

SEVEN MYTHS

THAT LIMIT YOUR INCOME AND HOW TO CHANGE THAT

By

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This book is arguably more relevant today, than it was when it was written. The majority of the concepts and information in this book are timeless, yet times have clearly changed.

An individual, today, has a larger platform, a wider reaching voice and an overall greater scope of possibility thanks to social media most could have anticipated in early 2006 when this book was first written. Yet, as much as the world has transformed, as much as we all have benefited from advances in technology (many would argue that as a direct consequence of being so connected) that we have never before been so disconnected. The skillsets and mindsets required to create authentic face to face, meaningful communication have never been more indispensable for your success than they are today. What we are hired to do, to put it simply, is produce results. As leaders, trainers and coaches, we cannot produce results for others, but rather through them. Therefore, influence: the ability to positively affect the character development, and behavior, of someone is the pre-eminent skillset we must possess. This is how we lead others to make the decisions that allow them to create what they want in their lives. As coaches, we only get to have what we want by developing others, encouraging them to achieve what they want.

So, although technology has created a level of interconnectivity that has made following a few of the recommendations in this book easier and far more sophisticated, it has also made the interpersonal skills more critical, perhaps even more effective, than when I first sat down to write this book.

Since then, the content in this book has evolved into some of the leading coaching processes utilized by some of the foremost trainers, industry leaders, club chains, and certifications in the world. I have received correspondence from, as well as, have had many personal conversations with some of these individuals, communicating to me how useful much of the content on these pages have been to them in the development of their highly successful businesses. It is because of these conversations, I chose to make this book widely available to individuals committed to leading others to the results that truly matter in their lives.

I hope you get a lot out of it; take what resonates with you, leave what doesn't. Use this book as a resource to not only create and keep a clientele, but to help others create a future that inspires them, as well as a level of engagement that facilitates the actions necessary to one day bring their future vision into their current reality. This is the hallmark of leadership.

Thank you,

Robert Cappuccio

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Introduction

I know two things about you.

First, the fact that you're taking the time to read this means you want more from your career. Either as a result of aspiration or frustration, you want to grow beyond where you are today. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "***People wish to be settled; only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them.***" Translation, there is little hope for the *satisfied individual*. When an individual fails to pursue a life of excellence by design, he or she will fall into entropy by default. In today's industry (and more so in tomorrow's) not one of us can expect to put it in first gear for a second and still remain in the race. If we are to survive, let alone thrive, in this industry within the next 24 months we must be hell bent on massive contribution, as well as massive transformation!

Second, your innate talents and creativity, combined with the knowledge, skills and experience you've acquired so far, positions you to create a significant point of differentiation in the contribution you are capable of making to your clients, facility and the fitness industry every day. These two factors combined mean that you have the *potential* to exploit the enormous opportunity that is available to you.

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If we will do what is necessary to develop ourselves as the best choice for our clients among seemingly endless choices available to them; we can pave our own road to success in the near future. As job security continues to vanish from our society, the only security that remains is the ability to position ourselves as the preeminent option for our clients, employers and business partners.

The late 1990's was considered by many to be the golden age of opportunity. Yet, great opportunity often presents great challenges. In January 1998, AT&T announced the lay off of 20,000 of its employees. A few months earlier, the previous November, Kodak reduced its workforce by 11 percent, which meant 10,000 holiday layoffs instead of bonuses; with another 6,000 to follow in the following months. GM had eliminated 82,000 jobs from 1991-1998! Then there was Citicorp 7,500...Sunbeam 6000...Fruit of the Loom 3,000... and so on. The promise of getting an education, a good job, and a secure future if you kept your nose clean was a deception. The reality was (and is) that the average person could expect to hold 10-12 different jobs and 5-6 different careers within their lifetime. –(Burke, H. Who Stole the American Dream? INTI Publishing, 1998)

Despite the significant challenges, the late 1990's were prosperous, and the majority of us greeted the 21st century with optimism (aside from the looming possibility of Y2K). Arguably, Life was pretty good. No body could have predicted the events that would follow within the next 2years. Time Magazine, in the September 2002 edition, declared that "It may someday be said that the 21st century began on

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September 11, 2001..." If our sense of security (and reality) had drifted away from us prior to the new millennium, it wasn't even visible on the horizon. What was clearly visible however, was the recession. However, in the presence of the recession, the International Health Racquet and Sports Association (IHRSA) 2003 trend report revealed that health club memberships grew from 33.8 million in 2001, to 36.3 million in 2002. The number of health clubs in operation increased by nearly 2,500 during that same period. Industry expert Thomas Plummer back in 2003 stated in Club Business International magazine that, *"there's never been a better time to be involved in the fitness industry..."* Yet in the aftermath of events that no one could have predicted, Rick Caro asserts that 2009 was the worst financial year in the history of the Health and Fitness Industry. For average professionals things are going to get scary. Yet in the worst financial year in the history of our industry we also witnessed the proliferation of high-end personal training studios in addition to a rise in fee based group programs. For top fitness professionals this may well be a time of opportunity.

What's the cause of all this impending opportunity, in an age where many other industries are clearly struggling? Even your average CEO is only able to hold on to their position for about a third of the time they could a decade ago. There are many factors that could be affecting the increase in exercise participation. (1) The increase in the number of health clubs and studios makes exercise more accessible and convenient. (2) The increase incidence of lifestyle related chronic diseases. (3) Greater awareness about the necessity of exercise. For

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example, the *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity*, released in late 2001. (4) The aging baby boomers, seeking to enhance their quality of life. Irrespective of the cause, the effect of this trend is that health club memberships, personal training, group exercise, etc. are shifting from being a luxury, dependent on discretionary income. Exercise is quickly becoming a necessity. With that shift, comes great opportunity. Accordingly, that means a great deal more responsibility.

What Our Clients Are Up Against

According to the IHRSA Global Report, the average age of our client is 37 years old. The August 17th, 2003 edition of the Wall Street Journal stated that the average retirement age is steadily increasing. Based on a study published in the March/April 2003 Financial Analysts Journal, the ratio of working age people to retirement age people will be 2.7 to 1, by the year 2035. That means, if we are to continue to drive the economy, we will need a larger workforce. This coupled with the fact that pension plans will not be sufficient to support individuals after retirement, means there will be an elevated necessity for individuals to retire later in life. Robert Arnott, co-researcher in the study, predicts that it's inevitable that the retirement age will climb to 72-73 years of age, within the next 30 years. That may seem far off, but concerning our clients, who's average age is 37, this change will significantly effect them.

With the decrease in job security, the greatest certainty for the future is in keeping yourself decidedly employable. The future belongs to the talented. More than that, to the individuals who can employ their

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talents most effectively toward the growth of their business or the company they work for. Ed Michaels, Helen Handfield-Jones and Beth Axelrod of McKinsey & Co. assert that even with the slow-down of the economy, there's a war for talent. And it's far from over. The growing propensity of people to frequently switch jobs, the irreversible growth of the information age and increasingly arduous competition, make talent a scarce resource. What that means for our clients is, they will have to demonstrate superior performance, work harder, longer and throughout a greater duration of their life.

However, in actuality the physical and mental capacity to perform at a higher level is decreasing steadily in our society. The American Journal of Health Behavior published a study conducted in Dallas Texas, comparing health care costs of normal weight employees to those who are obese. Obese employees were found to cost their company five times that of normal weight employees annually. Employees who were classified as overweight cost four times as much comparatively. The Washington Business Group on Health determined that employers lose \$12 Billion each year on health care costs and employee absenteeism due to overweight and obese employees. As a result, more companies are building health clubs within their corporate head quarters and sponsoring Weight Watchers Programs. This is not only in an attempt to decrease health care costs, but to increase productivity as well.

If our clients are working in an environment, where only the most talented survive, exercise has many other benefits aside from decreasing obesity and risk of chronic diseases. Energy, self

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confidence and high mental acuity, are all directly related to top performance. Recently, research has revealed that exercise not only decreases mental decline, but actually increases the number of connections between neurons as well as may enhance regeneration of brain cells.

- ❖ Kramer, A.F. Physical Activity Insures Brain Cells; Club Business International. May 2003
- ❖ Gamon, D. Ph.D., Bragdon. A.D. Building Mental Muscle; Conditioning Exercises for the Six Intelligence Zones. Walker Publishing Co. 2003. pp. 288

The bottom line is, we are not only in a position to assist our clients in the achievement of greater health, self-esteem and quality of life, but are increasingly becoming a resource essential to the security of multiple aspects of their future. That means that our services are becoming a necessity rather than a luxury based on discretionary income. Rapid changes are coming to our industry.

However, many trainers are going to find themselves creatures of their circumstances, while top performers will get to be creators of their circumstances. This is because greater opportunity will increasingly be accompanied by the entrance of highly qualified, highly motivated professionals into our industry, as evidenced by the American College of Sports Medicines trends for 2012. So while there will be greater opportunity, there will also be much higher standards of performance. Some fitness professionals will be victims of these increasingly greater requisites, while others will be victors! The difference between the two

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is mostly contained within their beliefs. We act on what we believe to be true. The problem is that many of the things that we believe to be true are actually lies. We once believed that the world was flat, until Christopher Columbus proved us wrong. We believed without question that the Earth was at the center of our solar system. Anyone could clearly see that the celestial bodies in the heavens orbited the Earth! That is until Copernicus and Later Galileo proved us wrong. Even then Galileo was not only disbelieved but persecuted and driven into isolation during his last years. We believed that it was physiologically impossible to run a four minute mile; until Roger Bannister broke the four-minute-mile barrier in 1954.

What we don't know *can* hurt us. Even more dangerous to our future is what we know, that just isn't true. There are seven myths that we will explore in this text. Then, I will discuss the reality of that myth and the solutions, skills and mindsets that correspond with that reality. If you apply the tools, insights and practices in this book it will make a dramatic impact on your level of effectiveness within 30-days. Providing you tenaciously apply the resources in this book continually, until you develop competency in each area. I want to acknowledge the personal accountability you have taken for your future so far. Most professionals working today will not take the time to invest effort into their personal development. But because you are willing to do what they will not, you can have the future they can't. Congratulations and thank you for letting me take the journey with you.

Myth #1:

I'm a trainer not a sales person.

Reality:

This one belief by itself can dramatically limit your income permanently. The reality is that everyone in life sells! If you've ever gone on a date before, you made a sale.

One misconception that drives me to the edge of insanity is "I'm a trainer not a sales person." NO! NO! NO! What we do is never defined by our title or methodology, but by the outcome it produces for our client. Clients don't buy training, they buy results. They buy solutions to their problems. Moreover, they buy the emotional transformational experience they believe or hope will occur, as a consequence of the measurable result. Our clients don't buy training any more than the IBM clients of yesterday bought hardware, software or service. Once upon a time IBM got this. One famous advertising ad once stated, "*At IBM, we sell a good night's sleep.*" In the past, people bought IBM for peace of mind, perceived competence in the eyes of their peers and supervisors. Today this security and even prestige is attained through organizations like Apple. WE ARE ALL IN SALES! End of story. Selling is the means by which we transfer the benefits of what we offer.

What emotionally compelled you to seek a career in the fitness industry? What is it about this industry that gives your life more meaning and significance? For most trainers I've spoken to, the

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answer lies in something they wish to give to others through fitness. Ask yourself, do I believe with conviction that based on my talents, skills and intentions, I can be a catalyst for meaningful transformation in someone's life, if they experience what I have to offer them as a trainer? If you don't believe that you can dramatically add to the quality of life of your clients, then I would understand if you had an apprehension about selling. However, my guess is that you at least believe that if someone were to become your client, they would experience greater benefits, and most likely a better quality of life than if they had trained on their own. If you agree with me on that, let me then ask, if you could positively transform the life of just one person, does it make a difference?

One morning, a grandfather took his grandson for a walk along the beach. As they walked, enjoying each other's company, the grandson noticed that every so often his grandfather would bend down, pick up a sand dollar lying on the beach and toss it back into the ocean. Curiously the boy asked, "Grandfather, what are you doing?" The grandfather replied that the sand dollars had been washed up on the beach by the tide. If they remained on the beach, they would dry up and die. Seemingly satisfied, the boy just nodded and resumed his walk. However, a short time later the boy noticed that there were many sand dollars lying around on the beach and quite concerned asked, "Grandfather, you said the ones left on the beach would die. There are so many washed ashore? What difference does it make if you through back just one? The grandfather smiled at the boy, bent down and picked up a sand dollar. He held it up in front of the boy

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and replied, "to this one, it makes all the difference in the world", and tossed it into the sea.

I'm sure that you share my contention, that in the eyes of that client, it *would* make *all the difference in the world*. If you got into this industry to do more than make a living, but to make a difference, does not the transformation of one person's life make you to a degree successful? If yes, what about transforming the lives of two people? That would make you twice as successful, wouldn't it? And so on. But the reality is, nothing happens until you make a sale. Therefore, selling is not something negative we do *to* someone, but something we are ethically responsible to do *for* someone. Selling is our means of achieving great success in our lives, by helping as many of our clients as we can, achieve great success in theirs.

Assuming that we at least in part agree on that, what's the reason that so many trainers assert that they "train, not sell"?

There are two reasons why someone would be opposed to sales as part of their role, either because it conflicts with her self image or out of fear. Therefore, before deciding whether or not we are in sales; we need to clarify what we mean by "sales" in the first place. I often ask my audiences what adjectives and associations come to mind when they hear the word sales person. It's not surprising that many people say things such as a greedy, manipulative, deceitful, pushy and superficial person. Well now, why wouldn't anyone want to be associated with such a flattering depiction?

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Do you want to be successful? Of course you do, if not you wouldn't be reading this. Most people, if not everyone, want to succeed in life. The question becomes, how do you know whether or not you're successful? Usually you know whether or not you feel successful by determining if your achievements and actions are aligned with your highest values and aspirations. What is your personal definition of success? Although everyone's definition of success varies, it's likely that yours involves making a contribution to someone or something. That's because we all innately know that in order to have something you must first be willing to give something. As a fitness professional, your definition of success probably is defined by your ability to ultimately make someone's life better. Your ability to do that depends on some important factors:

1. You need to have a degree of trust and credibility with the person or people whose lives you desire to make better.
2. You need to know why they want change, the implications this change will have in their life and the consequences of not changing. You need to understand how they think, what emotions increase or diminish their personal effectiveness. Then, you need to know how their belief affects their ability or inability to take the actions that will result in the changes they desire.
3. You also need to possess a degree of expertise that allows you to assess their needs with insight beyond what they're capable of.

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4. You must be able to design a plan that will effectively and progressively move them in the direction of their desired outcome.
5. You need the skills necessary to assist them in the implementation of that plan.
6. You need to make modifications in the plan based on its effectiveness on a physiological level, adaptations in their level of ability and changes in their psychological state.
7. Ultimately, you need all of the expertise and skill to make the right recommendations and then get your clients to continually take action until the outcome they desire is fulfilled.

These skills are the key to or the lock on the door to your success. They are essential to your ability to consultatively lead your client down the path to a better future.

Which brings me to the next question that I present to my audiences, what associations come to mind when you hear the word consultant? This time the responses differ greatly. I hear things like expert, professional, trustworthy, caring, problem solver and so forth. Do any of those descriptions map with who you are or desire to become? Who would not want to be one of those? In fact, why would anyone who didn't fit that description deserve to be well paid? If you go by the above adjectives, it's clear that a consultant needs to possess all of the preceding seven abilities.

What's interesting is that in our industry there's virtually no difference between a salesperson and a consultant. They're both different

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descriptions for the same role; considering that consultant's often must possess a greater diversity of skills because their role is often continual and requires them to function as a coach. Which set of adjectives most closely describe you is based on your intention and how you first define yourself.

Our definition for sales is *the ability of a professional to utilize his expertise to empathetically lead people to decision's that will positively affect the quality of their life.*

If that definition resonates with your sense of purpose, then the only other reason why someone would be averse to sales being part of their role is fear. Fear comes in many different forms such as fear of rejection or failure and feelings of inadequacy. Many times we experience these emotions because we are evaluated solely on performance. In our manager's eyes, it may not matter how much effort we put in or what our intentions are, we either possess the ability to create and keep a full client base or we don't. Because these feelings are uncomfortable we seek to avoid them. However, what we need to understand is that anyone who ever becomes excellent at anything received criticism, rejection and experienced repeated failures. This is the reason that most people give up. However those who persist despite these unpleasant feelings because they have a reason that is greater than the temporary discomfort they must endure, most often succeed.

When your waiter offers you a refill on your coffee, if you decline he doesn't storm back into the kitchen dejected and broken. He doesn't

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blame the manager, the customers or the economy. He doesn't feel rejected, and most of all he doesn't think to himself, "I guess I'm just not cut out for this." Why? He doesn't take it personally.

As a rule: never take anything personally. Treat every outcome as essential feedback to help you become better. Have fun observing how your performance increases every time you're on an appointment with a potential client.

Rule two is, become a fanatic towards developing the skills and processes necessary to produce a result. Every skill is developed through a process. Some people know their process intuitively and couldn't tell you how they get the results they produce. Then there are individuals who have the discipline to learn and practice a process over and over until they're very good at it. There are four levels of competency in the development of any skill:

- *Unconscious incompetence*: You lack competency, but you also have no experience. Therefore you are ignorant to your lack of ability.
- *Conscious incompetence*: You have an experience that reveals your lack of competence.
- *Conscious Competence*: After executing a skill continually, you become progressively better at it. You now perform with a degree of proficiency, but it requires considerable effort and focused concentration. It's because of the effort required that most people give up on further developing their skills at this

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point. That's unfortunate, because the last and final component of this process is where the breakthroughs lie.

