

Sales-as-Service Culture Helps Drive Mobiloil Credit Union's Dramatic Transformation

Company

Mobiloil Federal Credit Union

Industry

A provider of financial services and products for its members

Strategy

Restructure internally and create a culture of trust, cooperation, and a new member-facing strategy called "Sales-as-Service." Increase per-member transactions to help grow the company's loan-to-share ratios and make the credit union of greater value to its members.

Implementation

Deliver the new skills, behaviors, and attitudes required for this transformational change via classroom and eLearning workshops. Maintain learning through training reinforcement techniques.

Results

Significant growth in credit union's loan-to-share ratio, helping grow the organization's assets 46 percent in two years. Sales and leadership training helped management and staff become more deeply committed to their positions and significantly more successful by embracing a sales-as-service culture.

Sales and leadership training and coaching from AchieveGlobal helped Mobiloil Federal Credit Union increase its loan balances more than 20 percent annually during 2009-2010 and generate one of the fastest growing credit card portfolios among credit unions in the United States.

The comprehensive initiative allowed senior management to establish a pivotal "sales-as-service" culture throughout the Beaumont, TX financial services institution. The enhanced training and coaching specifically equipped tellers and other member-facing staff to more effectively engage members. By doing so, the front-line employees are now better at asking the kinds of questions that reveal members' needs for financial products.

The effort, coupled with internal restructuring, increased Mobiloil FCU from a \$260 million credit union with 143 employees to a \$380 million provider with 120 employees — in two years.

"The training worked. That's the bottom line," says Bob Hamer, President. "We had specific goals in mind for AchieveGlobal, and they exceeded our expectations."

Re-structures for success

When he first arrived at Mobiloil FCU, Hamer faced a daunting task. Two year turnover was in excess of 130 percent; sales per member were low and flat; and an unhealthy culture left the organization disorganized and demoralized. His first initiative was to restructure, replacing various personnel — from tellers to senior managers — and to build a culture of respect, trust, and purpose.

"We spent the first year working on rebuilding trust, followed by empowering staff and managers to be true leaders," Hamer says.



Bob Hamer, President
Mobiloil Credit Union



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At the same time, Hamer engaged a well-known credit union strategic planning group to analyze Mobiloil FCU and benchmark it against the competition.

“They identified as serious concerns the lack of training and a precarious reliance on an overabundance of members for a credit union our size,” he recalls. “We had too many members not buying more than one service or product from us. It was clear we had to increase sales per member if we were to remain a viable credit union.”

In response, Hamer reached out to international performance improvement leader AchieveGlobal. He had worked with them before, when an executive vice president at his former employer, a California credit union. With AchieveGlobal and Mobiloil FCU’s Senior Management Team, he developed a training strategy to help a traditionally sales-averse organization feel comfortable with and then embrace the act of selling. They called the strategy, “Sales-as-Service.” Hamer and AchieveGlobal account executive Rachel Harner then presented the strategy and the AchieveGlobal training plan to put the strategy into action to the credit union’s Board of Directors.

“The Board of Directors was impressed, and they overwhelmingly agreed to engage AchieveGlobal,” Hamer says.

Equips staff to sell

To address the credit union staff’s long-held bias against “selling,” Hamer and Harner positioned AchieveGlobal’s training not as “sales training,” but as “sales-as-service” training. The subtle difference was powerfully effective. For instance, the new skills taught tellers and other service representatives how to ask the right questions and how to engage members in directed conversation — a nuance of service — to uncover opportunities to promote the institution’s products and services.

The training structure included classroom workshops and eLearning. To supplement the training and have it become integral to the credit union’s ongoing “sales-as-

service” culture, Mobiloil FCU brought aboard a new training coordinator, Lisa Miller, who subsequently became a certified AchieveGlobal trainer.

AchieveGlobal programs implemented include:

- *The Principles and Qualities of Genuine Leadership*[®] for all company personnel
- *Reaching for Stellar Service*[®] for all company personnel
- *Developing Others*[™] and *Giving Recognition*[™], for managers and supervisors
- *Guiding Customer Conversations*[®] for all member-facing personnel
- *Expanding Customer Relationships*[™], for all member-facing personnel

“These programs helped structure the conversations tellers would have with members so they could move from the transaction only phase into a needs identification phase and ultimately into cross-selling our products and informing members of our promotions, which they had not done before,” Miller says. “The staff grew more confident and were able to see themselves excelling within their position; they took ownership of their job title.”

Tests for effectiveness

To test attendees’ success at learning and applying their new skills and behaviors, Hamer, Miller, and others frequently surveyed members as they exited the credit union. “We learned that a few tellers still clung to their old ways. We had to remind them of the new culture, and we had to discipline a few. We also had to remind some managers to coach their staff the way they had been trained,” Hamer notes.

As change began to occur, the leadership handed out rewards recognizing tellers and others for success at broadening member discussions. These discussions resulted in the sale of additional credit union products and services based on the members’ needs. Likewise, members of the management team observed and coached “on-the-spot” interactions. Tips were shared, skills reinforced, and role play enacted to drive home concepts and practices.

“We’re continuing to help our staff guide member conversations and encouraging them to focus on member needs,” Miller notes. “For instance, one teller practicing these new skills learned a member had a son who was looking for a new car, and she suggested the member apply for a car loan with the credit union, which happened.”

Hamer said management soon learned that its new strategy and training investment were paying off. “When members started telling us we were doing a better job at listening to them and offering products they might want to consider as a result, we knew we were on the right track,” Hamer says.

Generates strong results

Hamer cites the following results from the internal restructuring and new focus on “sales -as-service” to increase per-member sales:

- **Year 1:** Earnings estimated at zero, minus special assessments (paid by all credit unions to assist struggling institutions), but increased earnings per member helped minimize losses at \$175,000.
- **Year 2:** Estimated earnings at \$1.6 million, yet even with continued assessments earned \$2.2 million.
- **Year 3:** Estimated earnings at \$3 million; on track to exceed, even with continued assessments.

“The loans outstanding are as large now as the entire institution was two years ago. When I walked in the door, the total loans were \$173 million and now they are \$256 million at a time when the industry has experienced little or no loan growth,” Hamer notes.

Other improvements include:

- Greater staff confidence
- Increased knowledge of the products and services offered by Mobiloil FCU
- Increased volume of member referrals
- Greater productivity and reduced turnover

Hamer and Miller also cite AchieveGlobal’s programs for helping the credit union learn and speak a new common, sales-oriented language. Continuing the training effort is simplified, both Hamer and Miller say, due to the excellent AchieveGlobal program materials and guides. “The AchieveGlobal course materials are excellent and very useful whether conducting an instructor-led course or doing a one-on-one activity with new associates. We want to help them embrace our “sales-as-service” culture starting their first week with our organization,” Miller adds.

About AchieveGlobal

In the 21st century, the level of human skills will determine organization success. AchieveGlobal provides exceptional development in interpersonal business skills, giving companies the workforce they need for business results. Located in over 40 countries, we offer multi-language, learning-based solutions — globally, regionally, and locally.

We understand the competition you face. Your success depends on people who have the skills to handle the challenges beyond the reach of technology. We're experts in developing these skills, and it's these skills that turn your strategies into business success in the 21st century.

These are things technology can't do. Think. Learn. Solve problems. Listen. Motivate. Explain. People with these skills have a bright future in the 21st century. AchieveGlobal prepares you for that world.



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