



Sam Bell

Embracing Diversity

Since 1996, I have been involved as a volunteer with many charitable organizations, and one of my constant ongoing struggles across organizations has been to find a way to help members feel included and part of the organization’s family as a whole. The struggle happens for a variety of reasons: Sometimes group cliques seem to “control” how the organization functions, making tenured members reluctant to accept new members to the group, or sometimes it is just simply a struggle with change that makes new members feel unwelcomed by tenured members.

When I joined CFDD—from my first meeting—I was immediately welcomed into the CFDD family and asked to consider serving either as Vice-President or President of my local chapter. The leadership team who encouraged me to step into one of those roles had literally just met me at the very first Chapter meeting I attended. I must have made a good impression! While I had the ‘resume’ to serve in these critical leadership positions, they were unaware of my credentials and knew practically nothing about me personally.

What impressed me so much about CFDD was the habit of measuring volunteers on the merits of their accomplishments, without regard to their personal backgrounds. Our personalities, beliefs and ethics help shape us professionally, and I believe that someone should be judged as a leader of an organization based on their performance, actions and results.

We are so blessed to have such a diverse group of individuals make up our CFDD family. We come from diverse and varying backgrounds and nationalities. We have different skill levels, specialize in different industries, practice different religions and hold different political beliefs. And, we have different preferences—which include the entire spectrum of the LGBTQI+ community. My point is that the CFDD membership mirrors our country’s wonderful melting pot; and just as in the United States, all of our membership is respected for who they are as professionals and for what they bring to the CFDD table as leaders.

As an organization, I am proud that we embrace diversity and work so hard to overcome any tendency to judge. Embracing diversity empowers every member of our family to feel comfortable enough to step into leadership roles. As an organization, we need leaders to step up into whatever role they feel they can accomplish and, of course, into roles that will be fulfilling and satisfying.

DATES TO REMEMBER ...

CFDD National Award
Nominations by
March 15

CFDD National Board
Applications for Positions by
April 1

1st Quarter 2022 Membership
Reports Due by
April 10

Annual Leadership Report
Due by
April 15

Annual Chapter Statistical
Report Due by
April 15

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I challenge all members, no matter your professional background, to give thought to reaching out to your local leadership team to express your interest in assuming leadership positions. If you don't feel comfortable doing that, you have me as an ally and sounding board. My email address is: sam.bell@louisvilleadder.com, and you are ALWAYS welcome to contact me about anything that might be a concern to you or to simply ask for advice or guidance. You, our members, are the greatest asset we have, and everyone has a seat at this table. EVERYONE is EVERY ONE.

Speaking on behalf of the CFDD leadership team, we welcome and encourage you to reach for the stars and see what your potential within the CFDD leadership ranks could be. I encourage you to reach out to member colleagues by phone or by email to say hello, to check in on them, to encourage them to attend meetings, to encourage them to bring a friend or colleague, to apply for scholarships to advance their education, to attend our CFDD National Conference and/or the NACM Credit Congress, and to work on their roadmap journey toward earning a professional designation.



It's important for our continued growth for us to nurture each other as well to reach out to fellow industry members to encourage them to become part of the CFDD family.

I look forward to seeing so many of you in Louisville this June for Credit Congress. If you haven't registered yet, please consider doing so as soon as possible. Louisville is a wonderful, all welcoming city and excited to welcome the CFDD family.

Sam Bell is the 2021-2022 CFDD National Chairman. Sam is a proud member of the CFDD Louisville Chapter and is credit manager for Louisville Ladder Group LLC in Louisville, KY.



Shape the Future of CFDD

Submit your application to join the National Board of Directors by April 1



CFDD National Award Nominations Requested by March 15

Valarie Hardesty,
CCE, CICP



CFDD AT CREDIT CONGRESS

CFDD Members step into the winners' circle to lead the following sessions:

31018. Make an Impact: Engage in a Mentoring Relationship!

Speaker: Valarie Hardesty, CCE, CICP, Elevate Textiles, Inc.