- *Unconscious Competence*: At this stage, high performance comes effortlessly to you and without thought. You just reflexively perform exceedingly well.

Solution

Let's assume that your ability to acquire a client depends on some form of introductory session, if you master each aspect of that process and develop a high degree of competency in each corresponding skill, you will be very effective in building a clientele through this means. You will eventually come to look forward to each introductory session, because they will become more exciting and rewarding as your confidence grows.

The initial experience that a member has with you greatly affects the likelihood of whether or not they will become a client. Therefore, the initial introductory session has a profound influence on how successful the member will be at integrating exercise into their lifestyle, as well as your success as a fitness professional.

The orientation session generally consists of 5 parts:

1. The greeting
2. Profile

3. Induction workout
4. Confirmation
5. Signing up the client

Part 1: The greeting

The greeting is the limiting step of the process. Meaning, if the greeting goes well it greatly increases the likelihood that the entire session will be a success. However, if the greeting fails to initiate a positive feeling of rapport, confidence and reassurance it will undoubtedly have a negative effect on the outcome of the orientation. The orientation is an intangible process, which makes the relationship between trainer and member, as well as the trust it facilitates, of preeminent importance. The relationship a trainer cultivates with a member is highly influenced by the member's first impression of him/her. A solid first impression is formed within less than ten seconds and is effected by communication cues that the member may not even be consciously aware of. When greeting a new member it is important to be aware of what we are communicating both verbally and non-verbally. Some important things to remember are:

- Stand up straight
- Make eye contact
- Smile
- Express enthusiasm in your verbal and non-verbal communication
- Develop synchronicity between you and the member by developing rapport

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Developing rapport is the prerequisite skill to developing a valuable and effective relationship with your future and current clients. This is because what you sell is intangible. It's not like buying a car, where the prospective buyer can feel the handling of the vehicle during a test drive, listen to the purr of the engine, smell the interior and see for themselves the beautiful design and engineering that went into creating that automobile. If they have done their homework and know what they should be paying, the car demonstrates its own value.

All sales are based on a degree of trust; especially in our industry because we are not selling a tangible product. At the time of the purchase, the benefits the member desires have not yet been realized. Therefore, we are to a degree, selling nothing more than a promise. This makes the cultivation of trust imperative in the orientation process.

Risk creates reluctance to make a purchase. This is regardless of whether the risk is financial, the risk of failure, or the risk of a bad experience. In order to attain a client, the risk must be minimized in the mind of the member, while the perceived value maximized. In order to accomplish this, we must not only focus on their needs, but their desires and fears as well. Without rapport, this is not likely. Rapport is a relationship of cohesion and responsiveness. It facilitates trust. Trust leads to honest communication. If the trainer is able to effectively communicate, it is likely that he/she will be able to accurately assess the most compelling needs and desires of the member. The more effective our assessment, the more individualized

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benefits we can offer. This creates high value. When the value exceeds the risk associated with the buying decision, we have a new client. When we fail to build rapport the value we can offer is decreased, and very often, our opportunity to create a new client is lost. Therefore, we and the member who could have been a client both lose.

Developing Rapport

First and most importantly, rapport is a product of intention. Meaning, there are no magic techniques or verbiage that will fake sincerity. Customer service training can be ineffective, even damaging to rapport if it's not sincere. We are all walking lie detectors by the time we reach adulthood. The average individual has had extensive experience in interacting with others. We know almost intuitively when someone's intentions are benevolent or not. Have you ever instinctively not liked or not trusted someone when you initially met them, but you didn't have a logical reason why? Usually, when this happened, you were right.

The individuals who are most effective at building rapport are those who understand the principle of reciprocity. We are drawn to individuals who like us and make us feel special and important when we're around them. Conversely, we reciprocate by liking them as well.

No customer service technique will be effective, unless a fitness professional genuinely emanates confidence in their ability to deliver a

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preeminent offering. Do you radiate enthusiasm, demonstrated in an authentic interest in the problems, concerns and aspirations of each of your current/potential clients? Does your body language, tonality and interactions make you approachable?

If you are reading this and affirming inwardly that this is you we're talking about, the following applications will make you even more effective in cultivating rapport quickly and effectively.

Components of communication

Think about a specific time when you've been powerfully influenced by someone; maybe a speaker, teacher, coach, or manager. Were you impacted by just their words alone? Would you have been just as affected if you read their words in a memo, as opposed to being in this person's actual presence? For most people, the answer is "No." The reason for this is that there are 3 primary components of communication. The words we use represent only a small component of the message we communicate to others, and vice versa. Most of the content within the communication process is contained in our physiology (body language) and tonality (how we say something). Have you ever been upset by something that was said to you, because you misread the way it was said, or the expression of the person speaking to you? According to Professor Albert Moravian, when what we say is incongruent with our body language or tonality:

- 55% of people will believe our physiology or body language
 - Posture
 - Facial expressions, etc

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- 38% will believe our vocal tonality
 - Tempo
 - Intensity
 - Voice inflections
- 7% will trust what is actually said

Failure to be congruent in your physiology, tonality and intended message, can create a less than optimal experience for individuals we are communicating with. It can also damage our credibility.

Pay Attention

We all communicate through our five senses. Whether we are on the sending or receiving end of the communication process, we communicate through what we see, hear, feel, taste and smell. The three most dominant senses we use in communication are auditory (what we hear), visual (what we see) and kinesthetic (what we feel). How we use these 3 senses, determines how we communicate and what we perceive. Each person communicates a little bit differently, based on the order and primacy of the senses they use. For example, if you pulled over to ask for directions, would it be easier for the person to draw you a map and help you identify landmarks, or for them to write out the directions in bullet points. If you are a visually dominant person, the map would work best. If you are an auditory dominant individual, the map may be frustrating and the bullet points may be most effective. This way you can vocalize in your head (maybe aloud) each step in route, as if someone were beside you, giving you verbal directions.

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Everyone uses all 3 senses in communication all the time. However, we have preferred communication pathways we utilize predominantly. When our communication style differs from the person we communicating with, it decreases the ease, enjoyment and efficacy of the communication process. Conversely, as mentioned before, our perception is effected by how we use our senses,

- What we visualize internally or focus on in our environment
- How we move our body, hold our posture
- What we hear or say to ourselves

When our communication style matches that of the person we are speaking to, we share the experience or state they are in at the moment. The conversation seems to be in flow. Notice, next time you're out in a restaurant or any public place, two people that are involved in intense, seemingly enjoyable conversation. Their body language, intensity, and gestures will most likely be very similar. That is not to suggest that you mirror the other person's exact movements. If they place a hand on the table, don't immediately place your hand the same way on the table. This can be interpreted as artificial or even insulting. Instead, pay close attention to how they communicate and adapt your communication style to the one that they prefer. This is considerate and requires you to pay complete attention to the other person. Adapt your communication style to theirs in the following aspects:

1. ***Rate of speech***: People process information similar to that which they speak. Their comfort and comprehension will be

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enhanced when your rate, inflection and intensity of speech is similar to their own.

2. **Body language:** By adapting someone's physiology, you're sending the same sensory messages to your brain as they are to theirs. This also assists you in sharing their experience. In addition, you physically represent someone who is similar to them. This commonality may help them feel you are alike, therefore able to understand them.
3. **Choice of words:** We select words based on our internal representational patterns. This means that a visual person may illustrate their goals in terms of how they want to look or how they "see" themselves after achieving their goals. A kinesthetic person, when discussing their fitness goals may focus more on how they want to feel than how they want to look. Listen carefully for the words and descriptions each individual predominantly uses. Communicate with them in the same way that they are communicating with themselves. For example, if they express consistently how they want to feel, avoid focusing exclusively on esthetic changes. If they use certain words like "tone or firm", use the same words when expressing the benefits of your program even if their description contradicts scientific fact (i.e. spot reduction). Education is a process based on the readiness of the learner. The more you can make an individual feel understood and validated initially, the more receptive they will be to learning incessantly. Adapting their communication style makes it easy for them to relate to you, makes them feel listened to, and is motivating for them because the communication is centered on what is most important to them.

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Listed below are some common characteristics of each dominant communication style.

Visual:

- Speaks rapidly
- Uses frequent body gestures and voice inflections
- Looks up to the left, right or straight ahead during the conversation
- Uses and relates to visual words, i.e. "Can you see what I'm saying? It's *clear* to me that..."

Auditory:

- Uses body gestures less frequently
- When accessing/processing information during the conversation, looks side to side
- Speaks almost rhythmically, uses voice inflections rarely
- Communicates with and relates to auditory words, i.e. "Does that *sound* right to you?"

Kinesthetic:

- Speaks slowly, pauses frequently, uses filler words i.e. "Um," "uh," etc.
- When accessing/processing information will look down
- Very few body gestures, does not have animated body language
- Relates best to how they feel about what they are saying or is being said, i.e. "I *feel* that..."

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The main premise of part one in the **READ system** is that rapport is most effectively established when (1) Everything you communicate sincerely relays your commitment to the individual, (2) all aspects of your communication are congruent with what you desire to convey to your customers, and (3) you pay attention to the communication style of your client. Mirroring the communication style of your client happens naturally as a consequence of being in rapport with them. There is increasing evidence that matching and mirroring are most effective when spontaneous. A sincere interest in them as well as making the client the center of your focus will allow you to adapt your communication style to that of your client/prospect in order to facilitate effective communication, making them as comfortable as possible.

Part 2: The profile

The persuasiveness and effectiveness of the trainer is in direct proportion to how well he/she conducts the profile. The profile is not only the means by which we assess individuals past history and fitness needs, it's our means for affecting the behavior of an individual by assessing his/her buying criteria. Buying criteria refers to what an individual buys and how they prefer to buy it. Usually, people tend to follow the same behavior patterns. If you determine why someone has bought a product or service in the past, you can probably persuade him or her to make a similar buying decision again if you can offer the same benefits. Conversely, if you can identify why the

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member has not bought something in the past, you can avoid turning them off by demonstrating how your services are different.

Important questions to ask in order to determine individuals buying criteria are:

- ***What primary goal are you trying to achieve?***
- ***What is most important to you about the achievement of that goal?***

These questions should be asked within the opening of the orientation in order to focus the member on the principle outcomes he desires to achieve most.

After briefly discussing the member's goal, proceed into the general warm-up by utilizing a piece of cardio equipment. The general warm-up is a great place to continue the profile, because the member is usually anxious to begin their exercise program. Having him seated for long periods of time prior to doing anything that he may perceive to be contrary to his expectations can heighten his level of anxiety. Therefore ask the following questions in the orientation process while the member is doing his general warm-up on a piece of cardio (this should take 10 minutes):

- **What is your client/members level of physical activity?**
Ask for specifics. An individual may sit at a desk all day long but answer phones and e-mails constantly, therefore from their perspective, they may say they're very active. That's why we need to ask well thought out non-directive questions, that enable us to

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gain a proper perspective. For example, ***“Can you tell me a little about your daily activities?”*** Get them talking.

Our responsibility is to ask questions that can even identify a prospect's unstated needs. An un-affirmed need is one that the prospect may not be explicitly aware that he has, therefore it never comes up unless you conduct your profile the way that a detective would conduct an investigation, to reveal what is not initially apparent. If we are to offer results and experiences that go beyond the expectations of our customers, we must be more than customer driven. Leading fitness professionals need to see beyond the stated desires of their customers. Customers across all industries have been historically shortsighted. How many of us 15 years ago were demanding fax machines, cell phones and hand held satellite global positioning systems? Often, an individual will possess a need that they're vaguely aware of, yet be clueless to the possibilities that are available to them.

An affirmed need is one where the person clearly understands their problem. They're also aware of the explicit consequences their problem presents in their life. They know how much better off they would be if they could solve their problem. Therefore, they have a sense of urgency in finding a solution. It's our job to provide solutions that go beyond our customer's imagination and meet even their unexpressed needs. In order to accomplish this, we must ask the right probing questions that allow us to identify needs beyond what is overtly stated.

Identifying un-affirmed Needs:

- *How are your energy levels during the day?*
- *How are your stress levels?*
- *How many hours do you spend at work?*

Affirmed Needs:

- *When are your energy levels lowest during the day?*
- *Stress highest?*
- *How does your stress/energy affect you? At home? At work?*
- *How long has it been like this? Has it been better or worse recently?*
- *If your energy/stress levels don't improve, what are some possible consequences?*
- *If we could design a program that can help you increase your levels of energy (or decrease stress) throughout the day, what benefits would that have at work/home?*

The strategy here is to help the individual identify that low levels of energy and high levels of stress are potential causes of dissatisfaction in their professional and personal life. If they could increase energy and decrease stress, it would remove dissatisfaction, stress and make life more enjoyable. Remember that the actions of every individual are guided by the motivation to move toward incentives they desire and away from pain or fear. The more ways you can demonstrate how your services will increase pleasure and decrease pain in someone's life the more value they have.

Does your new client or prospect currently exercise?

If the answer is "Yes," the next question in your buying criteria assessment is ***"How many times per week?" and "For how long?"*** These questions are extremely important because:

- In the purchase of personal training products and programs there are common concerns. If these concerns are not addressed it could prevent a sale from taking place. A common concern that many people have is "I don't know if I have the time to commit to any type of program right now."
- That is why it's very important to identify the time parameters of their current program and then ask ***"Does your current program completely fit your lifestyle without placing excessive demands on your schedule?"*** If they say to you that they're training 3 times per week/1 hour per day and that program complements their schedule, the concern of time will not be an obstacle to the purchase of a personal training program, if the program doesn't demand any more time than they currently dedicate to exercise.
- If they tell you that it's difficult for them to adhere to their current workout schedule ask: ***"What type of workout schedule would more realistically fit into your busy lifestyle?"*** Let's say they tell you that their program would be more realistic if it were only 2 days per week. Respond by saying: ***"The least amount of specific work to produce a change can be the most effective approach to initiating a***

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new training program. I would recommend only 2 days to start. Does an hour per day sound reasonable?" If it does, tell them that those are the parameters you will use in their program. Before moving on ask the question, "***Does this now better fit into your lifestyle?"*** If it does, you solved the problem.

- Next, ask them what their exact expectations are. Once you identify their exact expectations, be sure to point out during the workout what components of our products and programs would meet those expectations. For example:

Member: *I want to know exactly how to use all of the equipment and what to do when I'm here.*

Trainer: *So if I understand you correctly, you're expecting exact instructions on how to properly use all of the tools we have here to help you reach your goals.*

Member: *Basically, yes*

Trainer: *If we were to provide you with specific instruction on each component of exercise in order for you to get the most out of your time in the club, would that meet your needs, or is there something else in addition?*

Note:

- Always probe for fitness related problems that you can solve

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- If an individual is exercising, a great needs analysis question you can ask is: *How satisfied are you with the results you're seeing currently?* Obviously if they are sitting with you they are not completely satisfied. Ask them why they believe they are not getting the results they want. How does your solution correspond with their belief about why they're not more successful in achieving their training goals? The greater the consistency between your solutions and their beliefs, the greater chance of success both of you will have.

If an individual is not currently exercising, have they exercised in the past?

If they have exercised in the past but stopped ask:

- *How long ago was that?*
- *Were you happy with the results? What pleased you the most? (Remember, what made them happy about exercise in the past may motivate them in the present if you can show them how you can help produce the same results.)*
- *What caused you to stop?*

It's very important to identify what caused them to stop because it could still be a limiting factor to them adhering to a consistent program

- ***How have those circumstances changed?***

In the previous question, you identified the reason they stopped exercising in the past. By asking how they're circumstances have changed, they are overcoming their own objection to why this

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reason would still be a complication to their exercise adherence. This is because either (1) they will tell you that their problem has changed, or (2) their problem has not changed, but they have related to you why their reason to start exercising again exceeds their previous reason to stop.

- ***Is there anything else that would interfere with your exercise program now?***

This question is asking them to further identify possible objections. By identifying and handling objections in the beginning of the appointment the prospect is not defensive because you are not talking about buying anything. By handling objections early on, there will be fewer reasons why the person cannot purchase a training package.

- ***What changes have you seen (visual) or felt (kinesthetic) since you stopped exercising? Has anyone else said (auditory) that they noticed (visual) any changes in you?***

When you ask this question, the member has to think about the changes they have experienced since they stopped exercising. This creates a feeling of dissatisfaction. We are motivated to move away from behaviors that cause dissatisfaction. By creating painful associations to the current behavior pattern of not exercising, it is easier to motivate them to adapt a new behavior pattern of consistent exercise.

- ***What made you decide to start exercising again?***

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Pay close attention to the reason, was it the way they felt (kinesthetic), the way they looked (visual), something someone said (auditory)? Is the reason related to appearance, health, or performance? Is their motivation toward an outcome they desire or away from an outcome they fear such as failure, judgment, criticism, etc?

- ***If you can... what benefits would that give you?***

Ask them what the most desirable benefit they will experience can be if they get to their goal. (Toward pleasure)

- ***If you don't...what are the consequences?*** (away from pain)

If they never have worked out before:

- ***When were you in the best shape of your life?***

This question gets them to recall a positive association to being in better shape. It mentally brings them back to a time where they might have been pleased or less displeased with the way they looked and allows them to experience that feeling. Alternatively if they have never been in good shape it can evoke pain and lead the conversation into the consequences they experienced in past, continue to experience in the present as well as the consequences they are likely to face in the future if this pattern is not broken.

- ***Tell me about...What was different when you looked that way?***

If they say they looked the best back in high school ask them to tell you more about that. Direct their mental focus to how life was

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different when they were in the best shape of their life. It may have been their ability to play sports or perhaps it is the feeling of being attractive that stands out in their mind most. By getting them to focus on when they were in the best shape of their life and then guiding them with non-directive questions you enable them to relive those positive emotions. This creates the association that being in better shape would be pleasurable. Increasing the members desire to possibly exercise with a trainer.

