corinthian
building the foundations of marketing success

Laura Illig, Speaker
Credit Union Education Topics
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After spending more than fifteen years in marketing, human resources and executive leadership positions in credit unions and banks, Laura Illig founded Corinthian Consulting, a full-service management consulting firm specializing in marketing, strategy and organizational development.

With an MBA in marketing and entrepreneurship and experience working on three continents, Laura excels at adapting cutting-edge marketing and leadership theories to the practical needs of credit unions, both large and small. Laura is a gifted and inspiring speaker, an honest but compassionate coach, and a creative and insightful leader. Last year, her work for Oregon Community Credit Union won her CUNA's highest diamond award for "best corporate branding" in the nation.

Set forth below are descriptions of many of the topics on which Laura is able to present. They are organized into the following four categories:

- Marketing presentations
- Human resources presentations
- Leadership presentations
- Strategy presentations

Unless otherwise indicated, all presentations are planned for 60 to 90 minutes. Of course, Laura is also happy to work with individual credit unions and credit union leagues to tailor these (or other) topics to their particular needs and concerns, and/or to lengthen or shorten any of the presentations.

For more information about Laura and Corinthian Consulting, please visit our website at www.corinthian-consulting.com. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with you and your organization to help build the foundations of your business success.

Marketing Presentations

Introduction to Channel Marketing

In this interactive session, participants will learn how a well-designed mix of marketing channels supports and reinforces their organization's overall strategic marketing plan. The session will focus on developing clear marketing goals, understanding target audiences, and selecting the appropriate marketing channels to achieve the credit union's objectives. We will also look at case studies including Coca-Cola and ING Financial, both of which have achieved success while utilizing very different marketing channel tactics.

Advanced Channel Marketing

In this interactive session, participants will learn how to manage their channel marketing mix given a diverse membership and multiple generations of members and potential members. The session will explore the proliferation of new-media channels – including mobile, social media and podcasting – as well as their impact on traditional forms of marketing. Participants will gain insights into how to develop a successful channel marketing plan no matter what size budget they manage. The session will include case studies illustrating successful use of channel marketing principles across a range of industries and company sizes.

Turning Adversity to Advantage: Marketing in a Down Economy

During a down economy, marketing is more important than ever if credit unions want to grow, retain members, and solidify market share. However, with tightened budgets and limited resources, marketers must be savvy and strategic about where they spend their dollars and their energy. Participants will learn how to prioritize their marketing efforts, whether and how much they should cut, and how they can most effectively maximize whatever marketing efforts they continue to pursue. In particular, the seminar will focus on the six critical success factors for marketing success during a down economic cycle.

Generational Marketing

In this engaging and informative session, participants will learn about the five living generations that make up credit unions' membership and how to effectively tailor their marketing to each of these unique groups of individuals. The session will focus on understanding the differences in buying behaviors, financial goals, customer service expectations and media usage among the different generations. Participants will leave with an enhanced ability to select the appropriate marketing channels and messages to achieve their credit union's objectives with desired target audiences. The session will include case studies and examples of successful generational marketing from a variety of national and international companies.

Marketing as Theater: Creating the Experience That Members Will Pay For

Given trends in the financial services marketplace, as well as changes in consumer psychology, credit unions can no longer depend on traditional ways of differentiating themselves, such as low rates or even individualized service. Instead, Credit unions need to rethink what services they provide and begin to envision how to provide transformational experiences. Marketing is no longer about brochures and press releases – it is about theater. In this interactive session, participants will grapple with the implications of these changes, and will learn new ways to envision credit union marketing, creative ways to focus their marketing efforts, and new tools with which to measure their success.

Branding From the Inside Out

Marketing dollars are often wasted when credit unions forget to look inward. If an organization's internal culture doesn't match its external brand promise, members and employees will sense a lack of authenticity and seek to do business elsewhere. The strongest brands – those that foster enduring member and employee loyalty – are based upon marketing messages and corporate cultures that exist in harmony with one another.

In this, Corinthian's signature presentation, participants will gain an understanding of how focusing on internal branding can maximize ROI on a credit union's external branding and marketing. The session will discuss the importance of building a strong brand from the inside-out, starting with organizational values and culture, proceeding through operations, training and member service, and finally being realized in traditional marketing communications messages.

Green Marketing

Building a green credit union, and marketing a credit union as green, requires thinking holistically about the entire business enterprise. In this session, participants will learn how to communicate their commitment to sustainability in believable and meaningful ways. In particular, participants will learn how to avoid the pitfalls of "greenwashing", how to create a sustainability marketing plan, and how to take small steps to become the "green" credit union their members expect them to be. Finally, this session will focus on concrete steps credit union marketers can use to recruit members and employees into their sustainability plan.

