a personal profile. The rep will then handle ongoing needs, such as new accounts, loans or investments. The member doesn’t need to wait in line at a branch or for a call center

A Banking Lifeline

In Canada, members are finding new and better ways to connect to their credit unions. “Across the board, staff and members love using our mobile banking app (app.honestmoney.ca) because of its convenience and security,” shares CUES member Paul Paruch, VP/digital & payments for \$6.8 billion Atlantic Central (honestmoney.ca), the Atlantic provinces’ central banker and trade association for credit unions, based in Halifax, Nova Scotia. “Our credit unions’ mobile banking app was a game-changer pre-pandemic, but now it feels like a banking lifeline.

“Not long ago, sending and depositing money easily from the comfort of home was a convenience; now it is a necessity,” explains Paruch. “Even those hesitant to trust technology or intimidated by perceived complexity have been wooed by the app’s ease, convenience and security. Now, individuals still receiving checks can take a picture and deposit the funds.”

Mobile deposits increased by 44% in 2020 for Atlantic Central, with a significant spike in Q2, right around the height of COVID-19 lockdowns. Access to online banking via a mobile device also continues to be more popular with members than access via a desktop computer (55.46% versus 44.54% respectively). And almost 35% of members exclusively use the mobile app for their online banking needs.

rep. Most importantly, they start to build a relationship with this employee, which enhances and further humanizes the interaction.”

However, Landivar says members still prefer a text over a video encounter. “Texting over a secure mobile app is safer than via SMS, and the asynchronous nature of texting lets the member text and reply at their discretion. Additionally, employees can manage as many as hundreds of conversations conveniently on their end.”

PANDEMIC BRINGS NEW INSIGHTS

“In 2020, we saw a mad race for credit unions to become full-service digital,” says Lee Wetherington, senior director of strategy at Jack Henry (jackhenry.com), Monett, Missouri. Adoption and usage of mobile features intensified throughout the pandemic, giving credit unions better data and insights into members’ needs.

“These included shifts in money behaviors, payments usage, account-opening preferences and money-movement patterns,” says Wetherington. “Going forward, credit unions that leverage their data to surface personalized, actionable insights for members in real-time—and enable conversations around those insights—will differentiate themselves against disruptors that are automating the humanity out of financial services.”

Personalized insights might include an infographic providing a snapshot of weekly spending, an upcoming bill payment or a budget alert on a particular spending category, all of which give the member an option to connect with a credit union staffer who can provide counsel and suggest relevant products or services. Other insights might include double-charge alerts, tips for improving credit scores or even renegotiation of subscriptions or recurring bills.

“Mobile marketing will leverage algorithms monitoring payments flows to encourage proactive, real-time member conversations from within the mobile banking app,” Wetherington says. “By encouraging these contextual conversations in authenticated settings, digital [key performance indicators], member user experience and efficiency ratios will improve dramatically in concert and finally convert digital from a self-service cost center into a full-service revenue engine.”

Several metrics can help gauge an app’s full-service journey. Wetherington suggests tracking app speed closely: “What are your app-launch-to-app-usable or app-launch-to-balance-view intervals, for example?”

The most important metric, however, is the time it takes to resolve a member’s question or concern (what he calls “the moment of need to resolution.”) The faster this becomes, the greater your efficiency and member trust level. Conversely, if times increase, that is a less convenient and satisfying experience for your members.

Mobile usage data can reveal even more about your members than perceptions of performance.

“It’s also interesting to follow your data to see if members are ‘cheating’ on you,” says Scott. “If members are only logging in to check balances and not looking at a credit card, savings or investment account, it’s safe to assume they’re going elsewhere for their financial needs. Furthermore, members interact with you through how they pay—gas, groceries, bills and more, often multiple payments per day. The key is, how do you use this data to improve your mobile banking experience?”

“If your app is not a ‘destination site,’ it’s vital to get people engaged,” Scott stresses. “How can you energize your site so members can’t wait to check it every day? What unique ways can you engage

“We’ve seen over 120% growth in the use of card-control features when included within the application versus members having to download an additional application to manage their credit or debit cards.”

— Luis Landivar

with and maximize your members’ financial lives? Can you present and provide relevant solutions?”

These may include savings goals, financial health advice, projected cash flow or P2P payments.

Financial checkups are another way to engage members. “Consider providing a loan analysis or comparison within mobile, perhaps showing the benefits of paying off a loan or taking another action,” says Scott. “It may not help the credit union in the short term, but long term, you foster relationships and ‘do well by doing good.’”

It’s about the experience, reiterates Scott. How do you make your mobile experience worth coming back for? What features can you add that customize the experience or make members feel valued? Can you increase comfort levels, so members feel more in control?

FEATURES OF THE FUTURE

When considering new tools for mobile engagement, look for augmented reality functionality and virtual reality to offer more practical uses for members—someday.

“Right now, these applications aren’t necessarily practical or useful—for example, using AR to replace signage or to display additional contextual information about a service offered at a branch or VR to schedule remote virtual branch visits,” notes Landivar. “There is a whole generation growing up with VR headsets that offer a new set of experiences, and the pandemic pushed many events like concerts and conferences to that format. In the ’90s, few people thought we would have the capabilities we have on our mobile devices today, so practicality won’t stop companies from developing products to see how customers react. Regardless, it will be fun to watch.”

Also, watch for enhanced business banking tools, such as workflow, payroll and ACH features. “There are features institutions use today but are still fairly new,” Landivar says. “Once fully developed, business mobile will be here to stay and offer business owners much more versatility.”

While the bells and whistles always draw attention, don’t let them distract from what’s vital to your members’ long-term financial success. “At CEFUCU,

when launching new mobile products, we look to our ‘superusers’ to help review and test the process,” shares Geason. “Their input has proven extremely valuable, even helping us on social media, stepping in to assist others with questions about functionality. It creates a bond within our community.”

Alliant CU has also relied on member sentiment, particularly when redesigning its online banking platform in 2019. “We prioritized the features that meant the most while looking for new and unique ways to delight our members,” says Hill. “Some fun features recently implemented are an anniversary message and a display on the member’s birthday.”

Having a good analytics framework is the best way to keep a pulse on the most-used features in your mobile application, adds Landivar. “Analytics reports can show you ... where members are spending most of their time in the app and a view of the flows they take so you can identify bottlenecks and take proactive action. Consider solutions that incorporate a feedback feature within your mobile app as a proactive way to capture member opinions, giving them a voice and you the opportunity to address their needs before it turns into a negative review on the app store.”

Looking at feedback and data helps you to get into the mind of the consumer, notes Sterner. “It’s also worth noting that mobile users aren’t really skewing younger anymore,” he adds. “Since the pandemic, we’ve seen mobile numbers surge across all age groups, while members adapted quickly (no matter their age or background) to doing all their business via mobile.”

Sterner concludes that it is possible to succeed in a digital-only environment: “Goals can be reached and accounts managed, and you can use mobile to help members stay connected for greater financial success.” ✦

Stephanie Schwenn Sebring established and managed the marketing departments for three CUs and served in mentorship roles before launching her business. As owner of Fab Prose & Professional Writing, she assists credit unions, industry suppliers and any company wanting great content and a clear brand voice. Follow her on Twitter @fabprose.