- ***What was most important to you about being in shape?***

If they state that they enjoyed the ability to be more active as well as the feeling of being more attractive, ask, ***“In addition to that, is there anything else?”*** After they tell you all the benefits they enjoyed when they were in the best shape of their life ask, ***“What was most important to you about being in that shape how is this different from the first question you asked?”*** (if they state a few goals, we can restate the question to determine which outcome they desire most. We could restate the question to read: ***“What do you remember being most proud of?”*** Follow up with, ***considering all of the other important priorities in your life, on a scale from 1 to 10, how important is it for you to feel or look like that again?*** These questions accomplish 3 things:

1. Identify the primary motivation for the goal
2. If they state an 8 or above, you are getting them to verbally express the importance of achieving their goal (which is profoundly more effective than you telling them what's important).

3. You are focusing their attention on why they desire the goal

- ***What if you don't change?***

Again, create a pain association to not changing.

- ***What would it take to make sure you do?***

Have them tell you the conditions of their commitment. How can you help them, in accordance with their conditions?

- ***If you could get back to... what would be different?***

Get them to visualize the positive experience of being in that shape again.

Has you're prospect previously been a member of a health club?

This question is extremely important in assessing their buying criteria. Remember, if you can determine why they have bought something in the past, you can identify what would make them possibly buy in the present. Never say anything negative regarding another health club, or any aspect of a past buying decision. When you say anything that is considered derogatory regarding the competition, you appear to be unprofessional. When you criticize another health club, you are also criticizing the person's ability to make an intelligent buying decision. This can offend someone easily.

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On the other hand, by complimenting the competition you encourage the prospect to tell you what they liked about that company and their services. This is a useful way of determining what services influence their buying habits. If you have ever experienced anything positive at their former health club, or have heard anything positive, tell them. Next ask them:

- *What made you join...?*
- *What about...did you enjoy most?*

A discrete way of finding out what the person did not like about the competition is:

- *... sounds like a great place to work out, what brought you here?*

You never need to be critical in order to justify your services in comparison to previous ones they experienced. Let them tell you what made them leave. Was it cleanliness, the staff, quality of training? If you know what the member likes and dislikes, it can not only help you create a client, but keep one.

Have they ever participated in a personal training program?

This question follows the same thought process, however is more specific to personal training. What factors influenced a buying decision in the past? What type of experience are they looking to avoid.

- *Why did you decide to do that?*
- *What was your experience like?*
- *What did you enjoy most?*

- *Is there anything you would have liked to be different? Why?*

If they say no, move on. You don't want to initiate a conversation about a service they've never experienced. At this stage, it has no value to them. Therefore, if the question of price comes up, most prices will seem too high for a value point that has not been demonstrated yet.

If they currently exercise, what type of workout are they doing?

- Find out what they are currently doing and which part of their workout they enjoy the most. In the beginning phases of their program, it will be very difficult to remove aspects of their workout they enjoyed the most. Scientific rationale usually will not be helpful either. If they do agree to remove it from their program, it will be a reluctant compliance. This does not create an experience that encourages adherence. Unless, they are doing something that is harmful, design their program based on what they need, but package it in what they want.

Ideally, if they were guaranteed that they could achieve one goal, what would that be?

Follow up with:

- ***What is most important to you about...?***

The answer to that question should be the benefit that you focus most of your solutions on.

- ***In addition to that what else do you want to accomplish?***

This way we are sure to address every goal in our appointment, emphasizing with the one they said was most important.

The member must feel that you understand and are empathic towards his/her goals, wants and needs?

- ***Have we covered everything that is important to you or is there something we missed?***

This question is another way of handling objections early. It is far better to identify a possible objection very early in the appointment process and deal with it then to have it come up when they are back in the membership consultant's office. At this point, if you have uncovered every need and desire they have and made sure that you didn't leave out anything that was important to them, you are ready to move on to the rest of the workout.

Part 3: The workout

At the conclusion of the profile you will know what goals your member is most motivated to achieve. Make sure that during every component of your exercise program, you relate it back to the benefit that's most important to the member. The following chart is an example of how you might explain why each component of the work out program is

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essential to getting the results they desire. The charts have three versions based on three commonly stated goals you'll hear frequently.

FAT LOSS

COMPONENT	BENEFITS
Flexibility	Muscles are at ideal lengths to allow for more efficient movement, facilitating better breathing mechanics, positively effecting hormonal response, leading to the potential for greater caloric expenditure, as well as fat loss, inside and outside the gym.
Core	Activating the muscles of the core allows for increased recruitment of the bigger muscles throughout your body, which burn more calories.
Balance	Working in controlled unstable environment is more of a neurological challenge which burns more calories, in the gym. Additionally, by creating this type of challenge to your body, you burn more calories long after your workout is over.

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Reactive	Increases the challenge to the body through training at different speeds. It allows for increased recruitment of muscles, which in turn, burns more calories.
Strength	Increase or maintenance of lean tissue enables the body to burn a greater number of calories, even when client is not training.

HYPERTROPHY/MUSCLE GAIN

COMPONENT	BENEFITS
Flexibility	Muscles are at ideal length for greater force production and there is less inhibition of the muscles, which leads to a potential for greater growth.
Core	The stronger the core or foundation is, the stronger all structures attached to it (or, the extremities) will be.

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Balance	Balancing increases the body's ability to recruit its muscles throughout.
Reactive	A muscle can only grow if it is recruited. Reactive training conditions the nervous system to recruit muscle types that have the greatest potential for growth.
Strength	Greater joint stabilization permits greater activation of muscles and force production.

PERFORMANCE

COMPONENT	BENEFITS
Flexibility	Flexibility aligns muscles to be at ideal lengths for greater force production and performance
Core	Increased activation of the core muscles allows for greater force production throughout the extremities.
Balance	Balance challenges the body to achieve alignments and positions that are specific to the environment and

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	demand in sports and/or recreational activities. This helps reduce the risk of injury during activity.
Reactive	Increased speeds that match those a client encounter during recreational and competitive sports activities will allow the client's body to move more easily and effectively in the future at those speeds.
Strength	All components of the program will condition the client for greater performance and control, and reduced risk of injury in sports activities.

Part 4: Confirmation

Using the chart, relate the primary components within each phase to the benefits that correspond with the member's goals. It is imperative to understand that members do not buy products or services, but instead the ensuring solutions that our services present. The greater the trainer's ability to identify the solutions a member desires most, the more persuasive s/he will be in acquiring a client by demonstrating how s/he can individualize the solutions and benefits afforded to the

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member. When implementing each phase of training explain to the member how it will move them toward their goal.

Below is a case study example demonstrating how a trainer might correlate a member's goals, needs, beliefs and past experiences with the training components of an orientation session.

Correlating Goals and Needs to Benefits

For many people, developing an exercise program can be daunting. The greater the complexity of the decision, the greater the hesitancy of the individual. Therefore, establishing agreement on each component of your program separately and systematically is less overwhelming to the individual.

The following case study example demonstrates how the continual use of questions, can assist in the sales process by gaining agreement on each component of your service, before attempting to ask for a sale based on the entire program.

Let's say your appointment is Mrs. Jones:

- She is 37 years old.
- Her occupation is pharmaceutical sales
- She has not exercised in about 1 year.

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- She stopped exercising because she *felt* (kinesthetic) she did not have the time.
- Here primary goal is body fat loss and to *look* (visual) "toned."
- If she can get into shape she feels she would be able to participate in more recreational activities.
- Experiences low back pain.

Let's take a look at how our trainer in this example presents a few of the components of an exercise program.

Flexibility

Trainer:

Mrs. Jones, you said that you wanted to tone. Are there any areas of your body that are especially important to you?

Mrs. Jones:

Yes, I want to tone the back of my arms, my waist and especially my rear end.

Trainer:

Great. By customizing our flexibility program to you specific needs, we can increase tone in at least two of the areas you mentioned. There's no such thing as spot reduction. Where body fat comes off first is dependent on the individual. But muscle tone is different. The right flexibility program will help you to feel and see a difference in your body in less time.

Mrs. Jones:

How?

Trainer:

When you have excessive tightness and lack of flexibility, it can cause certain muscles to lose tone. I can teach you a flexibility program that will help with

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function, but also potentially increase tone in your glutes and mid-section. Why don't I show you one right now, so you can feel the difference for yourself?

Mrs. Jones:

Absolutely.

There are many benefits to a well designed flexibility program. However this trainer focused his presentation on the benefit that would directly address her most important goal. He understands that people are motivated by what they want, not what they need. By keeping the presentation focused on her specific goals, he created a level of value for a flexibility program. He also used visual and kinesthetic descriptions of the benefits she would experience. This matched the pathways she used to communicate her desired benefits.

Cardiovascular Endurance

Discussion of cardiovascular exercise related to the members goal:

Trainer:

Mrs. Jones, you said that the goal that was most important to you was to lose body fat. That's why cardiovascular training is going to be very important for you. It helps you burn fat directly when you use any of the equipment I am going to show you today, or when you take one of our group exercise classes.

Can you tell me a little bit more about your previous cardiovascular workouts?

Mrs. Jones:

I used to walk a lot on the treadmill or sometimes I would use the bike

Trainer:

How do you feel about the results you were seeing?

Notice how the trainer uses the words like feel and see to match her kinesthetic and visual communication pathways

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Mrs. Jones:

I really don't feel like I was seeing that much of a result.

Trainer:

How many days a week were you training?

Mrs. Jones:

I tried to do it 3-4 days per week, 5 if I could

Trainer:

How much time each day?

Mrs. Jones:

About 45 minutes

Trainer:

Looks like you had a pretty extensive program, were you consistent?

Mrs. Jones:

I tried to be, but I admit I wasn't as consistent as I should have been.

Trainer:

How do you like cardiovascular exercise?

Mrs. Jones:

It's okay, not really my favorite thing in the world though.

Trainer:

How did you monitor your level of intensity?

Mrs. Jones:

I used the "fat burning zone" chart on the machine

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Trainer:

So it's safe to say that no one ever customized your workout intensity for you, based on your individual goals and needs?

Mrs. J:

No, not really

Trainer:

Individualized assessment and program design ensures that all the variables of your workout are as productive as possible in helping you attain goals. Which I'm sure is very important to you, isn't it?

Mrs. Jones:

That's why I'm here.

Trainer:

Mrs. Jones, I'm going to show you how to monitor your target heart rate zone ?? that we assessed for you in the office. I'm going to use that in conjunction with another test called the "talk test". Then I will tell you exactly what level of intensity you need to exercise at based on your goals, age and ability as an individual, so that you can burn the most amount of calories each time you do cardio. And being that you said cardio isn't your favorite activity, if we can maximize the effectiveness of your cardio program so you can spend less time doing it and still get great results, could you see that helping you stay more consistent?

Mrs. Jones:

Yeah, if I could spend less time each day and see good results?

Trainer:

Great! in addition, a lot of people who do not find cardio really exciting are surprised at how much they enjoy group exercise. It's a fun way to help you get to your goals.

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Why don't we get you a schedule and help you pick out some classes you may be interested in before you leave here today. Would that be alright with you?

Mrs. Jones:

Sure, it sounds like it might be fun.

The trainer used questions to probe and identify as many problems as he could. He then systematically presented a solution for each. Every time Mrs. Jones said yes to a benefit or solution to a problem the program became more and more customized for her and her buying desire increased.

Once you present the benefits and establish agreement on the value that each component of fitness offers, your job is to recommend the fitness program that best meets the individual goals and needs of the member.

Core

Trainer:

Core training is an important component related to your goals of tone, ability to participate in recreational activities and helping to decrease or prevent low back pain.

Mrs. Jones:

I used to love doing my crunches.

Trainer:

What results were you looking for?

Mrs. Jones:

I wanted to tone my abs.

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Trainer:

Were the crunches effective?

Mrs. Jones:

I think they were?

Trainer:

How did you know?

Mrs. Jones:

I felt my abs working.

Trainer:

If you could produce the results you want, would the exercise you selected matter to you?

Mrs. Jones:

A little.

Trainer:

How do you mean?

Mrs. Jones:

Of course the results are what I want, but I just have certain exercises that I feel good doing. When I do them, I feel like I'm really working hard.

Trainer:

Like crunches?

Mrs. Jones:

Like crunches.

Trainer:

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You said that you thought the crunches were effective, because you could *feel* your abs working. Your core consists of an outer portion as well as an inner one. The inner portion needs to work in conjunction with the outer in order to protect your back as well as help you perform better in sports and life. Additionally, they are the muscles that draw-in your waistline. By combining specific exercises with the crunches you already do, we can help maximize all of these benefits. You will be able to *feel* a big difference in just one workout. Let me show you one exercise.

Note: The trainer did not try to take away her crunches from her. Instead he used questions to identify her belief about why her crunches were effective. He also helped her to prioritize between the result and her exercise selection. Then he collapsed his recommendations, with her goals and beliefs. This makes it hard for her to argue with the exercise selection. Notice how he used the same kinesthetic pathway in his explanation that she used in her rationale as to why she did crunches?

Balance

Trainer:

I noticed that when we discussed your goals, you specifically mentioned that you were very busy. You said that the most time per session you could allocate to exercise was one hour. Balance training is going to be very important to you for that reason. It will give you the ability to increase the calories you burn per session. Giving you the most out of every minute we spend together. In addition, recreational activities require a high degree of control and dynamic joint stabilization. This not only helps your performance, but increases the safety of participation. When you experience back pain, does it ever interfere with any of your daily activities?

Mrs. Jones:

All of them.

Trainer:

Which one specifically affects you the most?

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Mrs. Jones

Work.

Trainer:

How so?

Mrs. Jones

I have to travel to see my clients. When my back pain gets bad, I can't drive.

Trainer:

Do you ever have to cancel appointments as a result?

Mrs. Jones

It does happen.

Trainer:

How significant are the consequences of that? Can you reschedule?

Mrs. Jones

Not often. I deal with physicians. Their schedules are as busy as mine. If I cancel an appointment, I may not get in again. That means I lose the sale.

Trainer

How many appointments have you missed over the past 6 months?

Mrs. Jones

About four.

Trainer

Is that typical in a 6 month period, as a result of your back pain?

Mrs. Jones

I guess so.

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Trainer

How significant are those missed appointments to your career?

Mrs. Jones

Pretty significant. They can add up financially.

Trainer

In addition to work, what other areas are does your lower back pain affect?

Mrs. Jones

Well, like I already told you, I want to be able to go out and play with my children more. When I'm in pain, that just can't happen.

Trainer

It sounds like your back pain is costing you much more than discomfort. Balance is essential not only when you play with your children, but for all activities of daily living. We need the right communication between our brain and body when moving in a three dimensional, unstable and often unpredictable environment.

Here the trainer did a few things. First he wanted Mrs. Jones to emotionally desire the benefits of balance training rather than just intellectually understand them. Most of our clients do not come to us with an intense desire to work on balance. In order to maximize our ability to create a new client, we need to emotionally compel our clients to desire the benefits of every component of our services.

By asking probing questions, rather than simply explaining the benefits of balance training, our trainer:

1) Identified areas in Mrs. Jones' life that presented a problem. Remember earlier in the text when we discussed implicit vs. explicit needs.

*Helped her to see explicitly what her problem was costing her. First financially, then personally in regards to the quality time she is missing with her children.

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2) Increased her buying desire, and increased the value of his services. She stated that her problem was costing her appointments, which ultimately meant money. Often we tell people all about our services, without asking enough questions. Then, when an objection comes up, we try to overcome it through our justification or a memorized response.

In this scenario, if price comes up as an objection, Mrs. Jones has already stated that not training is costing her money. Over the duration of a few years, the consequences of her missed appointments could possibly far outweigh the investment of training.

3) Presented balance training as a solution to her problem of limited time.

4) Finally, he explained the benefits of balance training as it related to each of her goals, briefly and simply.

Strength Training

Trainer:

Strength training is also very important for you to see the results you're looking for. The more lean muscle you have, the more calories you burn, even when you're not exercising. In addition, you said that you wanted to be more active and participate in recreational sports. A good core conditioning program would make your recreational activities safer and improve your overall performance. If I can recommend a strength-training program that addresses those areas, are those the only goals that are important to you, or is there something else.

Mrs. Jones:

No that's everything, but I don't think I need any help with my strength-training program.

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Trainer:

Why do you say that?

Mrs. Jones:

My husband showed me how to do that stuff. He's in great shape. He used to be a football coach, so he really knows what he's talking about.

Trainer:

Really, how many years did he coach football?

Mrs. Jones:

Over five

Trainer:

Wow, sounds like he has a lot of experience. It's great that you have someone like that to help you out, most people don't. Your husband must have worked out for a long time?

Mrs. Jones:

Oh yeah, he's been working out for over twenty years

Trainer: So you basically are doing his program?

Mrs. Jones:

Yes

Trainer:

How much work do you think it took him to get into the shape he's in now?

Mrs. Jones:

A lot, he works out really hard

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Trainer:

Mrs. Jones, look around the club for a moment. Do you see anyone in here who looks exactly the same?

Mrs. Jones:

No why?

Trainer:

Would you agree that all the people here right now:

- Are different ages
- Have different lifestyles
- Genetics
- Goals
- Capabilities
- And have probably been working out for different lengths of time?

Mrs. Jones:

That makes sense

Trainer:

Does it also make sense that because you're an individual, you would do better on a program that was designed for just for you, rather than if you did a program that was made for any of the other members

Mrs. Jones:

Okay, I see what you're getting at.

Trainer:

Your husband has been training for over 20 years. Wouldn't you agree that he has developed a level of ability and conditioning that is different than the average person?

