

Merging a Customer-Service Mindset With a Sales-Focused Approach



OVERVIEW

Cobalt Credit Union, formerly known as SAC Federal Credit Union, is Nebraska's largest locally owned credit union. Founded in 1946 and with assets now over \$1 Billion, Cobalt has achieved tremendous growth in assets as they expand branches in surrounding counties. This remarkable increase over the last several years has been attributed to their marketing & rebranding program and the cultural transformation brought about through leadership's top down ownership of the development systems deployed through Integrity Solutions®.

OBJECTIVES

- Transition member mindset from 'military only' CU, to a community based CU – available to all.
- Bring consistency to the organization, with staff members' speaking the same language.
- Increase member-centric culture through training providing a common experience at each branch.
- Incorporate training outcomes to membership and asset growth.

IMPACT

Results from a member survey conveyed Cobalt Credit Union employees as "friendly order takers". This resulted in Cobalt's goals to deploy a process to enhance employee engagement and provide consistency in offering products. ISSP helped change the focus from individual accountability and financial goals to uncovering the specific wants and needs of the member. This mindset change resulted with an immediate increase in results. Asset growth skyrocketed in the first year as members increased over 20%. (The national average growth is 1-3% annually.) And this wasn't just a short-term fix. The 12-month Loan Growth was over 17%, and 12-month Share Growth topped 14%.

Managers often said, "Our plates are full already!" In turn Cobalt's senior team asked managers to take a 'leap of faith' when Integrity Coaching® was first launched. Managers now have a process to regularly meet with their employees and develop a framework around goal development, achievement and growth. Managers find they are now able to work on more than tasks by asking developmental questions that builds the individuals and team. Manager's conveyed the investment of time in Integrity Coaching® actually created more time for them that resulted in taking their team's growth to a new level. The

Senior Team
involvement -
"We walk the
talk!"

Teamwork across a
growing CU

ASSET Growth:
+ 68% in 2-years

Members' lives changed
for the better!

processes deployed provided these managers with the mindset and the tools to be the best manager they could be to ensure their employees success.

The next challenge was to impact the remaining employees who were not in a member facing or management role. This was a critical group to embrace as Cobalt viewed their employees as members too. To make sure all Cobalt's people understood the importance of serving the internal as well as the external member Integrity Service® was deployed. As a result, Integrity Service® provided the opportunity for the vital back office professionals to participate in training and understand the value of being member centric. By integrating Integrity Service® to the back-office staff (accounting, collections, research, etc.), leadership was conveying, "You Matter!" This decision was virtually immediately validated as these functional groups expressed appreciation exclaiming, "Now we're on the same team." Everyone now understood their importance to the organization and the big picture of exceeding member's needs. Leadership said, "Without them, we couldn't do the things on the front lines to make us successful. Now the entire credit union is on the same page!"

"Once employees complete these programs, their confidence level increases tremendously. We hear that in the graduations. Employees thank us for helping make their job easier, to be more confident in the products and services they offer. Integrity Solutions® gave us the tools to do the right thing for the member."

— Sharon Stahr, Chief Human Resources Officer