31027. Cyber-Attack: A Different Perspective When It Happens to YOU!

Speaker: Brett Hanft, CBA, American International Forest Products

31036. How to Build Efficiencies in Credit

Speaker: Alaina Worden, CCE, CECO, Inc.

31045. Positive Language in Communications:

How to Evaluate the Words You Choose
Speakers: Heidi Lindgren-Boyce, CCE, Star Rentals, Inc., and Nancy Watson-Pistole, CCE, ICCE

31054. Developing Skills and Building the Right Strengths for a Smooth-Sailing Professional Voyage

Speaker: Chris Birdwell, Pioneer Balloon Co.

31063. Find the Keys to Unlock Your Leadership Superpower

Discussion Leaders: Mary Moore, CBA; Marlene Groh, CCE, ICCE; Wendy Mode, CCE, CICP; Ellen Wodiuk, CCE, ICCE; Val Hardesty, CCE, CICP; Brett Hanft, CBA; and Sheila Roames, CCE

31072. The Dynamic Duo: Credit & Sales—A Look at Best Practices in the Relationship

Speakers: Chris Birdwell, Pioneer Balloon Co., and Brett Hanft, CBA, American International Forest Products

31081. Excel: Tips and Tricks

Speaker: Marlene Groh, CCE, ICCE, CE Southeast

NACM'S 126TH

**CREDIT
CONGRESS
EXPO**

JUNE 5-8, 2022

Louisville, KY



Brett Hanft, CBA



Chris Birdwell



Heidi Lindgren-Boyce, CCE



Wendy Mode, CCE, CICP



Alaina Worden, CCE



Nancy Watson-Pistole, CCE, ICCE



Mary Moore, CBA



Ellen Wodiuk, CCE, ICCE



Marlene Groh, CCE, ICCE



Sheila Roames, CCE

Register now!

RATES

NACM Members*	\$1,025
Non-Members*	\$1,175
First-time Attendee—Come with a Colleague**	\$126
CFDD Annual Awards Luncheon & Business Meeting	\$75

HOTEL

West Tower Deluxe Room	\$179, plus applicable taxes
East Tower Executive Suite	\$189, plus applicable taxes

* **Important note:** These fees apply to all delegates and spouses/guests staying at our official conference hotel, The Galt House Hotel, June 5-8, 2022. A Facilities Usage Fee of \$250 applies to anyone not staying at this hotel during the conference. (This doesn't apply to those who permanently reside in Louisville, KY.)

** **First-time Attendee—Come with a Colleague:** This special offer is for credit practitioners who have never attended Credit Congress before and who will attend with a member or non-member full delegate from the same company. Both delegates must have an individual room reservation at The Galt House Hotel during the conference. NACM will verify room reservations to ensure eligibility. This offer is not valid with the Team, Service Provider or Guest rates and cannot be combined with other offers, discounts or scholarships. Only one first-time attendee registration is permitted per each full delegate registration. Should the full delegate cancel, the first-time attendee will replace the full delegate registration at that rate. Should the first-time attendee cancel, the \$126 registration fee is non-refundable.

Perspectives from CFDD's Past National Leaders

A Nostalgic Walk Down Mentor Lane

Some of you may know that I have been around NACM and CFDD for quite a few years. I have served in most leadership positions at the local CFDD level, I have been involved in NACM locally and I worked my way up to serve as the National Chairman of CFDD. I was elected to serve on the NACM National Board as the CFDD Representative as well. I also have had the opportunity to advance in my career with Southern Carlson where I now serve as the Director of Credit. Along the way, I have had many, many great mentors constantly pushing me.

Jeffrey O'Banion, CCE, ICCE, died suddenly in 2013. Jeff was one heck of a guy, and I am very proud to say he was also a great friend of mine. Jeff encouraged me along the way and always had a positive attitude. He built up my confidence. If you were fortunate enough to have known him, you understand. We had FUN! Jeff was more like the brother I never had; and once in a while, he would lecture me (teasing me, I think). He was one of the most generous people with his time and money as long as he felt it was a great investment. He would recommend things to me that I should do to build my career, just as a Mentor should do.