Mrs. Jones:

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Of course

Trainer:

You haven't worked out for over one year, your needs are different than someone who has been training consistently for over twenty years. If I can design a program based on your individual goals, needs and abilities and assure you it will be the most effective program you can use, because it is designed just for you, would you give it a try?

Mrs. Jones:

Alright. I'll try it.

Trainer:

Great!

- When Mrs. Jones said that she did not need help with her strength program the trainer did not argue. He understood that if he challenged her husband's qualifications she might have been offended, which could have made her defensive rather than receptive. Instead he used it as an opportunity to talk about her husband's coaching experience and exercise expertise. This increased their level of rapport.

Although we just covered a few components, based on a hypothetical case study, it's important for you to understand the features and benefits each component of an exercise program includes and how they relate to the goals of your clientele. What are the most commonly stated goals of your clients and prospects? What is the *benefit* of each feature you offer in relation to those goals?

Part 5: Signing up the client

After identifying each benefit and establishing an agreement on the value of each component of your program, the ***trial close*** enables you to identify how appealing your entire program is when presented as a complete package.

In the trial close process you will:

1. Re-state the primary goal back to the prospect
2. Make a *simple, brief* statement of fact correlating the benefits of a component of fitness to the prospects goal
3. Ask one or more non-directive questions to gather information
4. Ask a directive question to gain agreement

Try using the trial close process in an everyday life situation, within the next 24-hours. For example, let's say you really want to go to a movie with a friend. They would like to go, but are not really sure, because they worked all day. As a result they're tired and would like "to take it easy." Using all of the tools you have learned up to this point, see if you can utilize the trial close in a common situation:

1. Re-state the primary goal

You said that you wanted to take it easy tonight

2. Make a simple, brief statement of fact correlating the benefits of a movie to their goal

If you're tired, but still want to go out, doing something fun and relaxing would give you a chance to unwind.

3. Ask one or more non-directive questions to gather information

If we were to see a movie tonight, what type of movie would you want to see?

- Suppose they say they would want to see an action movie
- Because you have been to the movies with this person before, you also noticed that they always enjoy a big tub of popcorn with butter
- They always love to sit right in the middle of the theater in front of the screen
- They really get into the surround sound technology because they can "feel as if their really there"

So let's see what you know about their criteria for enjoying their experience at the movies:

1. They enjoy popcorn with butter
2. They prefer to sit right in the middle, in front of the screen
3. Sound quality is really important to them

Note that you also assessed that they would want to see an action movie through the use of a non-directive question.

4. **Ask a directive question**

I know a great action movie playing tonight, the theatre just put in a new surround sound system. It feels like you're in the scene! If we get there early we can beat the lines and get a big tub of hot popcorn with freshly melted butter. We can probably get choice seats right in the middle of the theatre. Does it sound like a possibility for tonight?

This does not guarantee a yes. However it does raise their buying desire, because you did not tell them why YOU wanted to go to the movie, you focused on their reasons for wanting the movie. You now know if the movie is something they might want to do. If they are still not interested, you can ask *"What's missing? In order for you to go to the movies, what would have to happen?"*

You can use this in any situation, whether it's a movie, going to dinner, or to a party. This technique will not only make you a more influential communicator, it will make you a more considerate one as well. This is because you will focus less on your needs and more on what is important to others before asking them for anything.

It's important to restate that we do not sell education, products or services. What our clients care about is the process by which we integrate all of our knowledge and skills to solve their problems. Therefore, we sell solutions, packaged in an optimal experience.

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Each component of your program must correlate with the solution it provides. In order to offer compelling solutions, you must (1) have a superior level of product knowledge, and (2) have a high degree of knowledge about your client. A superior level of product knowledge will help you to identify a greater variety and complexity of problems. Knowledge pertaining to your client will help you correlate each component of your program, to what matters most to them.

Individualized Service

After you have presented the entire program in the trial close:

- Review the members most important goals
- Show the member how all the components of fitness can be put together to give them the means necessary to achieve their goals
- Establish agreement that what you have presented are the services that match their goals and needs
- Identify the aspect of your program that is most enticing to them
- Make sure you did not leave out any goal or need that is important to the member

Trainer:

Mrs. Jones, you said initially that you wanted to look toned and to be stronger as well as participate more in recreational activities. You also said that occasional lower back pain was a concern. Is that right?

Mrs. Jones:

Yes

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Trainer:

What do you think is the most important benefit we discussed so far in getting you to those goals?

Mrs. Jones:

I feel that getting results without having to spend too much time in the gym is something that's important. It's always been a trade off for me. I was serious about getting results, but exercise took up so much of my time.

Trainer:

So, if we can deliver all of the benefits we just talked about in your program, yet have your exercise schedule meet the time parameters you established, does this program have all of the components that you're looking for, or is there any aspect of exercise that's important to you that we didn't discuss?

Mrs. Jones:

No, this seems all right.

Trainer:

Then the next step is selecting the personalized program that best meets your needs. Based on everything we agreed on, that would be...

Let's get your first appointment scheduled so we can start your training as soon as possible.

Asking for the Sale

Most sales are lost because they're not asked for. It's not because you didn't use the right closing techniques. High pressure closing techniques can easily turn off or even insult a potential client. Failure to close a sale comes down to one or more of the following four reasons:

- (1) You didn't build enough value,*
- (2) Your personality or lack of rapport created hesitation to go ahead,*
- (3) You did not affirmatively ask for the sale or*
- (4) The individual legitimately does not have the ability to pay.*

The first three are directly within your control. Many trainers possess the potential to offer high value, have outstanding personalities, but do not ask for the sale because of the fear of rejection. If you have:

- Established rapport
- Empathy for why the member's goals are important to them
- Conducted a thorough assessment of their goals and needs
- Professionally and intelligently made the right Product and Program recommendations, then the close is about 10% of the outcome of a sale.

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Sales in any type of industry, is based largely on the law of averages. The more appointments you take, the more clients you will have.

If the prospect says yes to a Product, Program or Personal Training package:

- Finish the sales transaction
- Get them their first appointment as soon as possible
- Send them a thank you card immediately
- Call to confirm before your first appointment
- Go over their goals again and briefly reiterate how they will achieve those goals

If they decline to take the appointment:

- Remain professional and helpful
- Thank them for the session
- Ask if you can call them in a couple of weeks to make sure they are doing okay in their program
- Send out a thank you card immediately
- Put the date you said you would call in your daily planner
- Make sure you have all of their contact information. Periodically (weekly/monthly) send them information that pertains to their goals. This can be article clippings, copies of an article in a trade journal (simplify the most pertinent points), or an e-mail from a fitness website. Most importantly, keep in consistent contact. A "No" today is not a "No" indefinitely. In addition, the greater the number of people who consider you an expert and a resource for their health and fitness needs, the larger your referral base.
- Make sure you follow through

- Keep a record of all your points of contact.

Myth # 2:

In order for a trainer to succeed the absolutely most important skill is...

Reality

Regardless of the answer, it's wrong! Our clients don't hire us for our technical competency, communication skills, business skills or any other skill that we possess, but for an outcome. The outcome is the enduring positive transformation they hope will occur as a result of attaining their goals. They trust that they assume we possess the skills and ability to make their lives better; but it's never why they hire us in the first place. When you go to a doctor you trust that she has all

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of the expertise needed to help you, but you don't go to her because she is a highly educated expert, you go to her because you want to be well. Her expertise is the means; your health is the end result.

In any profession, there are multiple core competencies that need to be mastered in order to succeed. If you are weak in any of the core competencies essential to your profession, it could hurt your entire career. None of them are as important as all of them. Once, during a training and development meeting, a fitness manager of a major health club chain argued that skill sets such as:

- *Effective communication,*
- *Understanding human motivation,*
- *Assessment of needs,*
- *Abilities and how past actions reveal individual behavior patterns, as well as how to develop solutions that correspond with not only what the client needs physiologically, but who they are emotionally and psychologically,* should be greatly reduced in our core competency examinations.

I was curious as to what exactly he thought we do as trainers? His reasoning: these are all minor areas of importance compared to anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, etc.

If information alone was the key to achieving anything, everyone would be in great shape, stay happily married and be financially independent. We live in the information age! There are countless books, audio programs and seminars given by countless individuals who have figured this stuff out and applied it successfully in their own

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life. What separates two people with seemingly equivalent means who read the same book or attend the same seminar? One person finds the experience “motivating” or “interesting”, yet changes nothing. The other uses the same information to produce extraordinary result in their life? Transformation requires knowing not just how to change, but also why change must occur? So if there was a master skill, it would be to resign yourself to becoming a student of why people do what they do and equally as important: why they don’t do what they know they should do. Then, how can you get people to do the things that are necessary to bring about the changes they desire most, consistently? Even though there’s no one master skill, there is a preliminary skill: communication. It’s impossible to get anything accomplished without mastering communication; not just with others but with ourselves as well.

Look around you (whether you work in a studio, a health club or any environment) are the most successful trainers necessarily the ones with the greatest expertise? Sometimes this is the case. Yet, more often than not, the most successful trainers are the ones that connect most effectively with their clients. In the long-term, you need both. One area of competency will never compensate for inadequacy in other essential areas of competency. Having expertise in exercise science will not elevate your value in the mind of your client. That is the minimum criteria they expect from you in the first place.

With literally hundreds of thousands of certified trainers in the world, approximately 40,000 exercise facilities (including health clubs and

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studio's), increasingly greater complexity in the needs and expectations of our clients, it's either differentiate or die. The choice is literally: distinction or extinction. Every molecule of our being must be committed to identifying our Unique Selling Proposition (USP) and employing all our energy to transferring our USP into advantages, solutions, benefits and experiences that are so compelling it positions us in our clients mind as their only viable option.

Solution

In an industry that has multiple definitions for the word balance, whether applied to neuromuscular stabilization or esotericisms, I am suggesting a radically different paradigm. I implore you, starting now, to cease moderation in all things. I'm being facetious, *slightly*. I can't tell you what your area of distinction is, or what your unique talent's are. I can tell you that whenever you see anyone accomplishing anything magnanimous in this industry, they're applying 4 common principles. Although other principles may be in play, the four consistent principles you will notice in the study of people who have "stood out" from others and achieved greatness are:

- Clarity
- Innovative and adaptive thinking
- Uncompromising servitude
- Attitude

Clarity

This is the identification, in no uncertain terms, of who you are, who you wish to become, and what cause(s) you are committed to. What is the specific benefit, advantage, experience that you offer that impels your client's to desire your services?

Innovation

This is almost a catch phrase today. Innovative thinking is not just endowed to a few, but part of the basic engineering of all of us. It's also a result of our conditioning. Most often innovation is not the result of inspiration, but perspiration. It's a continual process consisting of the creation, execution, evaluation, modification and re-implementation of an idea aimed at providing a specific benefit, or solving a specific problem. Innovation cannot result from myopic thinking. Don't fall into the trap of trying to determine whether or not you should study professional development; learn a specific area of exercise science, or psychology to differentiate yourself. I hate to be redundant, but it's eminently important to our future that we not just understand, but internalize, the fact that Individuals hire us for the results we can produce, and the experience we create for them. Identify what outcome you want to facilitate for your clients. Then, learn everything necessary to transfer your knowledge, skills and talents to provide results, and an experience for your clients that are peerless! Become an explorer. As long as you have an adaptable system by which you apply your knowledge, differentiation will facilitate (to the degree that you're continually learning everything you

can to continue to evolve) your becoming an invaluable change agent for everyone in your reach.

Uncompromising Servitude

Any company or individual who is regarded or remembered for distinct greatness, earned their recognition not because of the gift they possessed, but for the gifts they gave away. The perception your clients have of you is created by how they feel around you. Become a student of unexpectedly great service. Exploit every opportunity to give more of yourself. The paradox is: the more of yourself you give away the greater you become. Read books about companies who are legendary for the service they provide. Companies like Ritz Carlton, Nordstrom's, Charles Schwab, South West Airlines, etc. Record every time you are the recipient of a mind blowing service experience (don't worry, there won't be that many) and think about how to adapt what you learn into the experience you provide.

Attitude

The most crucial attribute to who you are and who you will become in your personal life, as well as in your work, is your attitude. Your attitude determines your perspective on life; how you interpret and therefore respond to your circumstances. An example of attitude is represented in the story of "The Greatest Hitter In The World" by an unknown author:

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A little boy was overheard talking to himself as he strutted through the backyard, wearing his baseball cap and toting a ball and bat. "I'm the greatest hitter in the world," he announced. Then, he tossed the ball into the air, swung at it, and missed.

"Strike One!" he yelled. Undaunted, he picked up the ball and said again, "I'm the greatest hitter in the world!"

He tossed the ball into the air. When it came down he swung again and missed. "Strike Two!" he cried out.

The boy then paused a moment to examine his bat and ball carefully. He spit on his hands and rubbed them together. He straightened his cap and said once more, "I'm the greatest hitter in the world!" Again he tossed the ball up in the air and swung at it. He missed. "Strike Three!"

"Wow!" he exclaimed... "I'm the greatest pitcher in the world!"

Throughout history, theologians, philosophers, scientists, psychologists, sages and many great teachers have disagreed on many points. However the one point that they all seem to agree on is that thoughts are the creative force of your life. The scriptures say in the book of Proverbs, *"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."* Dr. William James of Harvard said, *"The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives, by altering their attitudes of mind."* Each of us is the culmination of our thoughts.

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Yes! The thoughts you hold in your mind constantly influence your actions. Actions influence consequences. What you become, and what you will or will not accomplish, is a direct result of the thoughts you focus on and the actions you take. You bring into reality whatever you place a steady focus on. The only way to achieve more, or have more, is to first discipline yourself to become more.

Aspiring toward external illusions and ignoring unpleasant reality distracts from long term fulfillment and happiness. The ability to produce greater results comes first from continual learning and inner development, and second from applied action toward a desired outcome. Your thoughts are a result of your attitudes and how you interpret events and circumstances in your life. Therefore, your attitude is a precursor to either happiness or distress.

Positive Thinking

Positive thinking is certainly useful. But do not make the mistake of equating positive thinking to an automatic positive outcome. Positive thinking by itself will not generate a positive effect. In fact, by itself, this practice is deceptive. The deception occurs when we attempt to see the world as we wish it would be, not as it is. However, reality is the world as it actually *is*. Positive outcomes, therefore, are a product of our positive actions, not our intent alone. Many people have great intentions, yet end up cynical and unfulfilled, blaming other people and circumstances for their disappointments. Why?

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The disappointments or triumphs that we experience are the result of direct omission or commission. In other words, who we are and where we are in our lives is the direct result of what we have done or not done. We alone are accountable for what we do with the life we are given. Our upbringing, associations and environment do affect us, but we are ultimately creatures of our own design, not of default. When we are influenced by an outside force, it is usually by someone who has overcome a seemingly insurmountable hardship. That's the power of the human spirit. The truth is that the world neither cares about nor remembers us for our intentions. It cares only about what we have *done*.

Now, I am not saying that we shouldn't think positively. Positive thinking and optimism are immensely powerful! They affect our focus and behavior, transforming our thoughts into reality. What I am saying is that our problems and challenges will not resolve themselves. So avoiding what is negative or unpleasant can be dangerous. Seeing the world as it is, rather than how we wish it would be, gives us the power to affect change. We deceive ourselves when we expect a reward before we have earned it through internal development, discipline, and contribution beyond ourselves. Our happiness will only be achieved to the degree that our thoughts, words and actions are consistent with one another.

Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (10th edition) defines "character" as "**One of the attributes or features that make up and distinguish an individual.**" Some of the character traits we possess — honesty, loyalty, compassion, etc. — support us. However,

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negative character traits are destructive to our growth and development. These dysfunctional character traits inhibit us from living up to our potential. They manifest themselves in everything we do. They conflict with our positive character traits and cause anxiety. But superficially exhibiting a positive disposition while ignoring the negative aspects of our internal nature is delusional and detrimental. So we need to identify dysfunctional character traits.

“And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character, and character, hope.”

— Romans 5: 3,4 NKJV

Affirmative Transformation

The first step in affirmative transformation of our character and potential is accepting that we are responsible for every consequence in our lives. Successful relationships, job satisfaction, and happiness are consequences of our choices. But they come as the result of painfully honest self-assessment. Adversity is unavoidable and essential to the development of our character. By identifying weaknesses in our character we can transform them. This process is hard and painful — hard enough that most people choose to ignore damaging aspects of their personality. They occupy themselves with desensitizing activities like excessive television or video games to avoid the pain of self-assessment. Or they just practice denial. This accomplishes nothing but self-doubt and anxiety. Any great achievement is hard and requires sacrifice. I don't know who said life isn't fair, but that's a lie. Life is hard for everyone. That makes life fair!

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Once we make the decision to accept full responsibility for ourselves, we need to ask some very difficult, yet crucial questions. We all have the choice to live by design or by default. If we choose to affect our lives by design, we need to determine who we are and what is important to us. What are our most important values? Which one of our values is *most* important? Which value would we make the greatest sacrifice to uphold? What would we do if a situation threatened to compromise our most important value(s)?

There are no guarantees in life. Everything changes, sometimes without warning. In a world that changes faster than change can be anticipated, the only consistency is deciding on, and then remaining faithful to, who we are, what we stand for. What would we never stand for? From that clarity comes our interpretation or *the meaning* we attach to the events in our life.

The only thing that is certain is that opportunity and adversity are defined by the subjective meaning we give to our circumstances. By having the power to choose our interpretation of events in our lives, we are empowered to pro-actively respond to life, irrespective of our circumstances. Therefore, your attitude gives you the aptitude to:

- Identify what distracts from your personal growth and change it;
- Decide what is important to you and organize your values in order of priority;
- Decide what opportunities and challenges mean to you and how you choose to respond to them no matter the circumstance.

