



Craig Fraley

## **Persuasive message, magical messenger**

**Creating new relationships is easy when you have a creative approach.**



*Alex McVeigh*

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“It’s not hard to convince people when you’ve got the best product around,” says Craig Fraley, director of business development at Clark County Credit Union in Las Vegas. “What makes us better is the credit union philosophy: We’re owned by members, and at the end of each year, that’s where the profit goes.”

Fraley puts his creativity to work every day at the credit union. A former Elvis impersonator and still-practicing magician, he started as a teller and worked his way to the top of the sales team. “The great part is how creative this position is. I get to reinvent my job every day,” he says.





Every year, Fraley speaks to audiences at dozens of benefits fairs and orientations. He addressed 18 events in 2014, 30 in 2015, 86 in 2016, and he just scheduled his 100th event of this year.

His presentation often convinces people to join the \$684 million asset credit union—usually 80% or more of the attendees end up joining. One presentation reached a 110% join rate when someone who heard the presentation from the next room tracked him down afterward to become a member.

One of Fraley's favorite analogies is that of a football stadium. He tells his audiences: Imagine if, in one half, all the concession money goes to the owner of the stadium. And in the other half, all that money is divided among the audience at the end of the game.

“What would you choose?” he asks the crowd, and the results make it abundantly clear.

Fraley says the key to his success has been forming relationships. He makes quarterly stops to offices within Clark County's field of membership to touch base with old contacts and meet new ones.

‘People hate being sold, but they don't mind being informed.’

Fraley finds cold-calling and other techniques to build relationships challenging and fun, partly because he enjoys meeting new people, and partly because he's not just a salesman. “People hate being sold, something, but they don't mind being informed,” he says. “My job is to inform them that they have a better option than a bank. And it's a credit union.

“My job is the same today as it was 16 years ago,” he adds, “and it will be the same for whoever is doing it 25 years from now—the acquisition of new members.”



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