MORE ON MOBILE

Emerging Tech: What’s New, What’s Next
(cumanagement.com/1220emerging)

The Ultimate Judge of Mobile
(cumanagement.com/0420ultimate)

Voice Apps Gain Traction
(cumanagement.com/0420voice)

Earning Five Stars for Your Credit Union’s App
(cumanagement.com/0420stars)



No Single *Blueprint*

—
WHILE THE
BUSINESS
CASE FOR DEI
ONLY GETS
STRONGER, EACH
ORGANIZATION'S
PLAN FOR
TRAINING WILL
BE UNIQUE.

BY FELICIA HUDSON
HANNAFAN

While there has been much debate about whether or not diversity training works, there is a compelling—and growing—business case for credit unions to invest in, and sustain, diversity, equity and inclusion.

According to a May 2020 McKinsey report, “Diversity Wins: How Inclusion Matters ([tinyurl.com/mckdivwins](https://www.tinyurl.com/mckdivwins)),” the business case for inclusion and diversity is stronger than ever. In fact, the report’s authors write that “the relationship between diversity on executive teams and the likelihood of financial outperformance has strengthened over time.”

The foundational credit union philosophy of “people helping people” aligns well with the tenets of diversity, equity and inclusion. This is true not only internally for credit union teams but also extends externally to the communities CUs serve.

Doug Harris, CEO of The Kaleidoscope Group ([kgdiversity.com](https://www.kgdiversity.com)), a Chicago-based diversity and inclusion consultancy, says that when diversity is discussed, it’s most often in the context of representation within the workplace, but a bigger

part of the work should be invested in the diverse marketplaces companies serve.

“There are a lot of different types of people utilizing credit unions, and they want effective customer service,” says Harris. “They want you to be able to manage your biases—so there’s both external work and internal work to be done. If you’re not doing it well internally, many times it gets hard to do it externally. You have to learn how to value these differences because it’s showing up in who your customer is.”

Paying attention to DEI is no longer optional. It’s incumbent on credit unions to create an inclusive workplace culture that will foster membership and revenue growth. And doing well with DEI is an increasingly important part of that.

“There’s a business case, there’s a moral case, and there’s an economic case for diversity, equity, and inclusion,” says Vernetta Walker, president/CEO of Vernetta Walker & Associates Consulting ([vernettawalker.com](https://www.vernettawalker.com)), who was previously senior advisor on diversity, inclusion and equity at BoardSource ([boardsource.org](https://www.boardsource.org)). “What’s key is for

each organization to articulate their case for DI&E. It's easier to start building from there."

KEY PREMISES ABOUT DEI TRAINING

Once your credit union decides to invest in DEI, how do you ensure that any training you offer is not just checking off boxes but truly effective and leading to worthwhile conversations?

Chris Jones, founding partner of SpectraDiversity (*spectradiversity.com*), a Minneapolis-based diversity and inclusion company, offers three common premises about diversity training that are worthy of examination.

1. The first premise—that diversity training will “fix” things—is false. Without organization-wide changes to management behaviors, policies, practices and procedures, and to individual beliefs and interpersonal skills, real change is difficult to obtain much less sustain, Jones says. In most organizations' current model, people go to the training and then they get on with their busy lives. Without sustainment actions, no real change takes place.

2. The second premise—that diversity training is needed—is inclusion training. Diversity is a fact. It's how many people of different ages, ethnicities, races, gender identities, abilities and sexual orientation exist within an organization. Most employees have no control over the fact of diversity in their organization. What employees do have control over is inclusion, Jones explains. Inclusion is built on bias identification and such interpersonal skills as listening with an open mind, speaking in an inclusive manner and communicating well with others who are different from you. These are not only skills for the workplace but life skills. Think of it as emotional intelligence.

3. The third premise—and this one is true—is that inclusion training should not be conducted without first measuring attitudes and behaviors. Leaders should first understand what the organization's issues are before training takes place, Jones emphasizes. Are women feeling disenfranchised? Are Black employees feeling excluded? Is management perceived as favoring certain groups of people? If an organization understands where people are, a DEI strategy and tailored training will be more effective.

DEI TRAINING PART OF LARGER VISION

While there is no singular blueprint for creating a strong DEI training program, the best ones execute on a well-defined strategy, a consistent focus and an ongoing commitment. Here are three big-picture steps to ensure that credit unions are setting themselves up for success.

1. COMMIT TO OWNERSHIP FROM THE TOP DOWN

Diversity, equity and inclusion experts recommend hiring an employee experienced in creating DEI training or working with a consulting firm that specializes in it. Equally important is having a “champion” or “sponsor,” meaning an executive in the company backing the effort.

Aphaphanh Nussbaum, MBA, SHRM-SCP, diversity and recruiting coordinator at \$258 million Everence Federal Credit Union (*everence.com*), Goshen, Indiana, acknowledges that though the CU has been doing diversity training for more than 20 years, it hadn't been as

“Everybody has to own this. The champion, or sponsor, enforces how they own it, but everybody needs to own it if it's going to make a difference.”

— Doug Harris

effective as the staff would like. Management decided to make it more intentional by creating a position and hiring her in 2018.

“You have to have a dedicated person,” Nussbaum says. “Everence has spent years dabbling in different diversity and inclusion training. They didn't really have a strategy; they just knew it was the right thing to do. When they brought me in, they created the strategy to become more diverse in our workforce and for our clients. We're currently celebrating our 75th anniversary. So, how do we make sure our organization is still in existence 75 years from now?”

Nussbaum underscores that DEI is complex and having buy-in from senior leadership is critical. “It's not just an HR function. It's not one area,” she says. “It's actually an organizational strategy to be diverse.”

Walker agrees that everyone in the credit union must be dedicated, especially the board. She says that because of all that has happened in our country in recent times, conversations around equity—and race equity in particular—have been pushed to the forefront.

“There's an opportunity here for the board to lead with authenticity,” Walker says. “You can't expect the organization to grapple with these issues without having some leadership at the top.”

Walker explains, “It's really important for the board to lean into that space because for so long, it has felt like an uncomfortable space. ... We have been socialized not to talk about racial and ethnic diversity—at least here in the U.S. And now we can't get past it. If you just turn on the TV or read a newspaper, we're seeing stories and headlines that are bringing these issues front and center.”

Walker stresses that because board positions are voluntary and already require dedication from members, the board must also be willing to make a long-term commitment to this issue that can be sustained through leadership transitions at credit unions. She says that even if a credit union is working with a consultant, the staff and board members need to ultimately own the work.

“Always, I'm looking for the champions who will keep this going because it's not going to happen by itself,” she says. “And it's not for the consultant to do all your work. Even if a consultant is guiding, at some point, that consultant needs to be able to step back and know that you have done enough work to integrate new practices to really create a culture shift that is sustainable.”

Walker says that part of sustaining the culture shift is being mindful that this work is not just a “one-and-done” conversation. Be thinking ahead about your next champion, for example, if you currently have a champion on the board that will be rotating off. You don't want to have to return to square one with your efforts.

“There’s a business case, there’s a moral case, and there’s an economic case for diversity, equity and inclusion.”

— Vernetta Walker

Harris also says leadership backing is imperative and adds that it must extend to employees as well. “We [at Kaleidoscope] have a model called stakeholder ownership, where everybody has to play their role of ownership,” he says. “The champion, or sponsor, enforces how they own it, but everybody needs to own it if it’s going to make a difference.”