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Remember, your attitude has nothing to do with anything external. It is not subject to democratic debate, circumstances, or popular opinion. It is a product of the obsessions that you live for, and how you see the world as a result of them. You are not in control of the external events in your life. Your response to situations in life, however, is unconditional and by design. Despite your situation, you can choose its meaning and your actions in response. The decisions you make are a result of what convictions are inside you, not what happens around you. Therefore, once you know what you stand for, you are *more powerful* than your circumstances!

“[T]his is the last of human freedoms, to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s way.”

— Dr. Viktor Frankle

The Key to Prevailing Over Adversity

Viktor Frankle was a Viennese psychiatrist who had been imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp during World War II. In the death camps, only one out of 28 prisoners survived. Those who were too young or too weak to work were immediately murdered in the gas chambers. Those who were not executed immediately were subjected to brutal work conditions and physical and emotional torture. Most died of sickness, starvation, hypothermia and exhaustion.

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What differentiated the one prisoner who survived from the 27 who died? According to Dr. Frankle, in his book *Man's Search for Meaning*, it was the fact that they had a reason — an emotional resolve — to survive. Most of the prisoners had given up all hope of survival (and who can blame them?). They believed that living had no meaning for them, there was nothing left to expect from life. Dr. Frankle observed that this attitude was contrary to that of the survivors. Those who survived believed we should not expect anything from life. Rather, life expects something — a contribution — from each of us. Dr. Frankle believed that the greatest drive of the human spirit is the desire for purpose, a reason for living, contributing, loving, and even suffering. Thus, it is our responsibility to identify the meaning in all of life's experiences and commit to the fulfillment of our purpose without condition.

Dr. Frankle recalls one prisoner who had a dream that they would be liberated by mid March. He had a great sense of hope. But the expected day of liberation came and went. As a result, this prisoner suffered severe neurosis. Shortly afterward, he fell ill and died. Dr. Frankle believed his death was caused largely by the inability of his immune system to function in the presence of severe anxiety and loss of hope. Once he believed there was no reason to live, his body stopped fighting to survive.

Clearly, the prisoners who survived were not necessarily those who searched for a positive end to their suffering, but those who sought an internal meaning for it. Although they experienced the worst adversity imaginable in circumstances beyond their control, it was not positive

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thinking that kept them alive. It was their faith and perception (attitude) toward their circumstances that gave them the will, strength, and resources for survival. If *these* people had the ability to find meaning in their dire circumstances, what is our excuse for surrendering to adversity in our lives? Thus, it is not what happens to us that determines our success or failures, but how we interpret circumstances according to our attitudes, and the actions we choose, that influence the eventual outcome.

I believe that within every adverse situation there is an opportunity or benefit. As long as I choose to have that attitude, my actions are consistently aimed at fulfilling my purpose and identifying the possibilities in even the worst situations. The worst experiences in my life have always proved later to be exactly what I needed to grow and become better. My priorities have been clarified as a result of my trials. The quality and appreciation of my relationships have been magnified by so called "bad experiences." Therefore, I always intend to create better causes, and that produces greater effects. Adversity and opportunity are always there. It is your perception of them that affects your experiences and eventually your growth and development.

We said before that failure to examine the negatives in your internal and external world can be a potential disaster. However, after acknowledging and dealing with the negatives, we are responsible for finding meaning and opportunity within life. An attitude of confidence in your ability to grow from any situation comes from deciding your ultimate purpose in life and how your actions reflect that purpose irrespective of the situation.

Your Attitude Directs Your Focus

You work in an industry directed at helping people achieve greater self-esteem and avert physical and emotional pain. You change people's lives! When you help someone raise their self-esteem, every aspect (professional, personal, social, and romantic) of their life is affected. Thus, you are in a position where your work brings happiness, self-esteem, and greater quality of life to the people you touch. Think about that next time you find yourself pondering the meaning of your work. We have the ability to contribute massively to the lives of other people, to exercise our freedom to expand our abilities, and to choose our own standard of living.

So ask yourself: What is it that I do every day that mirrors my purpose? How does my attitude toward my purpose affect how I deal with daily challenges? So many people complain about their company, their manager or their clients. Yet *any dissatisfaction* you experience professionally (or personally, for that matter) is a result of your actions or personal interpretation of what's happening around you. You own your career. You own your mind, your emotions, and your perceptions. Management, co-workers, clients and others in your life do not have the power to affect you negatively without your permission. When we get overwhelmed and shaken by the behavior of other people and circumstances, it usually indicates that our focus is in the wrong place. Or, that we do not have a purpose significant enough to keep us focused on truly important matters and not distracted by stuff that's meaningless in the long term.

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Ben Zander, conductor of the Boston Phil Harmonic defines himself as *"a relentless architect of the possibility of human beings."* Think about the attitude reflected in that statement. Ask yourself: What is your personal belief and attitude about your work? What is the meaning of what you do every day? Are you a "trainer," a "manager" or a "consultant?" Or are you someone who is committed to cultivating human potential and enhancing the quality of life — physically and emotionally — for as many people as you are capable of impacting? Stop going to *work* every morning! Zealously commit to *the cause*, the desire to create, to impact, to be a catalyst for positively *changing something or someone!* Yes, semantics *are* everything!

Truth be told, people on a mission do not have time, or patience, to dwell on anything that distracts them from *the cause, the stuff that's truly important.* An argument in traffic or with another employee/manager with a personality disorder is not worth attention. Don't get me wrong, you do reserve the right to get pissed off every now and then. It's part of being human! But experience the emotion and *get over it!*

Ultimately, it is up to you to decide whether you are going to go to *the job* tomorrow morning, or commit yourself to a divine cause. People who are driven by money as the objective of their work rarely have the passion, perseverance and creativity to create anything worth paying for. It is the mission-driven zealot that provides meaningful services that have value. The person who identifies a cause in their work is immediately successful. For these people, financial reward is a

byproduct, not the end product. Ironically, these people typically create much more financial reward through indirect effort. So when you consider all these truths, the choice becomes easy. *Accept the mission! Be a zealot!*

Myth # 3:

They don't pay me enough to...

Reality

The only person who pays you is you! More likely than not, you are paid for your performance. The more clients you have the more money you earn. In many organizations there are different levels you can ascend to as a trainer, providing you meet certain pre-requisites. Therefore, you decide how much you earn per pay period. Many people will argue that the compensation offered by their company is limited; but we're the ones who agree to our compensation plan as part of the terms of our employment. The greater the degree to which you help other people get what they want, the more you will get everything you want. The greater you perform, the more opportunity that will be afforded to you. Opportunity may not come from your

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current company, but when you become outstanding at producing results, you will continually be sought after by prospective clients and other companies.

It was the first day of school. There was a familiar look of uncertainty on the faces of the impressionable young men occupying the seats of the classroom. Their eyes intently focused on every gesture and movement their new teacher made, trying to ascertain what the new school year had in store for them. Looking around the room, the teacher points to seemingly the most nervous kid in the class. He instructs the boy to stand up and face the door. The boy, a little puzzled and noticeably nervous, does as he's told. The teacher asks him to read aloud the plaque above the door. It reads:

"I am Shutruk-Nahunte, King of Anshand and Susa, Sovereign of the land of Elam... I destroyed Sippar, took the steel of Nirah-Sin, and brought it back to Elam..." -(Shutruk-Nahunte, 1158 B.C.)

Looking around the room, it was apparent that all of the boys were equally confused. Then, the teacher asks, "Who here has ever heard of Shutruk-Nuhunte?" Astonishingly, not one student in the class responded. King of Anshand and Susa! Sovereign of the land of Elam (wherever the hell that is)! That's quite the resume'. This guy even destroyed Sippar. Not to mention confiscating the steel of Nirah-Sin. By today's standards, he would be quite the corporate magnate. The pages of history are graced with the names of thousands of individuals, who arguably could not lay claim to accomplishments and conquests rivaling that of King Shutruk-Nuhunte. How is it then that

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no one has even heard of this guy? Was he the victim of an ineffectual PR department? Then the teacher disclosed to the class the meaning of the exercise, revealing the first (and probably most important) lesson of the year. That, *“great ambition and conquest without contribution, is without significance”*. – (The Emperors Club; Universal Pictures, Copyright 2002)

What’s appallingly depressing is that many fitness professionals working in this industry have appreciable talent and potential, yet, the majority of them are not performing even close to it. Many of them defend this fact by pointing to their company, manager, demographics and membership base. While some of them may have a justifiable argument, this is a practice in futility. Faulting circumstances outside of us, (clientele, management, the company, “they”), etc. prevents us from changing our situation. Further, we must never resign our future to someone else’s responsibility. Radical differences in achievement are a product of radical differences in thinking. High performance begins when you reinvent yourself into someone who:

1. Has a clear vision of who and what you want to become.
2. Has made an irrevocable decision, to give nothing less than the maximum capacity you have, to bring your vision into closer to your reality.

Vision

Vision is a function of passion. It’s a beacon that serves to guide us through the realism of today, toward the idealism of our tomorrow. It asks the question, who or what do I ultimately desire to become?

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What purpose defines my life? The very pursuit of which, bestows more meaning to me than anything else I could ever resolve to do. And the abandonment of which, would deprive my life of its most precious significance. How will I *literally* change the world I live in? (Whether that world consists of your club, community, nation or global network.) What will I be known for or remembered for? Our vision helps us to channel our time, focus and energy. It helps us to discern the relevant from the irrelevant. It gives us the clarity to continually adapt and reinvent ourselves.

Decision

The late Peter Drucker, has predicted more things accurately, for a longer period of time than almost any other revered business guru of the 20th century. In his book, *Adventures of a Bystander* he states ***“Whenever anything is being done, it is being done, I have learned, by a mono-maniac with a mission.”*** An individual’s clientele, reputation and overall success are reflective of the decisions he or she has made. Unfortunately most individuals have made the decision to adapt Standard Operating Procedures and company performance standards as the highest measure of their personal excellence. They believe that as long as I’m doing a good job, *they’ll* leave me alone. There are two problems with that thought process. First, the word JOB is an acronym for **J**ust **A**bove **B**roke. Anyone who resolves to just do their job offers no outstanding value to customers. Companies today cannot afford to pay high salaries and compensation for mediocre performance. Therefore any individual, who aspires to hold a job, will be just above broke for the rest of their life. Second, there is no *“they”* in the vocabulary of top achievers. In their book

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Organizing Genius, Warren Bennis and Patricia Ward Biederman (1997) cite the ingredients correlating with the greatest groups of the 20th century. Groups including *The Manhattan Project*, *Black Mountain*, *Disney Feature Animation Unit*, and *Zerox PARC*. Warren Bennis is a world renown Distinguished Professor of Business Administration, international consultant and U.S. presidential advisor. Patricia Ward is an award winning columnist for the Buffalo News and staff writer for the LA Times. They know what they're talking about. In chapter one, page one they state:

"In our society leadership is too often seen as an inherently individual phenomenon. And yet we all know that cooperation and collaboration grow more important every day. A shrinking world in which technological and political complexity increase at an accelerating rate offers fewer and fewer arenas in which individual action suffices. Recognizing this, we talk more and more about the need for teamwork..."

Name one revolutionary contribution made to the world in the last 100 years that was the result of individual effort (regardless of who got the credit for it). If you want to do more than make a living, but make a meaningful difference, you need to start by changing your vocabulary. Always refer to your company as us and we. The words *them and they* do not exude professionalism. Any incongruence between you and your company hurts the brand message. This negatively effects the perception of your members. Perception is in fact everything.

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Further, there is a distinctly different mindset between someone who considers themselves an employee for the company and someone who believes they are a part of their company. The first perspective assumes that as an employee the company is responsible for their success. The latter believes that as a partner the company is responsible to provide them with opportunity. Beyond that, they are responsible for the success of the company.

<i>Employee</i>	<i>Partner</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Exchanges time for benefits and wages ✓ Does what the boss expects ✓ Sees employment as a way to make a living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Can demonstrate one or more reasons why the company is better as a result of having him or her on the team! ✓ Continually re-invents themselves - fanatical about education ✓ Performs far beyond the bosses average expectations ✓ Builds relationships with team members & leads by example ✓ Seeks out opportunities to create magical moments w/members ✓ Contributes to their club,

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	teammates, company & community
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With the increasing expectations, complexity of needs and demands of our market, guess which paradigm produces greater income and possibility?

Simply stated, employees trade their time for wages, whereas partners trade their intellectual capital for opportunity. Employees get paid wages for tasks. Partners get a commission fee for results. The individual who earns the most is the one most capable of recognizing and capitalizing on the greatest number of opportunities. Therefore, it's essential that you are aware of the opportunities around you.

Earlier I said that I have asked the question "why did you get into this industry" to thousands of fitness professionals over the years. Recall, that although they stated it differently, the majority respond by saying that they got into this industry with the intention of helping others. To give beyond themselves in order to positively transform lives. Your company quite possibly has thousands, maybe tens of thousands, or in some companies even hundreds of thousands of members. That means that you are part of something greater than yourself. If you possess a partnership mentality, you can imagine the magnitude of impact that you have (directly or indirectly) daily. Your company provides you with an environment that enables you to access thousands of people who have already made some kind of a

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commitment to exercise. What would it cost you in terms of time and energy to produce that level of opportunity on your own?

The opportunity afforded to you by your company:

❖ *Basic operating expenses (B.O.E.)*

The B.O.E. of you're a health club can cost over \$100,000 per month. That's just to keep the doors open. That's the cost that goes into providing you with the environment, tools, prospects and opportunity to thrive.

❖ *Marketing costs*

How much money do you think it would cost you to generate a full clientele through traditional marketing efforts alone? A single health club can spend over \$10,000 on a direct mail campaign (not even including advertisements) and expect a 1% return on their investment. That's worth it if your mailer reaches the hands of 5,000 people. You have access to thousands of people that are in your facility already. It is ***far*** easier to up-sell a service to someone than to initially win their business. If you combine the costs of your facilities B.O.E. and marketing expenses it probably exceeds \$100,000 per month.

❖ *Marketing opportunity*

As I said before, the results that you produce in your outer world are reflective of your inner thoughts and attitudes. Too often I hear people complaining of how little they get paid per hour. They fail to realize two things. First, Your hourly wage is a fee

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you receive to provide an unsurpassed experience for your members, and market yourself. Even if you were not paid at all to service the floor and take appointments, that deal would present opportunity (although I'm not suggesting that). Imagine being face to face with thousands of people already in a fitness environment, who have decided to incorporate (or are trying to) fitness into their lifestyle. If they owned their own business, it would cost them an exorbitant amount of time and money to create that level of opportunity for themselves. The fact that they get paid anything to build their own business is auspicious in itself. Highly effective fitness professionals, capitalize on this opportunity by building a clientele quickly, making their hourly wages irrelevant. Besides, they agreed to go to work for that amount in the first place. In the interview, you can be certain they didn't promise to perform at a level of mediocrity and complain about their hourly wage until it was increased, then they would consider excellence as a performance criteria. Second, it is increasingly true that companies cannot afford to pay individuals for activities, but for outcomes. In reality, a company is not responsible to guarantee the success of its employees. The company is only responsible to provide the resources and opportunity for its employees to succeed. In actuality, each employee is accountable for the success of the company.

❖ *Education and Development*

Increasingly, what you earn is reflective of what your clients perceive you're worth. Regardless of our title, we are all

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problem solvers. We sell solutions, transformation and experiences. End of story. The vast majority of businesses go out of business, within their first 5 years of operation. Therefore, the only job security we have is to continually keep ourselves the more employable than anyone else. This is not measured in knowledge and skill alone, but in the application of our knowledge and skills toward measurable outcomes for our company and clients. Ask yourself, what two skills if I mastered, would provide me the greatest upward trajectory in my career? What training and development would you need to acquire those skills? What books would you read? Which courses would you attend? Don't just attend the training that you are required to by your company. You need to develop a fanaticism for continuing education and development. Greater your knowledge and skills, empowers you with the ability identify and solve a greater variance of problems. This alone, highly affects your professional aptitude. Create a weekly educational development program. The key to success is to start small. Many individuals attempt to go from virtually no additional training and development to hours per day. They don't adjust their lifestyle to accommodate their new commitment. Then, if they happen to fall short of studying 5 hours that day, they become discouraged. When setting a professional development goal, set your level of self-expectation very high. You will perform in accordance with your expectations. However, start slow, building momentum weekly. This increases the probability that you will adhere to your plan long enough to make continual development habitual. To do this:

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1. Identify what areas of knowledge and skills are in correspondence with your professional and personal goals. In general, there are 3 key areas you will need to master, (1) Business Development (marketing, innovation, management, and strategy.) (2) Sales Psychology and Communication, (3) Exercise Science.
2. Create a six day per week schedule. This will consist of one area of study every 2 days. E.g. *Monday and Tuesday: Business Development; Wednesday and Thursday: Sales Psychology and communication; Friday and Saturday: Exercise Science.*
3. Allocate a small block of time to start, even if it's only 30 minutes per day. Pick a time when you're not too tired to fully focus. Take an assessment of how you already use your time. How many hours of television per day do you watch? If the answer is 2 hours per evening, what one 30 minute show is least important to you? If you invest one fourth of the time you watch television into continual development, it will yield a return in the form of higher self-confidence, respect, a greater reputation and the potential for increased income. How long is your commute to work every day? If it takes you just 15-20 minutes there and back, that's 30-40 minutes per day. You can find a huge amount of professional development information on audio CD or downloaded to an MP3 player to listen to during your commute. If you are willing to turn your commuting time into learning time, you will greatly increase your knowledge without creating a conflict in your schedule. Think about it, if your commute were an hour per day 5 days

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per week, you would invest 5 hours per week into your professional development. If you work 50 weeks out of the year, that's 250 hours of continual development. That's more than 2 full-time university semesters!

