



Sandra Lawson



Years Experience: 18 years Newspaper Credit

How did you get your start in credit?

I started at the paper while attending CSU, Sacramento, working in our circulation department. In '87 I moved to Finance and held several positions there. While out on maternity leave in '96, I was informed that when I returned to work my position would be a credit collector. I almost chose to not return to the Bee because I did not believe my personality and those needed for a successful collector were compatible. I was wrong and I'm very thankful that I did not choose a different career path.

Things I like about the job?

I have two very successful collectors and I enjoy working with them to achieve win-win situations when we have an account that has experienced some difficulty. When working through payment plans that achieve our goal of getting paid while keeping the advertiser in the paper is the greatest sense of satisfaction. While not a natural risk taker, I enjoy when I have taken a risk on an account and they perform well. It demonstrates that sometimes a risk is a good decision. I also enjoy the people I have had the opportunity to meet and the exchange of common frustrations or new ideas.

Person(s) who influenced me the most:

In '98, while out on maternity leave with my second child, I was approached by Sally Burnham (The Sacramento Bee) and Bob Thomas (The Fresno Bee) about a credit manager position with NNN (Newspaper National Network). While having been at the paper over 12 years at that time, and having no intention of leaving, the opportunity was too great to pass up. Working for NNN for a year expanded my sphere of colleagues – got me started in AMCEA and gave me a greater appreciation for the whole newspaper collection process. When I returned to the paper in 2000, Bob Thomas was extremely influential in honing those collection skills and I appreciate all the support he provided. I also want to extend a huge thanks to Dwight Hastings (Finance Director of The Sacramento Bee), who taught me the value of “you get more flies with honey” and continually supporting me throughout my newspaper career.

TV Show – All Time:

That's actually a tough one, but there is a common theme - murder mystery. I think it began with Perry Mason and the Sunday night series of McMillan & Wife, McCloud and Columbo. Today, it is more CSI, Criminal Minds and Bones.

Movie:

National Treasure

Food:

Anything my husband (David) wants to cook!

Vacation Spots:

Having two girls (Jennifer 18 and Danielle 15) who play competitive soccer, our vacation is usually a soccer field somewhere. Looking forward to checking out new “vacation” spots when they are in college.

Leisure Activity:

Sports Photography. You can always find me with my zoom lens and monopod at a soccer field or football field taking pics of the athletes. I'm sure Facebook loves me for my album uploads.