Furthermore, Harris says, leadership has to empower people at all levels of the organization to give real feedback on what changes are needed and then execute those changes.

2. DEFINE HOW YOU’LL DO IT

Since joining \$1.9 billion Tennessee Valley Federal Credit Union (*tvfcu.com*), Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 2017 as VP/diversity and inclusion, CUES member Dionne Jenkins has made DEI training a priority by incorporating it into the credit union’s new hire orientation.

“I designed the training in a way that allows new employees to see how it pertains to the job,” she says. “I give specific examples of members that come into the credit union, what they may look like, what their account balances may look like, and different scenarios of how that encounter may go and how the employee should handle it—no matter who the member is. I put it in a perspective that they can understand and that is specifically job-related.”

Since Jenkins’ role of VP/diversity and inclusion was new when she stepped into it, she had to retrain employees who were there before the diversity program. Jenkins says this has been effective, and that employees frequently report back to her of having the exact scenario from a training session take place, in the branch or on a call, and how confident they felt in their ability to appropriately handle the situation because of their training. Similarly, others who started before Jenkins came on board have lamented to her that while they wish they had had the training earlier, they now know how to handle various scenarios in the future.

Jenkins notes it’s important when creating scenarios for training to not present it in a way in which employees may feel that you are using them as an example of what not to do or how not to handle a situation. This can lead to employees discounting what is being said or shutting down.

“What I find to be successful in our training is making it relevant and sharing real-world experiences, but also sharing it in a way in which people don’t internalize and feel like it’s a personal attack on their character,” she says.

Marvin York, CPM, VP/contact center member engagement at CUESolutions Silver provider PSCU (*psc.com*), St. Petersburg, Florida, and founder/strategic leader of PSCU’s African American

business resource group, Sankofa (*psc.com/diversity-equity-inclusion*), recommends employee resource groups, which he says are now evolving into business resource groups, as another initiative to support DEI in credit unions.

ERGs are employer-recognized workplace groups, voluntarily led by employees, to foster a diverse, inclusive workplace aligned with the organizations they serve. They are usually led and participated in by employees who share a characteristic, whether it’s gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, sexual orientation or interest. The groups exist to provide support and help in personal or career development and to create a safe space where employees can bring their whole selves to the table.

“ERGs have been around since the 1960s when Black workers at Xerox were discussing race-based tensions in the workplace,” York says. “They are important because we nurture the groups, giving those in them the comfort to be their true selves and bring their full selves to work. The creativity that is generated by this is priceless.”

With this in mind, York founded Sankofa (an African Swahili name meaning “to nurture”) at PSCU to champion its best and brightest African American professionals through mentorship and scholarship opportunities. (CUES has developed a custom development program for PSCU that will initially serve African American employees.)

In creating an effective ERG, York strongly encourages having an executive sponsor. “Appoint leadership in these roles in order for it to be successful right off the bat,” he says. “You have to have a strong leader, a visionary in that role and, once you do that, then you can start to shape some of the key initiatives you need.” He recommends the following guidelines: 1) Create a mission statement and goals; 2) establish guidelines and a structure for the ERG, meaning how the chapters are established, finances for that chapter and meeting functions; and 3) determine how leaders are selected.

Jenkins formed something similar that she calls an inclusion council and is open to anyone at the credit union.

“I was very intentional about calling it an inclusion council because I wanted our workforce to understand it was fit for all,” she says. “I try to have individuals representing different parts of the population in different demographics so that we have a voice for everybody in the council. We talk about what we want to do and how we want to move forward. I enjoy that because I am a team of one and we have roughly 400 employees. As much as I would love to say I know what everybody needs—and I know what each demographic is looking for—I don’t. So, having a council to help me think things through has really been helpful and beneficial.”

Lisa Koenecke (*lisakoenecke.com*), a DEI facilitator and author of *Be an Inclusion Ally: ABCs of LGBTQ+* (*tinyurl.com/beinclusionally*), specializes in counteracting unconscious bias and boosting LGBTQ+ inclusion in business, using a three-word model: show, shift and shape. In working with credit unions, she encourages them to show they are invested in diversity and training through increased intercultural marketing; shifting the mindset by, for example, shifting dollars to support a marginalized group in the community; and shaping policies to enumerate everyone.

“This is more than just human resources,” Koenecke says. “Everyone has to be on this page. Because if you have a member who comes in and looks like Jonathan Van Ness (*jonathanvanness.com*) from ‘Queer Eye’ ... wearing a skirt and a beard, how are you going to treat that person? What if you get a phone call from someone

“It’s not just an HR function. It’s not one area. It’s actually an organizational strategy to be diverse.”

— Aphaphanh Nussbaum, MBA, SHRM-SCP

who has a really low voice? Is your frontline staff trained to say, ‘Hello, sir?’” What if the person on the line is a transgender woman?

3. CREATE GOALS AND MEASURE EFFECTIVENESS

A successful DEI training program will require the creation of goals, consistent measuring and ongoing conversations with stakeholders in your CU.

Harris says that Kaleidoscope’s work with organizations focuses on five areas: the diverse workforce; the inclusive workplace; how you attract, manage and serve the diverse market; your reputation in diverse communities; and how you spend money when you’re doing your business with various vendors.

Kaleidoscope works with the organization to establish a business case, a vision of success, determine the desired impact, create and implement the strategy, and hold leaders accountable. They begin by assessing where the organization is today and reviewing the challenges it faces, what it’s doing well, and

where there are opportunities to do better, defining early on how success will be measured.

If you’re going to start an ERG, York says to track and measure the goals that you set, such as succession planning. Take a look at the top leaders of your organization. What do they look like? Do they look like the staff? And do they look like the members they are serving? Take a look at the glass ceiling that is there.

“There are glass ceilings in all organizations where, for example, IT, is stereotypical, you don’t see women or African Americans leading those organizations,” he says. “If we’re serious about making a change in opportunity, then it should be an HR hiring practice. It should be woven into that. Those things can be measured and then actually graded and projected when you’re going to hit a goal or make a change.” ✦

Formerly a member of the CUES marketing staff, **Felicia Hudson Hannafan** is a writer based in the Chicago area.



MORE ON DEI

Three-Tier Diversity Engagement Initiative (cumanagement.com/031521skybox)

When Hiring a Chief Diversity Officer, Look for Grit, Experience, Certification and the Right Spirit (cumanagement.com/podcast109)

DEI content from CU Management magazine (cumanagement.com/diversity-equity-and-inclusion)

CUES DEI Resource Center (cues.org/dei)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Cornell Certificate Program (cues.org/ecornell-dei)

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Goals and Measurements



Businesses measure their success against their strategic goals as a way to know how they’re really doing. When it comes to your diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, what are reasonable goals? What metrics should you be tracking?

Lisa Koenecke (lisakoenecke.com), a DEI facilitator and author of *Be an Inclusion Ally: ABCs of LGBTQ+* (tinyurl.com/beinclusionally), specializes in helping businesses counteract unconscious bias and better include members of the LGBTQ+ community. She identifies these five goals to aim for:

1. Increased employee retention
2. Increased employee engagement
3. Fewer complaints to HR
4. Reduced sick days
5. More people promoted from within a variety of populations and identities

Chris Jones, founding partner of SpectraDiversity (spectradiversity.com), a Minneapolis-based diversity and inclusion company, recommends doing a diversity and inclusion assessment at key points along an organization’s DEI journey as a way to measure progress. You can also:

- measure employee turnover among protected status employees; and
- tie diversity hiring and promotion measures to management bonuses or salaries.