4. It's impossible to cover all of the material that offers value. Select what you read carefully. Determine the utility of your reading materials before you invest time and money into them. Read the book cover jackets. Who is the author and what is his or her background? In addition to knowledge, what skills will you derive from the material? Where has this information been applied before? What were the results? Scan through the book, reading just the chapter headings and sub-headings. Determine the flow in which the information is presented. What words or sections are bold typed or italicized? This indicates what the author believes to be key information or ideas. Decide whether or not it's necessary to read the entire book, word for word. Maybe the book contains a chapter that's pertinent to you, but the rest of the book does not offer enough value to justify the time investment.
5. After you have decided that a piece of material is worth exploring further, ask yourself what is the exact outcome you expect as a result of studying it. Many people study with the goal of "learning" in mind. Learning is a vague generality. Instead, direct your focus though meaningful, specific goals. What exactly do you desire to learn from this material? As a result, what will you be able to do differently? Where and

how will you apply these new skills? By what means of evaluation will you be able to determine their effectiveness?

6. Most importantly, **START NOW!** The greater the momentum the more powerful its force. Momentum cannot be generated without first initiating action.

Solution

Scarcity vs. Abundance Mentality

As you read this, please understand that you are not the average professional. The average professional does not take the time or effort to learn and grow. By your very nature that's reflected in your willingness to grow, you have the potential to far exceed the achievements of those around you. This is providing that, you continue to do what they are not willing to. Avoid co-workers who consistently complain about their hourly wage, areas of responsibility, the management, etc. Notice that they are not the high performers in the company. High performers have neither the tolerance nor time to focus on things irrelevant to their goals. Individuals who have a scarcity mentality believe that the talents of others, decisions of management, et cetera, et cetera, detract from them. They don't hear opportunity knocking because they're too busy knocking opportunity.

Therefore, they feel that outcomes are outside their control. The more they give or do, the less they have. This is not only false, it's absurd. Again, your rewards reflect your contributions. When you're focused

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on what you can give, rather than on what you will receive, you offer higher value to those around you. Personally meaningful areas of value are the only things that people pay for. When you hear people complaining about their job description, excuse yourself from them quickly. There is only one fundamental objective in your job description, regardless of what your title says. That is to create and keep a customer through providing solutions and positive experiences.

An abundance mentality is reflected in the attitude that there are multiple opportunities around you. The more you give the more you will get in return. That means doing whatever it takes to add an increasing greater degree of value to those around you. I had a conversation with a fitness professional some time ago who said he was interested in moving up into management. When I asked why he was passionate about management he said, so he would not have to work the floor.

Unfortunately, even if his company were insane enough to consider promoting him, he would probably find disappointment in his new position as well. Talented individuals are not focused on moving up solely because they're dissatisfied being around their customers! Talented individuals seek out positions and projects that challenge them and expand their areas of aptitude. They seek outlets for them to do what they love to do and use their talents every day, in a way that matters to them and others.

Consider yourself an artist. Brilliant artists don't want to manage the art gallery so they can get out of painting! They seek out the next

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masterpiece that will magnify and diversify their talents. Similarly, a gifted fitness professional passionately seeks out opportunities that magnify and diversify their skills and contributions. Nothing is outside your job description. Your entire company consists of one team with several positions; each position allocates their diversity of focus, skills, responsibilities and areas of contribution to one objective. By now you know that that is the creation and retention of a member. Each position is essential to the success of the organization. There is no department that is more essential than any other. The mailroom mentality has no place in today's brutally competitive market. The mailroom mentality is simply the belief that I'll put in my time here at the mailroom until I can work my way up to doing something important. In any company, MAIL IS PRETTY IMPORTANT! Be the best mailroom clerk you are capable of becoming. Learn everything you can. Every job is inter-related. What is cool and exciting about the position you are in right now? Even if many things aren't cool, what aspects are? If your answer is none, the problem may not be your position. In the past ten years, hundreds of thousands of individuals who have lost their jobs have learned that there is vastly more security in developing diverse skills that can grow the company, than there is in focusing solely on advancement. Recognize the opportunity from where you are now. Never take a position solely for what it pays you, but rather for what it will teach you. In what 2 ways will you be more valuable to your company (measurably) in the next 6 months than you are today?

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Every six months, conduct a professional self-appraisal. This is a brutally honest assessment of what you are worth to your company and your clients.

- Why is your company a better, more profitable place as a result of having you on the payroll?
- What are your areas of differentiation?
- How is your resume markedly different than it was six months ago?

If you cannot answer any of the 3 questions above, you risk becoming obsolete quickly. You must be able to articulate and persuasively convey the benefits and solutions you offer to others. In order to bring your vision into reality, you must have absolute clarity as to what that vision is. What are your mission, core values, and personal standards of customer service excellence? What will you be known for 6 months from today?

Mission Statement:

This is the answer to the question, why do I exist as a professional? This goes beyond making a living. It identifies how and why you can make a difference. Your personal mission statement defines your purpose and offers direction for all of your strategies, decisions and actions. If you cannot answer this question clearly, you have no compelling proposition for your members. A mission can be considered as your personal statement of intent. This will help you to focus all of your energy toward a concentrated focal point. Crucial points to remember when creating your mission statement are:

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- It must be clear and succinct.
- It must be narrowly focused enough to provide you with guidance and direction in **everything** you do.
- It must be general enough to allow for strategic flexibility and adaptation.
- It must be specific enough to capture your purpose unambiguously.
- It must be congruent with your company's mission statement. If not, you and your company will detract from each other rather than mutually contribute.

Core Values

If our mission statement answers the question **why** we exist, than our core values answers the question **how** do we exist? How do we live and carry out the mission in every decision we make and in all our actions? What do we stand for (as professionals and as individuals)? And equally important, what would we never stand for? In 1963, IBM's CEO, Thomas J. Watson Jr., stated in the publication *A Business and its Beliefs*:

"I believe the real difference between success and failure in a corporation can very often be traced to the question of how well the organization brings out the great energies and talents of its people. What does it do to help these people find common cause with each other?...And how can it sustain this common cause and sense of direction through the many changes which take place from one generation to another?...I think the answer lies in the power of what we call beliefs and the appeal these beliefs have for its people...I firmly

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believe that any organization, in order to survive and achieve success, must have a sound set of beliefs on which it premises all its policies and actions. Next, I believe that the most important single factor in corporate success is faithful adherence to those beliefs...Beliefs must always come before policies, practices, and goals. The latter must always be altered if they are seen to violate fundamental beliefs." -
(Adapted from Collins & Porras)

Collins and Porras in their book, "Built to Last" describe beliefs in the former text as being analogous to values. They further claim that Visionary Companies, who have historically outperformed their competitors, have prioritized their mission and core values ahead of the exclusive pursuit of profit as the sole objective of the organization.

"PROFITABILITY is a necessary condition for existence and a means to more important ends, but it is not the end in itself for many of the visionary companies. Profit is like oxygen, food, water, and blood for the body; they are not the point of life, but without them, there is no life."

Reputation

What are you known for? Or, what associations, thoughts and feelings are invoked in your members when they see, hear or think of you? Do they think of anything at all? Your positioning in the mind of your members is either your greatest advantage or handicap in your career. There are basically 3 ways to grow the profitability of your business, and your companies. They are:

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- Increase the # of clients you have
- Increase the quantity of purchase per client
- Increase the frequency of purchase per client

The common denominator of all of the above is trust. Trust decreases the perception of risk. Your member's aversion to risk is among the greatest limiting factors in any sales transaction. Competency alone does not foster trust. When a member purchases training, they risk losing their investment of time, money and expose themselves to feelings of failure if their decision does not bring about the changes they hoped for. Regardless of the rationale supporting the purpose of training, all buying decisions are emotional. It's difficult, if not impossible for someone to place themselves under your guidance without trust. Ideally, there are two spheres of trust that must be established in order to optimize the number of training participants within your facility. The member must trust you, and they must trust your company. As far as your member is concerned, you and your company are inseparable. If you stay at a four star hotel and have a disappointing experience with every member of the staff except one, you would view that employee as the exception while maintaining a negative view of the hotel. In fact, you would probably not stay there again. However, if your experience with each person on the staff was *consistently* positive, not only would you likely stay there again, it would be easier for them to up-sell you on experiencing their restaurant, spa, VIP lounge et cetera.

While your reputation is how your members view you, your companies brand is the members mental and emotional associations they have

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whenever they hear your company's name or see anything representing your company. The brand is NOT the logo, color scheme, slogan or marketing of your organization. These are representations of the brand. **The brand is** 37 year old Jane who joined your club 6 months ago. One Saturday, while driving down the road, Jane sees an advertisement for your company. One of three things happens to Jane reflexively.

1. She instantly feels emotional duress, frustration and indignation. She recalls the promises that were made when she joined, the excitement and hope that she felt, and that none of your company's commitments had been kept. She feels more frustrated and hopeless about making changes in her life now, than she did when she joined your club.
2. She experiences elation and a sense of self-efficacy because of the changes she's made. Although she's not at her goal, she has come further than she expected to. She has made more friends, and received more support in the past 6 months than in most of her life. Her self-confidence has increased and her self-concept has been dramatically transformed since she became a member.
3. Worst case scenario, she's driving by, sees your advertisement and nothing computes. She has neither positive nor negative feelings about your company, she's indifferent.

Obviously, only one of the scenarios above offer any hope of ever leading Jane to participate in personal training. Yet, all of the above were created by every aspect of every contact, with every person in your company. If your company has a weak brand, no matter how

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well (or not) you're doing, your success will be transient and fall short of your potential.

If your brand is strong, your personal potential increases. Therefore, it's not only essential for you to be conscious of your reputation at all times, but you must also pay attention to how everything you do affects the brand image of your company. Your responsibility is to seek out opportunities to provide each member with an outrageously good experience in your facility.

The stronger and more positive the brand, the greater number of people that will participate in personal training. Therefore, it's not only imperative for you to be conscious of the reputation that you cultivate, but to be keenly aware of how everything you do adds to or detracts from the brand of your company.

Myth #4:

Getting clients off the floor in my facility is nearly impossible. My members just aren't approachable.

Reality

What type of business do you work in? A health club, training studio, a gym? NO, NO and NO!! Our business is never defined by what the sign on the door says it is. Neither is it defined by its products or services, all of which can be imitated or made obsolete by the competition. Rather a business is defined by its utility, or what it does for its customers. The value of which is relevant only to the degree that the customer says it is.

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Whatever made you or your company successful in the past may be irrelevant to the success of your organization in the future. Market leadership cannot be sustained, it must be reinvented.

No matter how compelling your vision or comprehensive your strategy, it is meaningless without execution. Simply put, you must get out in front of your customer and do something for them! Unless you are relentlessly engaging your customer, the odds are that you're failing to develop a skill that is extremely important in your career long-term.

The only means of assuring that the solutions your company offers, and the assumptions you hold are not divorced from the reality of what your customer desires is by cultivating relationships through frequent, continual, value added points of contact. A relationship of trust and proven efficacy enables honest feedback essential to your company's ability to adapt to the specifications of your customer. This cannot happen from your desk, sales office, trainers lounge, etc. It *must* happen out on the floor.

In their book "The Experience Economy", Joseph Pine and James Gilmore state in the sub-title; *Work is Theatre and Every Business is a Stage*. If our business is a stage, then the floor is center stage. And just like any great performer we must be completely immersed in each scene in order to deliver a captivating performance. If not, the show fails to connect with the audience and it eventually dies. An affinity for being in the presence of your customers, to listen and respond with urgency to their problems, to never allow them to feel undervalued is not a strategic initiative! It's an attitude that must be indoctrinated

into the minds of every fitness professional who is intent on making a significant impact in the lives of their clients, their company and the fitness industry.

Solution

Utilize the following five step process to (1) contact new members, (2) provide guidance related to a member's training goals and (3) increase personal training revenue.

The five step process:

1. Initial service approach
2. Provide measurable service
3. Send a thank you card
4. Follow-up call
5. Schedule a ten-minute assessment

Step #1: Initial Service Approach: Engaging a member on the floor for the first time.

Working the floor with mastery is one of the greatest ways to develop a clientele. However, due to negative experiences, we often become hesitant, even resistant to approaching members on the floor. Worse, we develop a generalized belief that our members are unreceptive and negative. The negative responses we experience are usually not attributed to lack of openness or sociability on the part of the member.

It is usually ascribed to one or more of the following 5 reasons:

- Your approach challenged their competency
- Your approach challenged their mentor and judgment

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- They are reluctant to reveal their ignorance
- Fear of failure, exacerbated by seemingly correct, yet conflicting information
- They have a conditioned response to any perception of solicitation, due to negative belief's and experiences with sales people

Regardless of how professional and courteous your demeanor, you will never maximize your effectiveness on the floor if you approach a member with:

- May I make a suggestion?
- Can I recommend a better way of doing that?
- Can I show you a different technique?
- Let me show you the right way?
- Can I help you with that?
- What's your goal for that exercise? etc.

The implication of that approach can easily trigger fear, apprehension, confusion and resistance in your member. The result is an uncomfortable experience for the both of you. This experience can be avoided, and your success greatly increased, by changing the way you approach members on the floor. Risk or fear is the primary reason for a lack of openness on the floor. If you intentionally or by default challenge a member's belief system, judgment regarding an exercise, competency, mentor, etc., they'll usually be unreceptive.

Trainers are not the only ones who have challenges engaging customers. Many other individuals across every industry struggle with

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this. In fact, like us, many businesses implement the same methodology to engage customers despite the fact that it repeatedly fails. Think about the last time you walked into a clothing store, shoe store, or electronics outlet. What was the first thing the salesperson said to you to initiate contact? *"Hello, can I help you with anything?"* Then, almost certainly you said, *"No thanks, I'm just looking."*

What would happen in retail if one day, the sales person woke up and decided to break the rules? In violation of the unwritten law of salesperson/customer encounters, just one salesperson (let's call him Bob) decided to change his approach. Bob works in the men's shoe department. Bob understands that based on the law of probability, the number of contacts he makes every day, should lead to a certain number of presentations. Accordingly, the number of presentations Bob makes will inevitably lead to a certain number of sales. But Bob realizes that he has a problem. You see he recognizes that every time he initiates contact with a customer, his sales process breaks down immediately, and therefore he never gets as far as the presentation. He notices a pattern reoccurring in his process. Every time he offers assistance, the customer declines. Therefore, Bob decides to take action. By noticing where his process breaks down, he adapts his approach, and then tests it on the sales floor.

The next day Bob approaches his customers a bit differently.

Bob: Hello, my name is Bob. I see you're just looking (stealing the customer's lines). I don't want to interrupt you, I just understand how frustrating it can be when you need assistance

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and there's no one around to help you. If there's anything that I can do to enhance your experience while shopping here with us, please just ask me. Your name is? (Bill) Thank you for coming to see us today, Bill.

Because his approach was unique, Bob stands out in the customer's mind. The customer didn't feel pressured in any way, which makes Bob unthreatening. Most importantly, Bob left them alone. Then unimpeded, they are free to go to the part of the store that has the merchandise they're most interested in. So they walk over to the dress shoes. After giving them the space they need to get settled in the store, Bob can now approach the prospect for the second time. The first approach just creates a first impression, but then leads into the second point of contact. For example let's say that Bob's prospect decides to have a look at some dress shoes. This is a perfect opportunity for Bob to engage him with a question such as:

Bob: Bill, I see you're looking at our dress shoes. Are these for work, or do you have a formal affair coming up?

If Bob would have initiated the conversation like that, there would not have been enough rapport built and it would likely be uncomfortable for the prospect. But since Bob took the time to build rapport he is able to use a question to create a seamless transition into a presentation.

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Granted, Bob is not guaranteed to make a sale. However, it's quite possible that he can dramatically increase his income. Let's say that Bob greets 100 people per day in his busy department store; if he works five days per week that's five hundred people per week. Using the "can I help you with anything method", just about every single person responded with "no thanks, just looking". Therefore, the greeting never resulted in a presentation. No presentations means no pro-actively generated sales. Bob had to depend on other people asking him for help so he could then punch-in his employee ID when they checked out, in order to get credit for the purchase. Now, with his new approach he takes control of every part of the greeting. That means there's nothing the customer can say no to. Bob has the control to transition every greeting into a presentation. Even if ninety-five percent of the people he greets never purchases any merchandise from him, he still would make five extra sales per day. That adds up to twenty-five sales per week, one-hundred extra sales per month and 1,150 new sales per year (assuming he takes a two week vacation). If he developed his level of skill as a sales person to the point where ten percent of the people he engaged make a purchase that would equal 2,400 more sales for Bob every year. The good part is that Bob is not working any harder, he merely modified his approach.

Utilize the following 2 steps to minimize the perceived threat you potentially represent and increase your success on the floor.

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The initial step is the bottleneck to everything you do. If done correctly, you have the potential to move successfully through the rest of the steps. If not done correctly it can make the other steps in the process especially difficult. The most effective way to build your business is by being approachable and representing the image of outstanding professionalism on the floor. While everything you do is important, exceptional service on the fitness floor is among the greatest contributing factors to building a clientele.

Using an approach that is non-threatening is less likely to trigger a negative conditioned response.