Building a Member-Centered Marketing Organization

Members have more choices than ever for where to take their financial business. It is therefore imperative for credit unions to deliver the benefits that members and potential members care most about. Delivering these member benefits requires that marketing become everyone's job in the credit union – not just the marketing department's.

In this session, participants will gain insight into how to build a member-centered credit union for the 21st century. We will look at ways to break down the silos between marketing and operations, how to ensure that marketing and member service become important parts of every employee's job, and why marketing can no longer be just about advertising and promotions. Participants will also leave with practical strategies for improving their marketing research, for gaining buy-in from senior management, and for measuring marketing success.

Strategic Marketing Planning

In this session, participants will gain an understanding of how to develop an effective strategic marketing plan for their credit union. The session will cover vision, mission and values, strategic differentiation, tying marketing activities to the credit union's overall strategic direction, long-term goal-setting, and development of a yearly and three-year marketing activity calendar. Attendees will learn best practices for successful marketing planning, as well as ways to involve their executive team and board in the strategic marketing planning process.

Human Resources Presentations

The Generation Gap: Managing and Leading Across Generations

At work, generational differences can affect everything, including recruiting, building teams, dealing with change, motivating, managing, and communicating. Generational tensions can impact overall firm performance, as different expectations and communication styles impact customer service, external representations of the company, and productivity. In this highly popular (and oftentimes entertaining) seminar, participants will come to understand differences between the four living generations in today's workplace, what those differences mean for how to find, engage and retain employees from different generations, and also what strengths and challenges each cohort brings. Participants will leave with strategies to more effectively manage their entire human capital portfolio across all of the generations they serve.

Becoming an Employer of Choice

In today's challenging economic climate, employers often have their pick of talented employees. However, savvy credit unions recognize that this will not always remain the case. When the economy recovers, and as Baby Boomers continue to retire, competition for talent will become even fiercer than it has been in the past.

The organizations that will win this new war for talent will be those that understand what it means, and how to become, an employer of choice for the most talented individuals. During this interactive session, participants will learn about the new skills and talents that will be most important in the coming decades, how to find people who possess those traits, and how to build a work environment that retains the most talented employees. Participants will leave with an understanding of specific ways to evaluate their existing workplaces in order to become employers of choice.

Developing a Culture of Learning

In this interactive session, participants will gain insights into the business case for creating a learning culture at their credit union. We will discuss what it means to be a learning organization, how adults learn best at work, and what the building blocks are for developing a credit union-wide learning culture. Using case studies, participants will explore different models of learning organizations in order to evaluate the model that makes the most sense for their particular credit union. Participants will leave with specific action items for building and fostering a culture of learning within their credit unions.

Cultural Competency: Skills for Leading a Diverse Workforce

In today's business environment, cultural competency is a must. Increasing numbers of employees are from different cultures, geographies and backgrounds (as are increasing numbers of members). Along with this diversity come different perspectives and different ways of approaching work, communication, leadership and member service. These differences can lead to communication breakdowns, conflicts, and even litigation – or be a source of pride and outreach. Using role plays, experiential exercises, and personal stories, participants will learn about the critical importance of cultural competency, as well as specific cultural competency skills they can carry back to their credit unions.

Deconstruction: A New Model for Managing Conflict

Conflict at work will never disappear completely. As a result, one important challenge for managers and leaders is to channel existing conflict in more productive directions. In this session, participants will explore the nature and effectiveness of existing models of conflict resolution as well as the underlying reasons why traditional models often fail to achieve business objectives. Using role plays and examples, we will uncover a new way of viewing conflict as well as tools for utilizing conflict as an engine of workplace innovation, creativity and strength.

Succession Planning for a Strong Future

According to a 2008 CUNA survey, 60% of credit union CEOs plan to retire in the next five years, along with many other key executives and managers. Having a strong succession plan helps credit unions maintain stability, keep critical operations going, and ensure strong futures. Indeed, NCUA letter 161 makes succession planning part of a credit union's CAMEL rating. However, many credit unions have not created a proactive succession plan for their organization.

In this session, participants will learn how to develop a succession plan for multiple levels of leadership, how to create talent profiles for key positions, and how to identify and develop talented staff for future assignments. We will also discuss the challenges of securing buy-in for succession planning from CEOs and senior executives, building models for a variety of retirement scenarios, and tying succession planning to key credit union metrics.