Plan Now for *the Next Disaster*

**COPING WITH
COVID-19
TEACHES
LEADERS THE
WAY FORWARD
FOR BUSINESS
CONTINUITY.**

BY ART CHAMBERLAIN

After dealing with a once-in-century pandemic that has turned their lives upside down for more than a year, it seems almost cruel to ask credit union executives what they've learned that will help them be better prepared next time.

Surely, industry leaders should be allowed to rest and watch life return to normal without worrying about the next time—yet. The last global pandemic in 1918 hit their grandparents and great-grandparents; surely the CEOs who were in the hot seat in 2020 can leave the next one to their grandchildren to worry about.

Sorry, but no. Taking the time to review the responses to COVID-19 and understanding what worked (and what didn't) can help credit unions prepare for other more frequent disasters, from hurricanes to wildfires to cyberattacks—and also, for the next pandemic that experts warn is inevitable.

Even though the executives we interviewed were

still working in their dining rooms with a small dog snoozing in its bed in the corner, the way to the kitchen blocked by a child's safety gate, or in what is now an office only because they installed sliding barn doors to wall off their stuck-at-home university student children, their minds had already turned to the future.

Regulators have long insisted that credit unions have disaster recovery plans, largely aimed at protecting data and IT systems, and business continuity plans, focused on the non-technology and HR side.

But some organizations completed those plans and then left them on a shelf; others have only done the bare minimum. John Venzon, managing director of the technology solutions groups at CUES strategic partner Cornerstone Advisors (crnrstone.com), Scottsdale, Arizona, notes that in the past, regulators only asked financial institutions to consider what they'd do if a pandemic forced

“We knew what we needed to do, and we had our process. ... You don’t want to inconvenience your members, but at the same time, you don’t want to put your employees in danger.”

– Rhonda Hotard

10% of their staff to work from home. As we all saw last spring, that percentage was way too low. In many cases, almost 100% of credit union employees worked from home when branches were closed and contact restrictions imposed.

For a heightened perspective on the issue, we talked to CEOs who faced natural disasters in 2020 in addition to dealing with the pandemic. It wasn’t hard to find credit unions in that category, since the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information ([ncdc.noaa.gov/billions](https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions)) says there were a record 22 weather and climate-related disasters in the U.S. last year that each caused more than \$1 billion in damage—from hurricanes to wildfires to tornadoes.

SERVING THROUGH THE STORM

Living and working in southern Louisiana, Rhonda Hotard, president/CEO of \$350 million Louisiana Federal Credit Union ([louisianafcu.org](https://www.louisianafcu.org)), headquartered in LaPlace, knows about hurricanes and how to survive them: It takes preparation, planning and sometimes luck. For example, when Katrina hit in 2005, the worst of the storm slammed into New Orleans just 20 miles east, but her credit union was largely spared.

A few years later, she prepared for another major hurricane by closing branches and gathering her emergency response team at an inland location farther north. When the hurricane came ashore, it missed her branches but veered hard right, taking dead aim at her supposedly safe spot.

“We had 15 people together in a place that got hit; that turned out not to be a great plan, and after that, I said I personally am never evacuating again,” Hotard says.

In 2020, the state faced seven hurricanes, and four required Louisiana FCU to close branches, but that was easy compared to dealing with the pandemic.

“We knew what we needed to do, and we had our process. When it gets to a certain wind speed, we prepare to close branches,” notes Hotard. “Usually I am very hesitant about making that decision, because you don’t want to inconvenience your members, but at the same time, you don’t want to put your employees in danger.”

But in 2020, she didn’t hesitate to close branches—in part because drive-thrus were open and members knew they could meet all their needs online.

“It was almost like there wasn’t even a second thought,” Hotard says.

Hotard reflects that she had a jump on most credit unions when it came to responding to the pandemic, largely because of a learning session she attended in 2008 that highlighted the danger of a pandemic. At that time, she insisted her senior team watch a documentary that laid out the dangers of the bird flu and ran a tabletop exercise to see how they could cope.

“I bought masks—I actually had cases of N95 masks in my attic,” she says.

In late February 2020, as fears about the COVID-19 virus were spreading, Hotard decided it was time for her credit union to pull out that 12-year-old plan and run through the exercise.

An advantage Louisiana FCU had was that due to its preparations for hurricanes, all members of the leadership team were already set up to work from home and the IT system could easily be expanded.

“But now we have 65% of our staff working remotely, including loan services, call centers, account services and the collections department—we got forced into that,” Hotard says. “A lot of changes we had to implement on the fly were changes that we wanted to do, but this pandemic just pushed a lot of things forward much faster.”

Technology changes of the past decade have made it easier to cope with the pandemic and hurricanes. The shift to the cloud and virtual services makes it much easier to keep working, she says. A transition to outsourced core banking relieved a major headache as well.

“We really pushed remote ... and digital services through all this. We had to change our own mindset and processes and work with our vendors to make sure that everything our members need us for they can do in drive-up or through a digital channel. These were things that were already on our list, but they were two to three years out there.”

Hotard says one of her main roles during crises is to be the organization’s cheerleader. When she considered her messages in early 2021, she realized that she had two staff groups that had lived through very different pandemic experiences. The retail staff had kept branches open and met customer needs, all while being stressed out by the possibility of acquiring the virus and spreading it to their families.

The other half of her staff had endured the pressures of working from home, some in crowded settings or without proper desks and chairs. “We had people initially saying, ‘I’m going to work from my kitchen table,’ and suddenly six months later they are still at the table and realize they needed to set up an office, because they have pain in their shoulders or backs. What we thought would be a temporary adjustment has turned into a much longer one.”

Hotard also believes the pandemic has altered the business landscape. “Our perspective as a credit union and how we run our business has changed. The consumer mindset has changed. Consumer behaviors are different now—for example, curbside delivery and ordering your groceries online and picking them up at Walmart and not having to leave your car. Those things are not going to go away. That has become the new way that people want to shop.”

“In some cases, people thought they had solutions in place but hadn’t tested them, and they ran into trouble when they had to use them.”

– Jeremy Smith

The key to surviving any disaster, she says, is that “even with a great plan, you have to be able to think on your feet—you have to be able to make decisions.”

WHEN NATURE AND BUSINESS PLANS COLLIDE

In February 2020, the focus at \$2.3 billion Rogue Federal Credit Union (*roguecu.org*), Medford, Oregon, was on its plan to switch to a new core banking system, recalls CEO Gene Pelham. Then the pandemic hit, followed in the summer by wildfires that destroyed 2,400 area homes and came within a mile and a half of the CU’s main office.

“Being prepared is good, but I don’t think anything really prepares you for the reality of dealing with a pandemic and dealing with the wildfires,” says Pelham, a CUES member.

Additionally, \$180 million Malheur Federal Credit Union, (*malheurfcu.org*) based in Ontario, Oregon, suggested last spring that the two organizations merge. Despite all the challenges, the merger went ahead, adding five branches and 50 employees who are located seven hours from Rogue FCU’s main office.