I would suggest something such as:

- **Good Morning (afternoon, evening), I know that you're in the middle of a workout, so I'm not going to take up any of your time. I just wanted to let you know that my name is _____, I'm a trainer here. I want to make sure that anything you might need is taken care of. If there is anything I can do to help you please let me know, I would be happy to enhance your experience here in any way I can. By the way, what's your name? Thank you "Mary", enjoy your workout.**

Note: Focus on service before science. Even if you need to simply introduce yourself, get the members name and make them aware that you are there to enrich their experience at the club, by attending to *any* of their needs, do it! By resisting the temptation to educate, your first interaction with the member is professional, pleasant and most

important, non-threatening. You will be in a better position to offer assistance during your next encounter.

Next time you have a conversation with them you can now address the exercise they are doing and communicate a benefit you can offer. The moment you invalidate someone's choice in activity, you eliminate the possibility of effective communication. The goal is never to be right, it is to be effective in facilitating a positive change for your member.

Step # 2: Provide Measurable Service: This second point of contact should take place within a relatively short time after the initial contact (within 15 min.)

Observe the member performing an exercise. What do you notice about her movements that stand out? How do you think that you can be of help? When on the floor, it helps to carry a clipboard on the floor with program templates and a checkpoint list. Create notes on various aspects of your client's movement patterns to make recommendations on how you can add value to her current exercise selection and overall program.

For example:

Mary, I just got back from a seminar (read a book, saw a video, etc.) and learned a variation of this exercise that is specific for your goal of ... If I can show you an exercise that would help you see greater results in less time, would you give it a try?

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When making an exercise recommendation, focus primarily on the benefit the member will receive, more so than the scientific rationale behind or feature of the exercise you recommend.

Note: Psychologically, it's very hard for an individual to resist a rationale that substantiates and relates to their own. Identify what they are trying to achieve. Offer an augmentation to what they are already doing. Don't try to persuade them to do something else. Remember, slow and progressive integration of your coaching methodology into their existing mental model, will reduce resistance and maximize receptiveness. At this point, utilize your knowledge of assessment, program design and exercise selection to offer an exercise component (flexibility, balance, power, etc) that supplements their current exercise. Articulate the benefit they will receive related directly to their goal (exercise component – benefit charts are provided below once again just as an example).

FAT LOSS

COMPONENT	BENEFITS
Flexibility	Muscles are at ideal lengths to allow for more efficient movement, leading to the potential for greater caloric expenditure.
Core	Activating the muscles of the core allows for an increased recruitment of prime movers, which burn more calories.

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Balance	Working in a controlled unstable environment is more of a neurological challenge which burns more calories.
Reactive	Increases the challenge to the body through training at different speeds. It allows for increased recruitment of muscles, which in turn, burns more calories.
Strength	Increase or maintenance of lean tissue enables the body to burn a greater number of calories, even when client is not training.

HYPERTROPHY/MUSCLE GAIN

COMPONENT	BENEFITS
Flexibility	Muscles are at ideal length for greater force production and there is less inhibition of the muscles, which leads to a potential for greater growth.
Core	The stronger the core or foundation, the stronger all structures attached to it (or the extremities) will be.
Balance	Balancing increases the body's ability to recruit its muscles throughout.
Reactive	A muscle can only grow if it is recruited. Reactive training conditions the nervous system to recruit muscle types that have the greatest potential for growth.
Strength	Greater joint stabilization permits greater activation of muscles and force production.

PERFORMANCE

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COMPONENT	BENEFITS
Flexibility	Flexibility aligns muscles to be at ideal lengths for greater force production and performance.
Core	Increased activation of the core muscles allows for greater force production throughout the extremities.
Balance	Balance challenges the body to achieve alignments and positions that are specific to the environment and demand in sports and/or recreational activities. This helps reduce the risk of injury during activity.
Reactive	Increased speeds that match those a client encounter during recreational and competitive sports activities will allow the client's body to move more easily and effectively in the future at those speeds.
Strength	All components of the program will condition the client for greater performance and control, and reduce risk of injury in sports activities.

Step # 3: Follow-up Calls

As a trainer, EVERYTHING MATTERS! The concept of "don't sweat the small stuff" may engender greater inner peace, but if you intend to create a reputation for peerless professionalism, you must sweat the small stuff!

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After you have given the member guidance that enables her to walk away with a tangible benefit, ask for her contact information.

- Explain to her that the observations you made will enable you to offer her further guidance in the future.
- However you are aware that she is in the middle of her workout and therefore would like to contact her later when you have developed more exercise recommendations.
- Ask her if it would be all right with her if you could contact her at another time to discuss some additional solutions?
- If you have followed the previous two steps, most members will say "yes."
- After she says "yes," ask her for her full name and where you can contact her (e-mail, phone, address) so you can send her information (article clippings, program recommendations, web-based information, etc.) that pertain to her goal.
- On the same day you receive her contact information, hand write a thank you card and mail it to her.
 - A card with your company's logo on it is preferable. If this is not available to you, invest in your own thank you cards.

The wording on the card should be professional, brief and should not solicit the purchase of anything. It should consist of something simple, such as:

Dear _____,

Just a quick note to thank you for your time the other day. It was a pleasure meeting you. I really enjoyed talking to you about your fitness goals. If you have any further questions on any aspect of your fitness program, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Once again, it was a pleasure meeting you.

**Best regards,
(your name)**

Include your business card. This is tactful, very professional and shows that you took the time to individualize a hand-written thank you card. This will have a much different effect than a standardized letter that is printed off of a computer or an e-mail.

Step #4

Follow-up Call

Make a notation in your planner to call her and every other member you send a thank you card to, within 2 to 3 days after the card has been mailed. The phone call is not to sell her anything. It's just to follow-up. The information you attained from her movement assessment will dramatically increase your value as a fitness professional during the call. The information you gathered in the assessment will demonstrate:

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1. Your level of expertise
2. How that information will help you individualize a program that will enable her to see greater results in less time.
3. What distinguishes you from other trainers

An example of what you might say on the phone is:

Hello _____, It's _____ from _____ how are you?

Do you have a couple of minutes, or should I call back at a better time?

I just wanted to make sure that you received the card that I sent and to thank you personally.

_____, are you going to be in the club around the same time later this week *or the next?*

Great! I didn't want to take up too much of your time the other day because I knew you were in the middle of your workout. But I promised that I would contact you when I had more recommendations to help you achieve your goals. I have some great ideas ready.

Can we spend ten minutes together so I can take a brief look at the exercises you'll be doing, so I can give you more information on how to achieve greater results?

What time is good for you?

I'll see you then, have a great day.

If the member declines on your offer, thank them anyway. You're not going to have everyone agree to meet with you. Never mention or give the impression that they should purchase anything while on the phone. If you keep the call focused on service, many members will appreciate the follow-up. When was the last time you purchased something from a store and the associate sent you a card and called you to make sure you were getting the most out of your purchase?

Step #5

The 10 Minute Appointment

When you meet the member for the 10-minute appointment, whatever exercises they're doing, utilize one of them to re-evaluate their movement patterns.

- Write out a brief exercise plan, consisting of 1 to 3 recommendations that correlate each component with their goals and with your assessment. For example, if you suggest to the member a flexibility exercise along with a more proprioceptively challenging exercise for her strength training, remind her of exactly how your recommendations will help her solve a specific challenge or attain a benefit that is important to her. Then, once she is excited about the exercise and understands its relevance to her, coach her through the application.
- Following the implementation of the exercise ask the member what part of her experience she enjoyed the most.

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Then, simply offer the member a personal training session. Explain to the member that the personal training package will:

- Provide her with a completely individualized program, based on their goals, the benefits that are most important to them and their current level of ability.
- Take the guesswork, confusion and frustration out of every aspect of component of exercise selection.
- Eliminate all fear and uncertainty of training by precisely measuring progress and offering an exact progression strategy to help the member achieve maximum results in the least amount of time.
- Continually build their confidence and inspire them to greater levels of success by:
 - Progressively teaching them to implement their own program.

After explaining the benefits of personal training, ask her to purchase a package of ____ sessions. If the member agrees:

- Complete all administrative paperwork and processes necessary to conclude the sale.
- Schedule her first appointment immediately.
 - The goal is to schedule them within 24 to 72 hours.
- Send a hand written thank you card that day.
- Call to confirm the day of or the night before your first appointment.

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- Go over the member's goals again and briefly reiterate how each component will help her achieve those goals.

If the member declines to purchase training from you:

- Regardless of the reason, express the fact that you understand. Rather than purchasing a package, ask them to give a single session a try. If they say yes, follow the steps bullet pointed above. If they still decline:
 - Thank them for the time they spent with you.
 - Ask if you can call them in a couple of weeks to make sure they are doing okay in their program.
 - Send out a thank you card immediately.
 - Put the date you said you would call in your daily planner and follow through.
 - Make sure you have all of their contact information. Periodically (weekly/monthly) send them information that pertains to their goals. This can be article clippings, copies of an article in a trade journal, etc. Most importantly, keep in contact . A "No" today is not a "No" indefinitely. You can offer semi-private training in the near future. Semi-private training lowers the price point and intimacy of the session, which may lower perceived risk and hesitation involved with committing to a personal trainer in her mind. In addition, the greater the number of people who consider you an expert and a resource for their health and fitness needs, the larger your referral base.
 - Make sure you follow-through on everything you say you will do for the member.

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Keep meticulous records of the results you produce in a specific time period (bi-weekly or monthly). Use those records to answer the following questions:

- How many members do I measurably assist each week?
- Am I sending a thank you card within 24-hours of each assist I make?
- Do I call every member 3 days after I send the card?
- How many calls result in an actual conversation with the member, as opposed to getting an answering machine, someone taking a message, etc.?
- How many phone conversations result in a 10-minute appointment?
- How many 10-minute appointments result in a purchase of training?

Now you have the information you need to build a system. For example if you want to get a new client, use the following process:

- Out of every 10 members you help, you send 10 thank you cards
- For every 10 members you assist and send a card to, you are able to personally speak to 6 of them by phone
- Only 4 of the members you personally speak to over the phone, agree to a 10-minute appointment.
- Out of every 4 members that take a 10-minute appointment, only one will purchase personal training or a group training package.
- **This means that you have a 10% closing ratio.**

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The benefit to having this information is being able to plan your weeks in advance. If you want one new client you can develop a strategy.

For example:

- Encounter assist 10 members that day
- 5 members during two consecutive days
- Or 2 members every day, within a 5 day work week

If you keep accurate statistics and are following a plan, you're chances of hitting your goal is substantially higher. If you fail to reach your goal, you have the information necessary to evaluate why:

- Did you assist enough members per day?
- Was every card sent out?
- If you're only able to personally contact 6 out of every 10 members by phone, are you calling at the best possible time? (Do not place more than 2 follow-up calls to a member, regardless of whether or not you personally contact them.)
- If only one out of every four appointments purchase training, is your level of assessment and program design skill appropriate for the value you are trying to create?
- Are you focused on the member's goals more than your knowledge, product or service?
- Are you focusing each component of personal/group training on the benefits it will provide for the member or on the technological features of the system?
- Are you keeping appropriate records of your daily floor activity?

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❖ Sample floor activity log:

CONTACT	NAME	DATE	Card Sent	Follow-up Call	10-Min. appt.	Result
Floor	Joe Smith	09-14-01	09-14-01	09-17-01	9-20-01	Program/no sale
Floor	Sue Williams	09-14-01	09-15-01	09-18-01	9-24-01	Program/no sale
Floor	John Jones	09-15-01	09-16-01	09-19-01	9-23-01	Sale- 10 pack
Floor	Gloria Fanelli	09-15-01	09-16-01	09-19-01	Decline.	N/A

Like every other aspect of your work, the starting point of top performance is clarity concerning your objective. What do you want to have happen as a result of working the floor? If the goal is to simply put in a days work for a days pay that is the **highest** payoff you can expect. If, instead, you identify specific goals, such as to cultivate your position within your club, develop a clientele and develop a solid word-of-mouth business, the payoff will be higher. The task now is to determine what you need to do every day in order to bring your desired outcomes into reality. Remember the statement from Joseph Pine and James Gilmore "*Work is theater, and every business is a stage.*" The floor is *center* stage of your facility. Everything you do on the floor either enhances your performance, or kills the show; what's more, in the eyes of your customers, you're only as good as your last performance.

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Here are 5 things you can do to enhance your performance when you're on the floor.

1: Total Accountability

Don't just work the floor, Own it. Take responsibility for everything that happens on the floor. Imagine it's opening day at the theater, you purchase your tickets and the usher escorts you to your seat. As the lights fade, you're filled with anticipation. When the spotlight illuminates the stage you discover that the set isn't built and there are no backdrops or music. No one in production gave any thought about the gaffers, cat walkers, stagehands, prop masters, conductors, etc. Even if the actors and performers were amazing, the lack of attention to detail would still detract from your experience. The performance of the actors may have saved it from being ruined completely, but your expectations made the event a bit of a disappointment. What do you think the other members of the audience thought about their experience? What affect will that have on ticket sales when the show earns a less than flattering reputation? This is analogous to the members experience when the club is dirty and the equipment is down. It may not be your job to care about repair and maintenance or cleanliness, but it affects your income and reputation. Disappointed customers usually are reluctant to buy any other services, such as personal training. Further, their opinion of the club helps form their perception of the people working there. Appoint yourself as the head of the maintenance department, complaint department and any other role you need to take to personally affect the members' experience positively. Never allow the words "it's not my job," to be part of your

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vocabulary. That type of mentality is a symptom of attitudinal sclerosis, or hardening of the attitude, and it is fatal to your career.

#2: Center Stage

"Leadership is performance; you have to be conscious of your behavior because everyone else is!" – (Carly Fiorina, C.E.O., HP) How many times have you walked into a store and needed assistance and couldn't locate anyone to help you? Your business does not grow or become more profitable from behind a desk. Profitability, brand distinction, and enthusiasm are created through cohabitation with the customer. Don't do what average trainers do and congregate in the middle of the floor or appear busy but with no purposeful *customer centered* outcome.

- Be aware of every member around you. Pay attention to every non-verbal cue indicating a customer may need assistance.
- Move with a sense of purpose and urgency. Let everything about you convey energy and enthusiasm. Never appear bored or as if you have nothing to do. Find every opportunity to create a value added moment with a member.
- Non-verbal communication constitutes over half of every message you send. Nothing about your body language is inconsequential or unnoticed. Think about what adjectives you would like members to use in describing you. Project that in every component of your performance.

#3: Engage the audience

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Nothing happens until you make a decision to do something. Being approachable in your non-verbal communication and attitude is the minimum acceptable criteria. However, it's not enough by itself to maximize the success that can be derived from effectively working the floor. Learn to master the art of engaging each member. Commit to learning everything you can about communication, psychology and exercise science in order to persuasively demonstrate to each member the value of that you offer.

Exercise: During your next scheduled shift, set a goal to meet 10 members. Don't worry about correcting exercise or providing any measurable means of service at this point. Your objective is to simply introduce yourself and walk away from that member on a first name basis.

#4: Rehearse

Your confidence and effectiveness on the floor is related to your proficiency as a fitness professional in multiple areas. Learn and study every day for at least one hour. I know a highly reputable account manager in the fitness industry who suggests breaking up your learning strategy into 4 quadrants. He recommends studying something a minimum of 15 minutes each day from the areas of:

- Exercise Science
- Industry events and trends
- Sales, psychology and communication
- Personal development

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The key to his system is quality, not necessarily quantity. If you can learn just one thing from each area, every day and log it into a journal for frequent review, you will have learned 1,460 new things every year that is relevant to your personal and professional growth. In addition, create a plan the night before work, detailing what you wish to accomplish on the floor the next day. Finally, use a checklist to determine whether or not you have met your objectives for that day.

A checklist is not limited to, but should include the following questions:

- How many people did I engage today?
- Did I send a thank you card to each of them?
- Have I made all of my scheduled follow-up calls?
- Did I contact everyone?
- How many appointments were made?
- Are they entered in my planner or personal management system?
- Ratio of calls to assessments?
- What number of today's scheduled assessments were no shows?
- Did I contact each no show to reschedule?
- What was the result of each assessment/appointment I conducted today?
- What is the next action step in my follow-up plan?

#5: Love your work

Your emotional and mental state, whether positive or negative, is infectious. Therefore, you inevitably project on the outside how you feel about your work on the inside. Before starting work each day ask yourself:

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- What do I love about my work?
- What about it gives my life the greatest meaning?
- What can I do for someone today that would add value to their lives and give me an inward feeling of fulfillment?
- How can I make every day at work more fun?
- How can I express myself through my work?

Finally, demand more from yourself everyday. Accept nothing less than the pursuit of excelling to the highest limits of your personal potential.

10 Steps to Success on The Floor

My advice to any in-club trainer is to act as if you are self-employed. Get into the mindset that you are an operating partner whose role is to create brand distinction, member retention and personal training revenue. Everything you do will therefore be the model for every other employee in the future. If you act as if you are a partner in your company, you won't fall victim to the attitudes and practices that hinder the upward mobility of many other trainers.

Many trainers never take ownership of their jobs; instead, they believe that their company is responsible for their success and profitability. This attitude leads them to focus more on their rights than their responsibilities. Trainers who adopt a different attitude ultimately benefit more. When you believe that you owe much, rather than deserve much, you will give much. Ironically, you will dramatically

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outperform the trainer who is focused on what they can receive from their company. What we receive is always in proportion to what we have given.

Take the time to ask yourself:

- What is it about my company am I most passionate about?
- What core values do I strongly share with my company?
- Why do I love my company, and more importantly our customers?
- What tangible contribution(s) am I accountable for making that will benefit my company, our customers, as well as myself?

If you cannot optimistically answer these questions, you are working in the wrong company. If you do not love your company, customers and the collective contribution you're making, your job will always be simply a job rather than a career full of experiences that will fulfill you emotionally as well as professionally.