Leadership Presentations

Courage, Guts and Love: Leadership in the New Economy

Tough times require that CEOs and senior leaders draw on new, often uncomfortable, sets of skills. During such times, the analytical and decision-making skills that propelled many leaders into their positions are no longer enough. Tough times require extra in the way of communication, courage, compassion and inspiration. Participants in this session will examine the elements of successful leaders during extraordinary times. We will discuss the behaviors that allow leaders to strengthen their employees' engagement and commitment, even while paychecks may be shrinking. Participants will leave with action plans for new leadership behaviors, as well as a lot to think about. This session is particularly recommended for Directors, VPs and C-level leaders, as well as for individuals who hope to achieve such status.

They're Just Not That Into You: Becoming a Leader People Want to Follow

Why do some leaders seem to be able to build cohesive teams, keep their best employees, and achieve their business unit's goals, while others experience high turnover, poor or mediocre results, and constant drama from their employees? In this session, we will analyze the traits and behaviors of managers that matter most to employees. Participants will have a chance to examine their own leadership and management styles in order to uncover opportunities for increasing the commitment of the employees they manage, thereby improving relationships and enhancing performance.

Work and the Pursuit of Meaning

As adults, we spend the majority of our waking hours at work. Too often, and for too many, however, work is drudgery. We do it for the money, but it seems unconnected to who we are and what we care about. We – and our credit unions – lose out when we don't bring our whole selves, our passion, energy, and drive, to our jobs. This session focuses on how individuals can rediscover passion and purpose at work, thereby becoming more productive, more engaged, and more purposeful about how they contribute to their credit unions. This session is specifically designed to be highly interactive and thought-provoking.

Strategy Presentations

The Vision Thing: Developing a Shared Blueprint for the Future

Without a clear vision of where a credit union is going, it is unlikely that the organization will get there. Too often, however, credit unions wonder why they are not having "success" even when they have never developed a clear, measurable, achievable definition of what future success looks like. In this session, participants will learn how to define success for their credit union in terms that they – and their Boards – can measure. In addition, participants will learn how to develop a meaningful vision, values and mission that will guide their actions, as well as how to effectively communicate their vision to their members and employees.

Effective Strategic Planning

This session focuses on the critical elements of an effective strategic planning process, with particular attention to their application to credit unions. These elements include a clear understanding of strategy versus tactics, a yearly strategic planning team and calendar, and an understanding of the macro- and micro- issues that must be assessed for a strategic plan to be meaningful and effective. Participants will leave with a blueprint for building an effective strategic plan, as well as specific recommendations for credit union participation and timing.

Beyond the Annual Retreat: Alternatives for Saner, More Effective Planning

Historically, a great deal of strategic planning at credit unions (and other businesses) has been conducted at an annual planning retreat. Decision-makers go into a room for a few days, maybe play a few rounds of golf, and develop a plan that sits on a shelf until the next year's retreat. In today's dynamic and fast-moving environment, this method is no longer a viable way to develop effective, meaningful strategic plans. In this session, participants will learn how their credit union can develop and implement a dynamic strategic planning process. Participants will leave with the ability to build strategic plans that take into account changing circumstances, shifting priorities, and competitive realities.

More About Laura

Laura Illig is the founder and President of Corinthian Consulting LLC. Prior to founding Corinthian, Laura held executive positions in marketing and human resources at several Fortune 500 companies, including Citibank, Salomon Smith Barney, and Bausch & Lomb, as well as at one of the largest credit unions in the Pacific Northwest.

Laura specializes in helping credit unions uncover the truths that their employees and members already know. Through research and active facilitation, she helps individuals and credit unions leverage their strengths, their personalities, and their strategic assets. She does not impose change from the outside, but rather challenges organizations to grow stronger from within.

Laura is a gifted and inspiring speaker, an honest but compassionate coach, and a creative and insightful leader. After only two short years working in Oregon, she was nominated as one of the state's "Top 50 Leaders" and her work has won her a host of regional and national marketing awards, including multiple Diamond Awards from CUNA.

Laura has been a frequent lecturer at the University of Oregon's MBA program and has supervised students at both the Lundquist School of Business and the School of Law. She has been a judge at the UO's internationally renowned New Venture Championship business plan competition during each of the three years she has resided in Oregon. As well as speaking to credit union executives, Laura has presented at leadership development programs throughout the nation, including at the University of Oregon.

Laura earned her MBA from the prestigious Simon School of Business, where she won the Carol G. Simon Fellowship for "the most outstanding female student" at graduation. She did her undergraduate work at Mount Holyoke and Williams Colleges, and has earned the rank of sensei in the art of Japanese flower arrangement. Laura has been a volunteer and advocate for a variety of youth organizations and has traveled extensively throughout the world. She currently resides in beautiful Eugene, Oregon with her supportive husband and charming seven-year-old daughter.

To learn more about Laura and Corinthian Consulting – including the full range of marketing, organizational development, and strategic consulting services we provide to credit unions – please visit our website at www.corinthian-consulting.com.