Recently B. Herbert Dewey, CCE, passed away. "Herb" was an Omaha native and very involved locally with NACM and CFDD. I can honestly say that Herb would drive us crazy with all of his questions and would keep us for hours after a meeting ended. I will say that he was a teacher, always assisting others who were pursuing a profession designation. I shared a few bottles of great wine with Herb: He loved wine and had great taste! Herb would push me to do my best and always compliment any accomplishment. He was a very smart man and always willing to share that knowledge.

Many of you know Sharon Ramsier Foster—Sharon was a CFDD National Chairman many years ago. When I first joined CFDD, I lived in Lincoln; Sharon would call me every month to tell me she was going to pick me up to go to a meeting in Omaha. I was young and didn't know how to tell her no! We shared a room at many conferences; and at that time, we would attend several a year. Sharon taught me so much about professionalism and the workings of both NACM and CFDD. She encouraged me to get involved and move up the chairs. Sharon has always been a great friend. I recently contacted her to tell her about Herb passing, and she informed me that her health is deteriorating.

Through CFDD, I had the opportunity to meet Marilyn Daugherty. While I did not know her personally, I knew what she stood for and admired her commitment to our organization.



Mary Moore, CBA
2008-2009
CFDD National Chair

CFDD AT CREDIT CONGRESS


**CFDD National Board of
Directors Meeting**
Tuesday, June 7
10:45am – 1:45pm ET

**CFDD Annual
Awards Luncheon &
Business Meeting**
Wednesday, June 8
12 noon to 2pm

We should aspire to be like the great mentors and friends I've fondly remembered while writing this article. The reason I bring up these great people is that CFDD is more like a family—a family of mentors and coaches. I know you have heard this over and over, but it truly is. Cherish the mentors you have and take their advice. I may have missed someone; and if I did, I am sorry. Take the time to get to know people, truly get to know them.

I can sit back and think about all the great times we have shared. I can smile and laugh out loud. I truly hope that you do not miss this opportunity. If I can inspire you to help others even a fraction of what my friends and mentors have done for me, I will be happy. The education that NACM and CFDD bring is priceless; however, it is the mentoring and friendships that truly stay with you. I promise if you get involved and stay involved you will reap the rewards.

Mary Moore, CBA, is the Director of Credit Services at SouthernCarlson in Omaha, Nebraska. She serves as the Director representing the Omaha Lincoln Chapter on the CFDD National Board of Directors. Mary served as the Chairman of the CFDD National Board from 2008 to 2009.



**Chapter Annual
Statistical Reports
Are Due by April 15**

**1st Quarter
MEMBERSHIP**
Reports Due by
April 10



**The CFDD National
Conference will be held
September 8 – 9, 2022 at
the Sheraton Oklahoma
City Downtown Hotel**

**CFDD
NATIONAL
CONFERENCE**

SEPT. 8-9, 2022 • OKLAHOMA CITY



Bob Karau

Credit and the Customer Experience – Part One

First Steps to Success: Opportunities

CFDD has been an invaluable asset in my credit career. Besides the benefits of education, professional development, leadership, mentoring and educational scholarships, the ability to network with other credit professionals throughout the nation has helped me grow and expand my knowledge.

As credit professionals, we realize the need to provide our customers with premier and proactive customer service in our quest to provide the best customer experience. Great customer service is not always easy to deliver, but it has a huge impact on an organization’s success. This includes all aspects of the customer relationship, including payments.

What does customer experience really mean? According to *Harvard Business Review*, customer experience is defined as “the cumulative impact of your customer’s end-to-end journey with you, the multiple touchpoints over time which create a true competitive advantage to the companies that get it right.”

Many business studies have shown that the first steps in any customer relationship are pivotal to a good customer experience. Gartner, Inc. (NYSE: IT) is the world’s largest information technology research and advisory company. According to an expansive Gartner study performed in 2021, “89% of North American companies surveyed now expect to compete mostly on the basis of customer experience.”