Pelham says the credit union had two technology features that made it easier to cope with the pandemic. “We already had an extensive interactive teller machine network in place, so even though we closed our branches, we were able to continue to provide a personalized service experience for our members.

“Also, we were just about to turn on an online appointment system, so we did that,” he adds. “It would have taken us months longer to accomplish any of these things, but the pandemic gave us the motivation, and our people did an incredible job over just a few days.”

Pelham says he learned during the 2008 financial crisis that it is important to communicate with employees so you can answer questions and allay fears. It is also important to keep the board of directors informed and engaged. Early on, Rogue FCU’s board approved a \$500 pandemic bonus for staff. Another was approved four months later when it became clear schools weren’t going to open on time, putting extra pressure on families.

Rogue FCU also held all-staff online sessions in the early months of the pandemic that attracted more than 300 of the 500 staff and generated 40 to 50 questions each time.

“We don’t have as many questions now,” Pelham notes. “We have been able to address them. We know the pain points. What is the impact on me? What if a family member gets ill? What if I get ill? We gave them an outlet to ask questions because the natural tendency is to think the worst.”

Pelham was transparent about the financial impact of the pandemic on the CU and assured employees that any staff cuts would be a last resort. This eased the minds of frontline staff and allowed them to focus on helping members who were facing those same questions in their own lives.

About half a dozen of Rogue FCU’s staff have tested positive for COVID-19 over the course of the pandemic, but none of the cases were contracted at work.

Pelham says all the challenges his credit union faced have highlighted the importance of IT for success. “We have a strong delivery platform, with more than 20 branches and drive-up locations. Physical delivery is the face of our credit union, but our strength comes from our technology, with its backbone being the \$8 million spent on the core upgrade.”

And yes, the upgrade went ahead in February 2021.

TECHNOLOGY AND SECURITY PLANNING

Venzon of Cornerstone Advisors says the pandemic has extended the reach of the security, planning and monitoring that credit unions need to do beyond the office walls.

The pandemic “has put an increased importance on network management, because now these endpoints are the individuals who are working at home,” he says. “You have to start thinking about, ‘Do we have enough bandwidth?’”

Venzon notes that in four of the last 10 engagements he’s had with credit unions, he has recommended they increase their network bandwidth so they can handle the growing demand stemming from remote work.

“It’s not just the pandemic, but I am hearing that branches are less important and items like ITMs are getting more play,” he says. “This is a shift in strategy, which ultimately trickles down to business continuity, because now you have to think about video access for call center agents who may be working from home.”

Venzon says the bigger issue is the security of remote work and the added risk to member information. “It is easier for bad actors who are employees to take account numbers and personal information, whether they use it themselves or sell it. Those are issues larger institutions have had to deal with in the past, and it’s only a matter of time until those hit credit unions.”

Venzon recalls that 15 years ago, while he was heading a call center operation for Bank of America, the bank eliminated the stenographer pads that agents used to make note of Social Security numbers, names and addresses while they were on the phone. “They were incredibly valuable in the wrong hands, and we implemented a zero-paper policy,” he says.

Unsecured networks and home computers are today’s steno pads; credit unions need to think of such issues as they consider their remote operations.

Jeremy Smith, director of client partnerships at ViClarity (*viclarity.com*), formerly PolicyWorks, West Des Moines, Iowa, agrees that there are security challenges and questions for remote workers. “Are they locking the computers in their house? Can you trust everyone in each employee’s house? What is the policy for people working remotely, and what precautions do you have to take? How can you get them access to the information they need securely?”

Credit unions were forced to swiftly equip their employees to work remotely, providing headsets, laptops and remote access to different systems.

“There has been an increase in pandemic-related cyberattacks, as hackers have preyed upon the vulnerabilities posed by employees working from home,” notes Matt Laba, chief information security officer for Celero Solutions Inc. (celero.ca), a CUES Supplier member and digital services provider based in Calgary, Alberta. “These attacks have demonstrated the importance of keeping hardware up-to-date with robust encryptions, security software and standards.”

Credit unions need what Celero calls good home-network hygiene. “Employees are bringing corporate assets into what could be termed a semi-hostile environment. Credit unions should ensure employees have anti-malware, anti-virus, proper patches and updated routers,” Laba says.

A September 2020 report by ViClarity (tinyurl.com/cbvc5cfe) found eight out of 10 credit unions surveyed last spring were not able to conduct critical functions remotely and only 44% had contacted their critical suppliers and vendors during COVID-19 to ensure services would be maintained.

“Vendors are playing a bigger role in the day-to-day operations due to online account opening, phone systems, web applications and mobile services,” Smith says. “They are part of the evolution of delivering financial services.” And that means they are a key component of BC planning.

On a positive note, Venzon finds credit unions are aware of the need to review their disaster recovery and business continuity plans. For example, he said eight of 11 assignments he was currently working on had specifically asked for a review of their continuity plans.

Venzon’s assessment of the importance of a strong core platform matches the experiences at Louisiana FCU and Rogue FCU. “Core processing is becoming a utilitarian function, like the power grid,” he says. “During the pandemic, you didn’t worry about the power going down, and for the most part, you don’t worry about your core systems. No system is perfect, and you still need to work through what can fail, as we saw in Texas. But generally, larger and properly run organizations have the greater ability to build highly redundant and reliable networks.”

PREPARING FOR THE NEXT ROUND

One issue that has been raised by credit unions and consultants is the need to help employees stay well, both physically and psychologically. The challenges and pressures of working from home, or working in branch during a pandemic, can be daunting.

As Hotard mentions above, uncomfortable chairs in makeshift home offices can cause employees pain; Pelham jokes that early on in the pandemic, one staffer was working with their laptop on their bed—during video calls, the screen went bouncing up and down as the staffer shifted positions. While these considerations may seem less pressing than network capability, they’re still an important part of business continuity planning.

Smith recommends that credit unions do a post-mortem on their plans now and make adjustments based on where struggles arose during the pandemic, where there was a lack of preparedness and where changes were made throughout the year.

“Even with the most robust BC plan, there are still lessons learned, things that they thought worked well that didn’t work well,” Smith notes. “Make sure you test potential solutions you think you have. In some cases, people thought they had solutions in place but hadn’t tested them, and they ran into trouble when they had to use them.”

ViClarity also urges credit unions to test their plans on a regular basis to keep abreast of changing processes and technology, because you know you’re going to need the continuity plan sooner than expected.

A friend recently posted on Facebook that his first book would soon be published by Amazon. Always happy to support a fellow writer, I was about to click purchase when I read the title: *After the Next Pandemic*.

What next pandemic? After? Most of us are still getting through this one—but dystopian fiction is as good a reminder as any that it’s never too early to be prepared. ✨

Art Chamberlain is a freelance writer based in Campbellford, Ontario, who has more than 15 years of experience in the credit union system.



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“It would have taken us months longer to accomplish any of these things, but the pandemic gave us the motivation, and our people did an incredible job over just a few days.”

– Gene Pelham



Jill Nowacki

Title: President/CEO

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where humans want to work, and they know it takes constant, intentional effort to build that environment. Maybe it used to keep them up at night that they worried about whether they have done enough to support, develop and retain the people who run their organizations. ... Today, they rest easy knowing they are building inclusive workplaces that people want to join.

