

Smart  
Living

  
**Education First**  
— FEDERAL CREDIT UNION —

November 2019

Volume Issue • November 2020

### **In This Issue:**

- **Gear Up for the Holidays!**
- **How to Stand Out From Big Businesses**  
Set yourself apart with these easy tips
- **Need to Grab a Last-Minute Holiday Gift?**



Smart  
Living

November 2019

**Education First**  
— FEDERAL CREDIT UNION —

## Gear Up for the Holidays!

- **Polar Express Holiday Loan**: Education First FCU takes on the role as Santa's little helpers to ensure you and your family celebrate Christmas in style!
- **5x Rewards for Visa Gold Card Holders**: It is time to reward yourself this Holiday season with 5x Rewards points.
- **Skip A Pay**: Put some extra green in your wallet by scheduling a Skip A Pay for your December or January loan payment.
- **November to Remember Sales Event**: Get \$400 cash back on a purchase of any new or used auto at Sour Lake Motor Company when financed with Education First FCU, PLUS lower than low rates on select autos.

We will continue to keep our members informed of branch updates and encourage you to like us on Facebook and visit our website for live updates.

---

Education First Federal Credit Union • 409.898.3770 • <https://www.educationfirstfcu.org/>

## How to Stand Out From Big Businesses

### Set yourself apart with these easy tips

Right now, starting a business has never been easier, but competing with corporate megaliths has never been harder. However, owning a small company gives you numerous opportunities to stand out from larger competitors and start down the road to success. Here are a few of the best and most effective ways to set your business apart.

#### Provide personalized customer service

While massive companies have the advantage of widespread exposure and a huge number of employees available around the clock, you can benefit from direct communication with your customers. According to Forbes' Larry Myler, "around 75% of customers state that they consider customer service a true test of a company's competence." When you're running a smaller operation, you're uniquely positioned to provide long-standing patrons with far more than an automated service hotline and convert first-timers into loyal customers.

#### Get involved in your community

If you're hoping for people to invest their time and money in your business, it may be wise to invest in them as well. Consider sponsoring local events, donating to causes in the area and offering classes or services based on the product you sell. Consumers in the area will begin to associate your company with positive change and recognize that you're an organization that cares, not just one trying to make some quick money. Myler also suggests that well-planned donations and sponsorships can keep you in the news as well as the forefront of people's minds.

#### Understand your market

Strategy+Business' Isaac Krakovsky states that a company that knows who it's selling to can customize its marketing efforts to that demographic. Whereas an enormous online retailer needs to cater to as broad an audience as possible, you can dial in on what your customers want, how they think and the best way to communicate with them. As a result, you'll build a personal connection and develop a higher sense of loyalty.

#### Never stop innovating

The single best way to separate yourself from other businesses — both big and small — is to realize that nothing is set in stone. If you're still developing your company, try to come up with a product or idea that nobody else out there is doing. Even when you're running an established operation, never be afraid to shake things up internally, adopting more efficient management and delivery processes, looking for ways to improve the customer experience and embracing emerging technology.

Lighter Capital's Rachael Pilcher also suggests that keeping an eye on your competitors' practices can give you a major leg up. She says, "startup businesses can get caught up in the excitement and pressure of their new venture and forget that they have competition. Realistically — a lot of competition. This could be from other entrepreneurs building similar solutions, or from well-established companies that have a head start. Looking at what your competitors are doing well (and what they're doing badly) can help you figure out new ideas for your own company and competitive differentiation."

There's never a guarantee of success, but if you follow these tips, you'll have a great chance to stand out in an incredibly crowded market.



Smart  
Living



Education First  
— FEDERAL CREDIT UNION —

November 2019

## Need to Grab a Last-Minute Holiday Gift?

Stop by a branch to pick up one of our Visa Gift Cards! Load up to \$1,000 with only a \$2.50 activation fee. Choose from various holiday designs.

Education First Federal Credit Union • 409.898.3770 • <https://www.educationfirstfcu.org/>