I realize that different companies and markets may have different needs and ways of interacting with the customer. And while one size does not fit all, hopefully you can find some processes, practices and procedures that you can use to positively impact the customer experience and elicit timely customer payments. From whatever perspective you take, a customer with an overdue balance is a customer-experience issue.

Consider the following four areas of opportunity as areas to improve and enhance the customer experience as well as increase the likelihood of timely customer payment. Look for areas where you can improve your processes, practices and procedures to elicit better payment performance from your customers. In Part Two of this article, I will offer some ways I have found to capitalize on these opportunities.

Account Onboarding

“Know your customer” is a mantra that credit and sales professionals embrace. The information you obtain from your customer is critical to a positive experience. Knowing your customer’s expectations; how the customer is set up in your system; and how your products were marketed, delivered, billed and used are all areas



Publicize Your Virtual Meetings Nationwide

CFDD Chapters wishing to publicize their virtual meetings nationwide should email details to Vice Chairman - Education, Programs & Chairman Elect Chris Birdwell at chrisb@pioneerballoon.com. Chris will share the program information with all Chapter Presidents.



LEARN MORE

Unlimited Webinars for One Year

Purchase an **NACM-National or FCIB unlimited webinar package** for anyone in your company to participate in unlimited live webinars for 12 months. The webinars covered by the unlimited webinar package include those live webinars offered by NACM-National, STS/MLBS and FCIB.

(Digital Replay Webinars not included.)

Once your unlimited webinar package is paid for, click on the registration button for any webinar and sign up.

LISTEN & LEARN

that can affect the client experience and impact the payment process. Are you asking the right questions and are you getting the correct answers from your customers? Do you know who needs to approve your invoices on the customer side? Should the customer be e-billed? Who is your collection contact? What can you include in the onboarding process that would not only improve the customer experience but also increase the probabilities of prompt payment? These are areas where you can impact both the customer experience and payment.

Welcome Practices

How does your company and your department welcome a new customer and introduce them to your practices, processes and procedures? With any new customer, there are certain expectations on the vendor and the customer side. Are you communicating with your customer to make sure that you have a mutual understanding on all business practices including the order-to-cash process? Would it impact your customer relationship if the first call from credit and collections was a positive, customer-focused call instead of a request for payment?

The First Invoice(s)

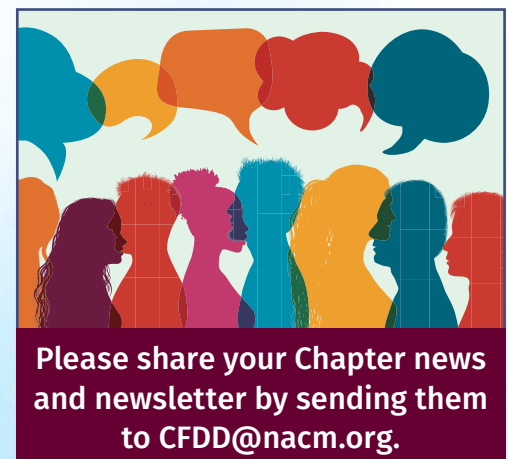
Do you have a practice of calling your customer upon delivery of your first invoice and offering to walk through it to answer any questions? Does your invoice contain everything your customer needs to process it for payment? Is the pricing accurate and was delivery of the product up to the specifications of your customer? It is better to learn the answers to these questions at the time the customer is first billed rather than waiting for a collection call to discover any problems. Proactive credit/customer service communications are essential in enhancing customer service and helping to assure timely payment of the invoice(s).

First Payment Default

Dun & Bradstreet, the FDIC and the Office of the Comptroller of Currency have all conducted studies on first payment defaults in consumer and commercial transactions. How and when you respond to a first payment default can be critical in consumer or commercial transactions. According to Dun & Bradstreet, an immediate follow up to a first payment default may increase the probability of more timely future payments in over 60% of B2B first payment default occurrences. Does your company have a policy on how to handle first payment defaults? You only have one chance to get this right. Many business studies have shown that the first steps in any customer relationship are pivotal to a superior customer experience and more prompt payment. What are your practices, processes and procedures to capitalize on this and not only improve the client experience but improve your company's bottom line?