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Special Report: Security

Credit Union Management

APRIL 2021

COVID-19 FEEDS FRAUDSTERS

Cybercrime prevention strategies
for beyond the pandemic

PLUS

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COVID-19 *Feeds Fraudsters*



**CREDIT
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BY GLENN HARRISON



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The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a wave of financial fraud that could continue long after the virus is under control. Fortunately, the reverse of that situation may also be true: Credit unions are learning fraud-fighting techniques that can protect them and their members far beyond this crisis.

The abrupt, massive shift from in-person to online transactions has been a catalyst for crime. Identity theft reports to the Federal Trade Commission (*ftc.gov*) in 2020 were about double the total from 2019. As ID theft drives many types of fraud, it follows that the overall consumer losses from fraud jumped to \$3.3 billion in 2020 from \$1.8 billion in 2019.

We asked experts from three companies that provide security services to credit unions about which types of fraud they've seen on the rise and what seems to be working best to combat it.

CONVERGENCE OF FACTORS

The combination of increasing remote transactions and widespread financial hardship is a perfect storm for fraud, says Chris Ryan, who leads fraud and identity product marketing for CUESolutions Silver provider Experian North America (*experian.com*), Costa Mesa, California. "It's harder now to weed out people with bad intent from good members facing difficult circumstances," Ryan says. "It's not as clear who to challenge and who to help."

Before the lockdown, most CUs could count on a certain flow of in-branch transactions where staff can easily ask to see a driver's license or other documentation to keep a transaction moving with high confidence that it is legitimate, notes Ryan.

When online users are asked for documentation, however, it creates "friction." Consumers are accustomed now to virtually frictionless fintech transactions.

This is why, even before the pandemic, it was becoming a greater priority for CUs to improve remote transaction protections while providing a smooth user experience, Ryan points out. Experian has been

working with CUs on using data analytics to balance safety and convenience.

THE POWER OF ANALYTICS

The problem with fraud detection for remote services isn't that humans can't see red flags when looking at facts about a consumer's life and finances. The problem is that humans don't have the time or access to review enough data—in a broad enough context—to make adequately informed decisions.

That's what data analytics tools do for financial institutions, Ryan says.

He offers the example of loan applicants who have a new address and a somewhat high level of financial activity on their credit reports. That's not necessarily a red flag. Moving isn't uncommon, nor is an increase in short-term spending in the process.

But what if the phone number on the application doesn't match what you have on record for that member? What if the new address is connected to multiple people with different surnames?

Criminals could be using the address to generate multiple fraudulent loans and redirecting phone calls to their own phones instead of the victims'.

"If people could see all this information, we would see these patterns and know when a new address might indicate a fraud attempt," Ryan says. "The challenge is that this is a really simple example, and in real life, a person might have to see thousands of pieces of data and understand how they all fit together to predict risk. Analytics can do this work reliably and consistently in a fraction of a second."

Ryan says a strong, basic data analytics solution should be able to analyze transactions for at least these three types of fraud:

1. First-party fraud: People applying for credit cards or loans with no intent to repay.
2. Third-party fraud: Criminals using victims' stolen credentials to impersonate them.
3. Synthetic identity: Melding real and fabricated data to create false identities, sometimes used for lengthy schemes.

Solving the complex fraud problem



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Third-party fraud: Identity theft

Definition

Third-party fraud occurs when a criminal uses another person's identity to open or transact on an account without that person's knowledge.

Concerns

The rapid digital transformation and increasing amount of personally identifiable information available online has made third-party fraud easier than ever to perpetrate.

Resolution

Leverage use patterns, history and recent velocity to separate normal from risky behavior. Then use a hierarchy of verification steps to contact the true identity owner and review suspicious activity.

\$16.9 billion in identity fraud losses in 2019¹

¹2020 Identity Fraud Study: Genesis of the Identity Fraud Crisis, Javelin Strategy, April 2020



First-party fraud: Promise to repay

Definition

First-party fraud refers to occasions when an individual makes a promise for future payments in exchange for goods or services but plans not to repay.

Concerns

The strain caused by economic changes over the last year has impacted consumers across the board and could cause a formerly good consumer to develop fraudulent intent.

Resolution

Utilize advanced analytics to track patterns in financial data that could indicate imminent bust out, then implement ongoing risk management strategies at the member or portfolio level.

50% of financial institutions said first-party check fraud losses rose in 2020²

²Key Trends Driving Fraud Transformation in 2021 and Beyond, Aite Group, December 2020



Synthetic identity fraud: Frankenstein identities

Definition

Synthetic identity fraud happens when a criminal creates a new identity with a mix of real and fictitious information.

Concerns

The recent uptick in synthetic identity fraud is likely due to the amount of data available on the dark web from data breaches and a desire to take advantage of the current lending environment.

Resolution

Apply analytics that leverage a detailed, historical and holistic view of a consumer's evolution to spot potential fakes, and utilize document and Social Security number verification to confirm real identities.

\$11 billion in total potential annual synthetic identity fraud charge-offs in the United States in 2020.³

³Synthetic identity fraud update: Effects of COVID-19 and a potential cure from Experian, IDC Financial Insights, June 2019



Account takeover fraud: Illicit access

Definition

Account takeover fraud is when a criminal gains unauthorized access to a user's account to make transactions.

Concerns

Reliance on password security, new forms of social engineering and new person-to-person financial services all give criminals more opportunities to take over accounts.

Resolution

Utilize device intelligence and biometrics to thwart both individual attempts and automated attacks; protect the member experience while minimizing risk with a robust step-up authentication process.

72% increase in account takeover fraud in 2019¹

¹2020 Identity Fraud Study: Genesis of the Identity Fraud Crisis, Javelin Strategy, April 2020

USE EMPLOYEES' EXPERTISE

Ryan says a data analytics solution doesn't remove CU employees from the process of detecting identity fraud. "An analytics platform can take care of most transactions and flag only those that require personal attention," he says. "That frees your best employees to handle more complex transactions."

Some turnkey data analytics products are designed for smaller financial institutions today, Ryan says. "Instead of simply saying a case is 'risky,' these tools tell a credit union exactly why and what needs to be done next," he adds.

Beyond flagging individual risks, data analytics help assess fraud prevention. Ryan recalls a client telling him why the CU's management switched to a data analytics approach.

"They couldn't make positive changes because it was impossible to review fraud cases and figure out what they did or didn't do that resulted in the loss. But when they started taking action based on analytics, the data showed what they'd done in each case and why," Ryan says. "That made changing processes to protect themselves very simple."

ONE-TIME PASSCODE SCAMS TARGET SENIORS

Card-not-present fraud had already been increasing before the pandemic, and now conditions are even better for that type of scam.

People who rarely or never made purchases online are doing so regularly, which makes them easier marks, says Karen Postma, VP/risk analytics for CUESolutions Bronze provider PSCU (pscu.com), a credit union service organization in St. Petersburg, Florida. Older members, in particular, are CNP targets now, she adds.

The most alarming trend in CNP fraud is a combination of social engineering and targeting transactions that have extra security, Postma says.

"This type of fraud has been on the rise since EMV (smart chip technology) was introduced," she explains. "Fraudsters have developed new ways to bypass advanced security mechanisms that credit unions put in place, such as one-time passcodes."

Cyber thieves gather personal information about members, much of it easily available online, and use it to convince members they are co-workers, friends, merchants—or your credit union. The fraudsters initiate a transaction that generates an OTP request, then use "phishing" calls, emails or texts to ask members for the password.

"We've been seeing this occur frequently in mobile wallet provisioning, as more consumers are embracing that technology," says Postma.

MULTICHANNEL MEMBER EDUCATION

Postma lauds CU clients that have response plans in place to address outbreaks of such schemes as OTP phishing. The best response plans include:

Fast internal communications. Establish a way for employees to relay to leadership members' reports of suspected fraud, so you can spot potential fraud campaigns targeting your CU. In turn, leaders should quickly relay new fraud threats to all employees who could be helping members deal with a scam.

Multichannel external communications. A tested, rapid push-notification system should be in place to alert targeted members. Communicate fraud threats to members via web

"Instead of simply saying a case is 'risky,' these tools tell a credit union exactly why and what needs to be done next."

— Chris Ryan

branch notices, mobile apps, email, newsletters and all the other ways you reach out to them. This is especially important for staying in touch with older members or others who may not regularly use digital channels.

"Emphasize in your external messages that your credit union will never ask members to disclose any type of personal information, including OTPs," says Postma.

TRAIN STAFF FREQUENTLY, INTERACTIVELY

Your fraud response program will be more effective if employees are frequently trained on spotting emerging fraud trends, says Jay Bowden, CFO of TRC Interactive (trcinteractive.com), Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, which partners with CUES in offering First Line of Defense™ (cues.org/firstline). The company offers online fraud detection and prevention training, using input from financial institutions and other sources to customize courses for the latest threats.

Bowden says the pandemic-fueled fraud surge has increased the overall need for training, including in wire transfer, PPP loan and tax-related fraud.

To train your employees to spot these and other crimes, look for relatively brief online courses—30 to 45 minutes or so—that minimize work disruptions. Bowden recommends courses that have a mix of interactive elements to keep employees involved, such as fraud simulations and game-like exercises.

Annual fraud training probably isn't frequent enough to keep pace with fraud innovations—TRC Interactive has found that quarterly training is generally more effective, Bowden says.

ESTABLISH ACCOUNTABILITY

In addition to training employees, Bowden suggests educating your board about interpreting fraud loss results. "Some boards are satisfied with being given a fraud loss number through regular reporting. But they should realize it's a number that can be influenced with effort," he says. Boards should ask what's being done to monitor and minimize fraud losses and whether these efforts have shown measurable results.

Establishing accountability for fraud prevention isn't just a good practice during a pandemic. It can yield results as long as cybercrime continues to adapt and innovate—in other words, forever. †

Glenn Harrison writes for Credit Union Management from Stoughton, Wisconsin.



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Fraud and AI: Moving from Detection to Prevention

By David Ver Eecke, Fraud Product Strategy, PSCU

For many decades, fighting fraud has consisted of the same set of tools and remedies: Fraudulent activity is reported to a credit union, which informs the risk team's fraud rule set. In response, the rule set is updated to protect against the type of fraud that occurred in order to avoid similar attacks in the future. While this cycle has been largely effective at stopping fraud over the years, fraudsters have not gone away. In fact, they are now willing to work harder and smarter in hopes of a bigger payoff.

Fraudsters Today

The heyday of swipe fraud may be in the rearview mirror due to innovations like EMV and contactless-enabled cards, but today's fraudsters are constantly innovating and looking for any cracks in a credit union's armor they can exploit. Being a fraudster is a profitable full-time endeavor, and today's perpetrators are more sophisticated in their attacks, even with security enhancements put in place.

For many credit unions, fraud prevention efforts are siloed and focus solely on credit and/or debit card transactions. Card fraud, however, is often the last step in fraudsters' plans – the final act in which they are able to monetize their efforts and cash out. The result of this singular focus is that credit unions or members can miss some of the early warning signs of an attack. Data sources that might reveal a fraudster's true intent before he/she cashes out are often not accessible to fraud decisioning systems. Many bad actors are aware of this loophole and take advantage of more vulnerable channels, such as contact centers and online and mobile banking solutions to gain access to the member's account, resulting in a significant loss for both the member and credit union.

Now more than ever, fraudsters are "entering" through the front door and pretending to be legitimate members. They lay dormant once they gain access to an account and will then exploit your credit union's good nature through a first-party attack, or one that occurs within your own network or system. As such, it is more important than ever for credit unions to take a hard look at their fraud monitoring tools and up their game to combat fraud before it happens.

Enter Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

Utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning to its fullest extent is a step in the right direction toward preventing fraud, and PSCU's Linked Analysis solution does just that. Linked Analysis – developed by the credit union service organization's in-house fraud experts – gathers disparate data from a number of sources, including contact centers, mobile banking logins and more, into one solution. From there, the team of talented data scientists uses a set of advanced algorithms to identify behaviors that indicate suspicious or fraudulent activity.

Many fraudsters will interact with stolen card data before attempting to cash out via a card transaction. They might call into the contact center to change the legitimate member's contact information on the account to their own or try to gain access via an online or mobile channel. Linked Analysis algorithms can identify suspicious behaviors like these, effectively predicting fraud before it can even start and stopping fraudsters in their tracks.

A tool like Linked Analysis is critical for a credit union to have in its arsenal. When combined with the power of a cooperative like PSCU, it can help identify threats across the credit union industry. With the help of Linked Analysis, PSCU is able to assist in fraud prevention for other credit unions that might not be experiencing a direct threat.

Providing holistic protection for all types of threats credit unions and their members are facing will be critical as we continue to combat fraud and innovative fraudsters. Through AI and machine learning, the credit union industry can move beyond simply trying to detect fraud to predicting when a fraudster will strike in order to stop the attack before it can even occur.

David Ver Eecke is a strategic product manager at PSCU. David knows that the cooperative nature of credit unions provides a unique advantage when it comes to stopping fraud. When he isn't working on products to increase payment security for credit unions and wage war against fraudsters, he finds time to write about topics on risk and fraud.

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Pembroke Inducted Into AACUC Hall of Fame

CUES is proud to announce that President/CEO John Pembroke was recognized for his contributions to the credit union industry as an inductee into the 2021 African American Credit Union Coalition's (*aacuc.org*) Hall of Fame. He and four other industry leaders were recognized in an online ceremony on March 1.



John Pembroke

Pembroke has been an avid supporter of the AACUC and its mission since his tenure as chief marketing officer at PSCU. This support continues with CUES, which provides complimentary memberships to participants in the AACUC's mentorship program, offering them access to top professional development tools.

"The AACUC has done great things for credit unions, and as a product of the industry myself, I'm beyond honored to be recognized in this way," says Pembroke. "Congratulations go out my fellow 2021 inductees as well."

CUES Launches Online DEI Resource Center

Following up on its commitment to support the credit union industry in creating diverse and inclusive work environments, talent development leader CUES has announced the release of a new online DEI Resource Center at *cues.org/dei*.

"Last June, on the heels of social unrest sparked by the murder of George Floyd, many business leaders made commitments to fight against racial and social injustice and improve diversity, equity and inclusion in their organizations," says John Pembroke, CUES president/CEO. "For our part, CUES immediately made our existing DEI resources available to the industry. At that time, we also made a commitment to build upon these tools. The new DEI Resource Center is one result of that promise."