In Part Two of this article, we will discuss specific strategies and tactics that can help your company to not only elevate the customer experience but also enhance customer payment performance. Stay tuned for *Credit and The Customer Experience - Part Two: First Steps to Success*.

Bob Karau serves on CFDD's National Board representing the Minneapolis St. Paul Chapter. Bob Karau manages Credit & Collections for Merchant & Gould P.C. in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



Recent Chapter Program Topics

Elevating the Credit Profession Through Knowledge



IDENTITY CRISIS: Risks & Best Practices for Doing Business with Affiliated and Newly Acquired Entities

This program examines the risks and best practices that credit departments should follow when doing business with customers that were recently acquired by another company or are part of a complex corporate structure including multiple affiliated companies. The speakers will review ways that credit stay on top of any changes to the legal name of a customer, the customer's organizational, corporate, and capital structure, and/or the customer's relationships with affiliated entities—including by discussing favorable enforceable terms and conditions that address these risks, and collection tools such as obtaining cross corporate guarantees. The program will include actual case studies.

Speakers: Bruce Nathan, Esq., and Andrew Behlmann, Esq., Partners, Lowenstein Sandler LLP



Strategies for Success: Doing More with Less

Highlights from this program include:

- Why the “More with Less” Philosophy
 - People retire and/or change jobs
 - Hiring freezes
 - Furloughs and/or layoffs
- Strategies for Doing More with Less
 - Understand the priorities
 - What does being a team player mean?
 - What's the best way I can be resourceful?
 - How to maintain work/life balance and why it's important
- In conclusion
 - Time management is a must
 - Find proactive strategies and solutions
 - Use a Support System
 - Don't forget to take care of YOU!

Speaker: Diana Crowe, Regional Director, NACM Southwest



Excel Tips & Tricks

Learn Excel tips and tricks for the reports you use every day. Learn about the shortcut keys that make it easier to perform functions such as vlookups, macros, pivot tables and conditional formatting.

Speaker: Marlene Groh, CCE, ICCE, Regional Credit Manager Southeast, MidSouth and Mid-Atlantic, CE Southeast

Best Practices: Cultivating a Successful Relationship with Your Sales Department

This informative 'best practices' session focuses on cultivating a successful relationship between your Credit and Sales departments. This program will dive into a detailed discussion about how this relationship plays a critical role in the overall success of your business. Sales, arguably, are the 'life blood' of a business while credit professionals always respond by saying 'cash is king' in any business! Key strategic discussion points include evaluating, formulating efficiencies, communicating, and collaborating with your sales team to achieve the greatest success from this 'Dynamic Duo.' This is a program you don't want to miss!

Speakers: Chris Birdwell, Credit Strategies Manager, Pioneer Balloon Co., and Brett Hanft, CBA, Credit Manager, American International Forest Products LLC

Cut the Clutter

This session will cover:

- Why in the world is this here?
- Why is this here ... (personal space).
- Motivation (moving the elephant in the room).
- Actual tips for clearing the clutter!
- Mantras for a fast-paced life

Speaker: Lisa Burns, CBF, CICP, Territory Credit Manager, Excel Industries, Inc.



Career Matchmaking

Have you fallen out of love with your current job? In the mood for a change of scenery, or a new career? Join CFDD Wichita for a lunch & learn, panel-style discussion with experts from The Arnold Group. Topics covered will include résumé and interview tips, best practices for changing jobs, and much more!

Speakers: Kristy Hawkins, Clinton Chlumsky, Dakota Longpine, The Arnold Group, a Human Resource Company



Maximizing Your Gratitude Attitude

'That Gratitude Guy' has the uncanny ability to illustrate and communicate the immense benefits of adopting an 'attitude of gratitude.' He reveals how a gratitude mindset can completely shift one's view of life to one that focuses on their blessings and abundance.

This is NOT your typical robotic presentation with tons of Power Point slides, instead, this is a very interactive, humorous, and fun, talk that includes high energy, exercises, and numerous takeaways to use in your everyday life. By embracing the incredible power of gratitude, and by using simple exercises to break old habits and beliefs, attendees can re-form and re-focus their lives with much higher expectations.