The DEI Resource Center consolidates all CUES offerings, courses and resources on the topic in one place for both members and nonmembers. "We're pleased to offer these resources so industry leaders who have committed to DEI at their credit unions can work on keeping their promises," says Pembroke. "But we know there is more to be done. We will continue to add new offerings and enhance the resource center accordingly."

New DEI Award Announced for 2021 Nominations for all awards due April 16

The deadline to apply for a CUES award is this month, and this year we have a new credit union award. CUES will recognize and celebrate the diversity, equity and inclusion efforts of credit unions through the new DEI: Catalyst for Change Award.

This annual award will go to a credit union that has demonstrated sustained support for advancing DEI in its workplace, raised awareness of workplace diversity and inclusion issues, been a catalyst for change regarding workplace DEI, and/or supported positive change within the industry, its internal organization or its community.

"Credit unions have worked hard and made tremendous strides in creating diverse and inclusive environments, and we felt it was important to acknowledge not only these efforts, but also the positive impact they will have on the future of the industry," says John Pembroke, CUES president/CEO. "We hope every credit union that has made DEI a priority will throw their hat in the ring by nominating their institution."

The winning credit union will receive a seat to attend the CUES and Cornell University Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Certificate Program (*cues.org/ecornell-DEI*). The DEI: Catalyst for Change Award joins a roster of other prestigious awards from CUES, including:

- CUES Outstanding Chief Executive Award, honoring credit union CEOs;
- CUES Exceptional Leader Award, honoring credit union leaders; and
- CUES Distinguished Director Award, honoring credit union board members.

Visit *cues.org/awards* to learn more. The nomination deadline for all awards is April 16.

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2021 ONLINE EVENTS CALENDAR

APRIL 2021

High Performing Board Digital Series		1st Seminar Begins April 1	cues.org/HPB
Strategy and Digital Marketing eCornell Certificate Program	OFFERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Cornell University	April 21–June 15	cues.org/eCornell-Marketing
CEO Institute II: <i>Organizational Effectiveness</i>	OFFERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management Cornell University	April 26–30	cues.org/INST2

MAY 2021

CEO Institute III: <i>Strategic Leadership Development</i>	OFFERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Darden Executive Education University of Virginia	May 3–14	cues.org/INST3
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JUNE 2021

CUES School of Business Lending™ III: <i>Strategic Business Lending</i>	OFFERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Hipereon Inc.	June 2–July 1	cues.org/SOBL3
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JULY 2021

Strategic Innovation Institute™	OFFERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Stanford University	July 19–August 4	cues.org/SII
CUES Advanced Management Program from Cornell University	OFFERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Cornell University	1st Course Begins July 21	cues.org/eCornell-CUManager

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COMING FALL 2021 **Board Liaison Workshop** cues.org/BLW

2021 IN-PERSON EVENTS CALENDAR

JULY 2021

Supervisory Committee Development Seminar	Amelia Island, FL	July 26–27	cues.org/SCDS
Director Development Seminar	Amelia Island, FL	July 28–30	cues.org/DDS

AUGUST 2021

Execu/Net™	Whitefish, MT	August 15–18	cues.org/EN
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DECEMBER 2021

Directors Conference	Marco Island, FL	December 5–8	cues.org/DC
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Dates and locations are subject to change. For pricing options, visit cues.org/Events.

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July 26–27

cues.org/SCDS

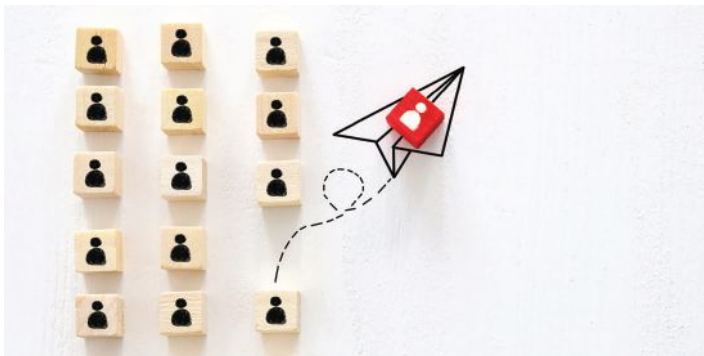
Director Development Seminar

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3 Ways to Differentiate Your Member Service With Coaching

BY LIZ GARSTER

Ask a credit union's leadership or staff what truly sets them apart from a bank and they'll almost always drop the "s" word: service. Ask them how their service delivery makes them different and you'll probably hear lines like, "People are more than just a number here," or "We truly care about seeing our members succeed."

But you know what? I would wager that bank employees would say similar things.

While it's true that banks answer to their stockholders, they also know that being profitable requires having customers to serve, and you don't maintain a customer base by being unbearable to do business with. Just like credit union employees, bank employees care about the financial well-being of their customers. Sure, banks may charge more fees and higher interest rates than credit unions, but the intent to deliver a positive service experience is still there. This means having employees who are nice and helpful is no longer a novelty—or perhaps it never was.

You may have worked with an executive, health or life coach. Financial coaches exist, too! They educate clients one-on-one on the basics of personal finance and help them develop a plan that reflects their values and aspirations. While sending your entire frontline staff through a certification program on coaching might

not be an option, elements of coaching can easily be incorporated into member interactions—and doing so is a great way to create a culture that stands out.

Here are three easy ways to blend coaching strategies with member service:

1. Believe in the member you're serving. Members can tell when someone is in their corner. Encourage your staff to set aside judgments during service interactions and begin the member relationship by believing the person in front of them has the capability to succeed financially. When someone is approved for a product or service, that's a victory worth celebrating; when they're not, frame the answer as "not yet" instead of "no way."

2. Get curious. It's difficult to act in the best interest of members without knowing much about them. Go beyond the standard application questions of "What's your annual income?" and "How long have you lived at your current address?" to get a fuller picture of a particular member's financial goals. This will help both the employee and the member get clearer about what products and services might be a good match. Some questions to work in might include "What does financial success look like for you?" or "What challenges are you currently facing with your money?"

3. Take notes and follow up. Employees can take notes on the questions they ask members and follow up later to help build a relationship of accountability. Doing so communicates that the credit union values the members' financial goals just as much as they do. For example, if a member says that financial success looks like homeownership within the next year, the MSR could send an email six months later to ask how that goal is progressing and if the member is interested in learning more about mortgages at the credit union to help make it happen.

In the cutthroat financial services industry, it's more important than ever that credit unions find a way to differentiate and deliver an experience like no other. Supporting members with a blend of exceptional service and coaching techniques will help them feel empowered and confident with their money—and encourage them to bring their friends, family and neighbors, too.

Liz Garster is VP/strategy & client services with TwoScore (twoscore.com), Hilliard, Ohio.



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"Referrals and attending local job fairs at city events or colleges have been our most successful platforms for recruiting employees. ... Hiring talent within the communities you serve and investing in the people of the communities you serve will help you attract the best employees. And investing in your employees and acknowledging what is important to them will deliver exceptional results and success."

Marisela Zambrano, director of business development at \$277 million Illiana Financial Credit Union (illiana.org), Calumet City, Illinois, in "An Inclusive Environment Is Essential at Illiana Financial" on CUES Skybox: cumanagement.com/030121skybox



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