Learning Objectives

- Learning how gratitude can overcome any life-changing event.
- Exercises to keep you moving towards a more positive mindset.
- The benefits of using a daily gratitude journal.
- Increased happiness, a better attitude, and higher self-esteem.
- Be prepared to look at your life differently.
- Gratitude turns what you have into enough.

Speaker: David George Brooke



HR in a COVID World

How has the Pandemic changed the role of HR?

- Returning to Work
- 10 Questions to be prepared to answer in the HR Pandemic Plan
- The CDC points users searching for guidance for Business and Employers responding to COVID to visit this website
- Identify what work can be done remotely for your business and what roles make sense for remote work
- Security should be increased
- What employees are saying
- The key to succeeding is to be as prepared as possible and to communicate clearly with your team

Speaker: Rachel E. Rogers, Esq., Hannah Sheridan & Cochran, LLP



Yvonne Prinslow, CCE

It's a Great Time to be a CFDD Member!

Of course, it's always a good time to be a member of CFDD—for the education, professional development, mentoring, leadership, scholarship opportunities, networking and camaraderie. Since the pandemic forced us to stop meeting in person and move to meeting virtually via Zoom, it has created some unforeseen opportunities.

I know the Portland Chapter had been toying with the idea of meeting virtually pre-pandemic, but they weren't quite sure about the logistics and if they would gain attendance or lose attendance if meetings were held virtually. Well, now all of their meetings are held virtually, as are the meetings of most other Chapters, which ended up creating the opportunity: Most, if not all, Chapters have opened their meetings to ALL CFDD members.

This gives us multiple opportunities to attend various Chapter meetings at various times with a variety of topics and speakers! I hope some of you have taken the opportunity to attend another Chapter's meeting; and if not, that you may in the future. If you are not seeing the other Chapter's meeting invitations, please reach out to your local Chapter President to ask.

I hope to see you in a virtual meeting!

Yvonne Prinslow, CCE, currently serves as the Director representing Direct Members on the CFDD National Board of Directors. Yvonne is Assistant Credit Manager at Hampton Lumber in Portland, Oregon.

Keep the CMI Accurate!

As we monitor today’s turbulent business environment, we need your participation to allow NACM’s CMI to continue to be an accurate, forward-looking, leading economic indicator. Commercial credit is the lifeblood of all economies as companies rely on credit to purchase everything from raw materials, inventory, and equipment to services—or just about everything that sustains the business economy. Virtually every business transaction that involves another business depends on credit.

The few minutes you invest to answer the CMI’s 12 questions, indicating if something is better, the same or worse than the month before, the more accurate the reading.



- Earn 0.1 roadmap points each month
- Receive email alerts when survey opens
- All responses confidential

SURVEY OPENS	SURVEY CLOSES
Mon., March 7	Fri., March 11
Mon., April 4	Fri., April 8
Mon., May 9	Fri., May 13

Read more about the CMI [here](#).

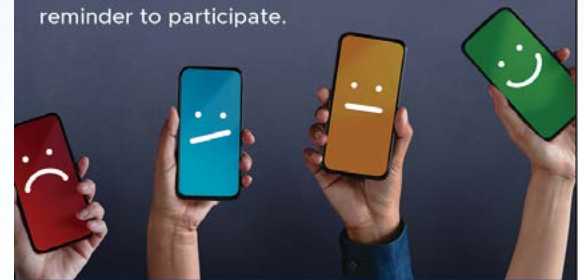
You're the Expert!



When you participate in the Credit Managers' Index, you are contributing to a leading economic indicator.

It only takes a minute—no math is involved. Just indicate if something is better, the same or worse than the month before.

Visit www.nacm.org/cmi to sign up for our monthly email reminder to participate.



The **Mission** of the NACM Credit and Financial Development Division is to develop tomorrow’s business leaders through core offerings.



Our **Vision** is to be a leading provider of professional development opportunities through learning, coaching, networking and individual enrichment.