No work environment or company is perfect. Regardless, take responsibility for what you do, right where you are. Never utter the words, "They only pay me X (dollars, euros, pounds, etc.) per hour to..." That statement is a symptom of attitudinal-sclerosis, the hardening of the attitudes, which is always fatal to your career.

Also, just as I said before your company does not pay you---you pay you. If you want to produce a level of compensation, you need to follow the same processes as an independent trainer. You need to develop a plan and then intensely work that plan. A good plan is

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analogous to a roadmap. A roadmap, if it's worth anything, must identify the destination. Then, it must offer multiple means of adapting the route you take to get there, in the event of unforeseen road blocks.

Your most powerful means of developing your clientele, and position among your members, depends on how well you work the floor. Don't make the mistake of completely relying on the Sales Consultants to schedule orientations for you. That philosophy will cause you to forfeit control of how many presentations you make per week leaving your productivity level in the hands of someone else. In addition, focusing exclusively on orientations, does nothing for your reputation, differentiation and positioning in the minds of the greater part of your membership base. Set up your plan based on your annual income goal. Utilize the following ten steps/questions to direct the design of your plan.

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Step # 1

- *What do I want to earn this year?*

Your annual income goal is the sum total of your monthly earnings over the past twelve months. Your monthly goal is the sum of your weekly earnings, multiplied by four. Once you clearly identify your desired annual income, move on to Step Two.

Step # 2

- *How many sessions per week do I need to perform, in order to achieve my yearly goal?*

The number of sessions per week, should produce an income that is equivalent to your annual goal, when multiplied by fifty (allow 2 weeks for vacation). Let's assume that you determined, by performing thirty sessions per week, you will achieve your annual income goal.

Step # 3

- *In order to produce thirty sessions per week, how many clients do I need to have?*

To establish this number, take the average number of paid sessions you perform weekly and divide it by the number of clients you have. If you are a new trainer, and do not have the ability to do this, guesstimate. The idea is to create a reference to work from. Let's assume you discover your average client trains 2X per week. That means you need 15 clients to produce 30 sessions weekly to achieve your annual income goal of X.

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Step # 4

- *What is my closing percentage/ratio?*

This is the total number of people you help on the floor compared to how many of them purchase training from you. In order to ascertain this, compare the number of people you have engaged on the floor within the past 30 days, with how many of them purchased training from you. If you do not yet track this information, take another guess. A realistic percentage will be 10%. Meaning, one out of every 10 members you help on the floor will become a client.

Step # 5

- What time frame will I give myself to achieve my goal of attaining 15 clients?

If you set unrealistic time frames (such as, next week), it will likely lead to frustration and disappointment. However, if you set the time frame too far in the future, you will not create the sense of urgency necessary to maximize performance. Both scenarios will probably lead to underperformance. Instead, allow yourself approximately six weeks to achieve your goals.

Step # 6

- If my closing percentage is 10%, how many members will I need to assist on the floor each week to achieve my goal of 15 client's within 6 weeks?

If your closing ratio is 10%, then you will have to assist 150 members within 6 weeks. That sounds like a lot. When you

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break it down into weekly increments, that's only 25 people per week!

Step # 7

- If I need to assist 25 people per week, how many people do I need to assist each day? The answer depends on how many days per week you work. If you work 5 days per week, that's five people every day. Meeting your goals become easier when you break your annual income goal down into smaller components?

Step # 8

- How many per hour?
If you work 8 hours per day, how many orientations do you conduct on average? Let's say it's anywhere from 3 to 4. That leaves you with approximately 4 hours of floor time. Let's take an hour for lunch. Now you are left with 3 hours of floor time. Every 30 minutes, you should be providing measurable assistance to at least one person in the club. That will give you 6 people per day that you can add to your prospect base. Out of those 6 members, 5 of them daily will contribute to your goal of 25 per week. The sixth, will give you a quantitative advantage considering, no-shows, cancellations and re-scheduled appointments that are inevitable (but can be considerably reduced by habitual confirmation and follow-up calls).

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Step # 9

- As a trainer you should possess the core competencies of individualized assessment, program design and exercise selection. With what you know right now, you have the capacity to provide a distinct, enjoyable experience for almost any member you make a connection with. If you have built a good level of rapport with the member, explain that you would like to have their contact information so that you can develop some exercises to help them achieve their goals. Tell them that during their next visit to the club you will assist them in implementing the exercises.

Step # 10

- Every exercise is an assessment. Each exercise a member performs will give you feedback regarding his movement pattern including static and dynamic postural alignment, neuro-muscular control and his rate of progression. This information is essential in exercise selection, regression and progression. More importantly to the member it gives you the trainer the ability to individualize the programming solutions necessary for him to achieve the greatest amount of results in the least amount of time, safely. Regardless of the exercise the member was doing on the floor, write down what you observed during your movement analysis. If you or your club does not have their own movement analysis methodology you can utilize tools such as the Reebok Movement Screen, the NASM Kinetic Chain Assessment, PTA GLOBAL MOVE appraisal, the Gray Institute or

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any other of the available options provided through educational organizations in the industry. Within 24-hours, mail them a hand-written thank you card, for the time they spent with you in the club. This shows that you took the time to sit down and write out a card, acknowledging them. This is small action will differentiate you from the rest.

Give the card 2-3 days to arrive, and then call. When you call, your goal is to:

- Make sure they got the card
- Thank them personally
- Let them know you have thought about their goals and would like to show them some exercises that will be helpful to them.
- Be clear that it will only take about 10 minutes. This way they will not be apprehensive about meeting with you again.
- Determine the next time they are coming to the club.
- Schedule an informal appointment, during their next visit.

When you see them again:

- Take them through a couple of exercises as an assessment
- Give them a couple of exercise strategies to implement
- Discuss the benefits of an individualized program,
- Recommend a training package that most closely maps with the goals they desire to achieve.

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Trainer: Mrs. Jones, this program offers exercise recommendations that relate to your training goal. You may have some questions about some of the exercises on this program and if you do I will be happy to help you. I always have 5 minutes when I'm not on an appointment. However, if we implement this program together, an individualized and progressive training process will enable you to experience the greatest amount of results in the least amount of time. Why don't we get you started on a training package right now, because that will enable us to schedule your first appointment and begin to achieve your goal of...?

If they decline on a package, whatever the reason let them know that you understand and appreciate their position. Then ask them to schedule a single session in order to just ***"give it a try."***

Many sales are lost, simply because they are not asked for. When you follow the above ten steps, and then directly ask for the training sale, 9 out of 10 members will say no. There are multiple reasons for this that are outside the scope of this discussion. However, even with a 10% closing ratio, hundreds of fitness professionals in this industry have been able to develop a clientele.

A quick review:

If the member accepts your offer to train with them:

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- Complete the sales transaction.
- Get them their first appointment as soon as possible.
- Send them a thank you card immediately.
- Call to confirm before your first appointment.
- Review their goals again and briefly reiterate the benefits they will experience training with you.

If they decline to train with you:

- Affirm the fact that you are always available to help them on the floor.
- Ask if you can contact them in a couple of weeks to make sure everything is going well with their program.
- Put the date you said you would call in your planner.
- Follow through.
- Put their name into a global e-mail file.
- E-mail them articles on a monthly basis that would pertain to their goal(s). You can get these from many resources, one of which is pt on the net.

Sir Winston Churchill said that *"Responsibility is the Price of Greatness"*. When you shift your focus from your rights, to your responsibilities, you create greater possibilities, not only for others, but for yourself. Prospecting and marketing is more than strategy, it's a responsibility. When you recognize the passion to give beyond yourself and believe you possess the talents to employ your passion towards the creation of possibility for others, you have an obligation to affect as many people as possible, within your reach. Talents are endowed to us not because we deserve them, but because we are

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accountable to fully use them in the service of others. The irony is that in order to retain and develop our talents, we must commit to giving them away. Yet, the instant you decide to fully commit yourself to the transformation of lives, you free yourself from the restraints of your job forever. Most people lack the vision and perseverance of those few who go beyond making a living, in pursuit of making a difference. If you are reading this and saying to yourself, "that's me, I'm that person. I am committed to making a difference", then I implore you to be uncompromising in your efforts to increase your volume of prospects. Marketing, networking and prospecting are not just an effective means of increasing your financial return, but also a means of increasing the magnitude of service you offer to others. That is the most enduring measure of greatness.

Myth #5:

I don't have a budget to market myself and I only have a couple of clients so I can't build a referral based business.

Reality

The more inundated our society becomes with e-mail, teleconferencing, spam, the internet, social media and an increasingly greater number of people trying to market an increasingly greater number of products, the less effective traditional advertising and marketing will become. We are likely exposed to more sensory bombardment in a month than our great grandparents were in their entire lives. We can't process everything, so the more we're exposed to the more we need to filter out. This is one of the reasons we're becoming so desensitized to traditional marketing. When was the last time you ever bought anything from a telemarketer? Do you know anyone who regularly buys from telemarketers? Me neither! What about direct mail. It is a viable means of advertising if you have the money, but only produces an average of 1% return. Meaning if 100 people receive your mailer, 95 will probably throw it out, and only one out of the 100 people will actually buy anything as a result of the campaign.

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Not too long ago the Wall Street Journal reported that Proctor and Gamble was going to reduce their fall television advertising budget by 15%. Proctor and Gamble has one of the largest advertising initiatives in the world! The problem is that cool offerings such as TiVo people aren't even watching commercials anymore (at least not nearly to the same degree). So why would any intelligent company continue to pour the same degree of financial resources into a means of advertising that is becoming less effective.

Martha Rogers Ph.D. has been ranked by the publication *Business 2.0* as one of the nineteen most important business thinkers of the last century. *Accenture's Institute for Strategic Change* named her as one of the worlds "Top 100 Business Intellectuals." She states:

The new technology of marketing is not mass marketing but one to one marketing, interpersonal marketing, network marketing.

Have you ever had the experience where a close friend goes to a restaurant or the cinema and was WOWED by the experience? He enthusiastically tells you about it and insists that you go as well. What did you do? Odds are you went. Could a telemarketer have gotten you there?

Marketing is the means by which we communicate our the benefits, advantages, experience and solutions that our services offer in a way that is so emotionally compelling it entices someone to buy from us. Put another way, effective marketing is effective story telling. Even if

you don't have a large budget there are ways to persuasively tell your story.

Solution

The key here is volume. The more people you contact, present the solutions your services offer and follow-up, the greater the return. However, averages by itself is not the strategy. The objective is to maximize our return on time and/or money invested. There are three simply strategies you can implement.

1. Presentations
2. Newspaper ads
3. Networking

Presentations

Presentations are among the most powerful means of marketing your services. Advertising is valuable, yet lacks the emotional connection of a live presentation. Have you ever had the experience of being moved emotionally by a speaker? Something in the content of the presentation, coupled with the conviction of the presenter inspired you. Compare this to the last time you opened the paper, or a direct mail postcard in your mailbox and couldn't contain your excitement. Which of these two scenarios is most likely to create responsiveness in you? In order to create brand identity, awareness and positioning, it's a good idea to utilize multiple means of marketing. However, a live presentation is the most powerful way of making an emotional impact and creating valuable leads to follow-up on. Think about what businesses/organizations in your community will afford you the

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opportunity to make a presentation to individual's who have a problem you can provide a solution for? What about a desire you can help them achieve? Some ideas are:

- Law firms
- Real estate
- Insurance companies
- Toast masters
- National Speakers Association
- Rotary organizations
- UPS/Fed-X
- Auto dealerships
- Department stores
- Advertising/marketing agency
- Any organization that has a demanding sales and productivity component to their position.

Create a list of advantages individuals will gain as a result of consistent exercise. Our ability to be effective in front of potential clients is in part, largely dependent on our ability to differentiate a feature from a benefit. A feature is some element or characteristic of our services. For example:

- Individualized program design
- Time allotment per session
- Exercise selection
- Exercise modification (progression/regression)
- Equipment utilized

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None of the above is particularly important to anyone, until you can effectively communicate to them how it specifically solves a problem, creates an advantage or improves their quality of life and/or work. Therefore, you wouldn't limit your positioning to weight loss, tone, muscle gain, low back pain prevention, etc. You would present the advantages you offer in terms of their outcome.

- More energy
- Confidence
- Efficiency in activities of daily living
- Job performance
- Less pain
- Attractiveness
- Greater mental focus
- Self-esteem

Your success is directly correlated with your willingness to prospect persistently. Get in front of as many people as you possibly can. This one discipline alone will generate greater returns than almost any other activity you engage in. It doesn't matter how skilled you are at assessments, program design or how experienced you are as a speaker. If you're not consistently putting yourself in front of people who will desire and benefit from the results you can yield for them, you will never maximize your professional growth or earning potential.

In addition, one can strongly argue that a complacent attitude towards prospecting is unethical. Ask yourself with unadulterated honesty, "Given my true intentions, skills and sincerity toward continued

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educational development, will my client's truly get more out of their life as a result of training with me?" If the answer is "No," then prospecting is dishonest, because we are attempting to sell something of no value. However, if the answer is "Yes," than anything less than a complete resolution towards maximizing our prospecting efforts is disreputable. The rationale for this is clearly evident in our assertion that we possess the capacity to positively affect lives and then withhold the extent of that affect intentionally. The fact that you are reading this, suggests that you are conscientious towards delivering optimum results for your clients. Therefore, it's your responsibility to do everything possible to increase the growth of your business, because doing so will have a great inverse benefit for others. In creating your prospecting plan, follow the proceeding steps.

Step # 1:

Make a list of all business's you will contact in the following week.

Resources you can use to identify these businesses are:

- Local chamber of commerce
- The internet
- Phone book
- Network with people you know who are clients, vendors, suppliers, employees and managers of these businesses

Be very specific about the outcome you desire. How many clients do we wish to attain from this? The answer to that question will determine how many companies you contact. Assume that only 5% of the companies you contact will invite you to present. That means if

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you make 20 phone calls, the result will be one presentation. In one presentation, let's hypothesize that there will be an average of ten employees present. Out of that ten, if two purchase training sessions from you, the presentation was profitable.

If you make 20 calls per week, schedule one presentation, which leads to 2 clients that will produce approximately 8 clients in approximately one month. If half of those clients train 2 days per week and you charge \$50 per hour, that presentation earned you \$400 per week in revenue. Is that worth spending a couple of hours per week on the phone?

The problem is that many fitness professionals will not invest the time and energy necessary to produce that revenue. For most, it's not because of laziness but because of fear of rejection. Remember, 19 out of 20 organizations will say no. But that's not rejection, it's progression.

If the result of 19 no's is one presentation, leading to just 2 sessions for the weeks effort, at \$100 in revenue, you earned \$5 per call. By itself, that may not be a lot of money, but if you perceive each call to have earned you \$5, you will be more motivated to make your calls, than if you consider 95% of them as a rejection.

Step # 2:

Identify the contact person. Who are you going to contact? Is it the sales manager, human resources? What is most important to them personally? What problems do they have that you can help them solve? For example, if they are in sales, how can greater energy, mental focus and confidence impact their sales? What is sub-optimal sales costing them, financially? In their opinion, what are the positive consequences of a highly motivated, energized, focused, confident team with an increased feeling of well-being? If they are human resources, what are their annual health care costs? Present your facts regarding the effect consistent exercise adherence on employee absenteeism. If you visit IHRSA's website, they post a variety of industry facts and statistics. Each employee who does not consistently exercise will cost his or her company over \$1,000 more per year than an employee who does. When you contact any organization, do not talk about your services or what they are. Instead, focus on what problems your services solve. If you are talking to a sales manager, they may not be interested in having you present on weight loss or how to improve performance in recreational sports. They will be interested in revenue. They will be interested in developing more confident, alert, energetic sales people, who can sell at levels of peak performance for longer periods of time. A human resources manager is concerned with how they can decrease health care costs and increase productivity, by decreasing employee absenteeism related to illness, low energy, depression, musculoskeletal injuries,

Step # 3:

Offer a free, no obligation presentation to as many of their employees as possible. All you ask for in return is:

- A contact list of all attendees, consisting of their name, phone number, e-mail address, and home/work mailing address.
- To have every attendee answer just a couple of questions, pertaining to their goals.
 - What's one fitness goal they would most want to achieve if they could?
 - What is most important to them about achieving that goal?

Extend the offer of a 15 minute consultation to each attendee. The assessments accomplish two things:

1. They only take about 15 minutes to implement. Offering an hour introductory session can potentially hurt revenue because of the time commitment. If you have four people accept a session, that's four hours of training. Not only do you lose the money for the session, you lose the time slot, allocated for existing clients.
2. If you utilize a systematic approach to assessment, movement analysis, exercise selection and program design you can create a roadmap for your prospects that will enable them to envision exactly how your services blend together to remove the guesswork from their goals.

Risk is the major reason why individuals/organizations elect to decline on what we offer them. If you can eliminate risk by offering a no obligation presentation, that potentially can deliver benefits to their

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employees/company, they will be more enthusiastic about your presentation.

Before you conclude your presentation, give each person a complimentary assessment card. This can be as simple as your business card. Attempt to make as many appointments as possible, immediately following the presentation. If that is not feasible, try to schedule as many appointments as you can within 24-hours. This is when their level of motivation will be the highest.

Step # 4:

Follow-up with every participant of every presentation.

- Mail a hand-written thank you card to every participant of the presentation. This is a professional and personal way to keep you on their mind. If they did not provide a mailing address, use e-mail to send your thank you. You can get some great stuff through yahoo Hot-bar or blue mountain.
- Call the people who have made an appointment, to confirm the time, date and reiterate how this assessment will correlate with the goal(s) they stated was most important to them, when they answered their fitness questions.
- Contact everyone who did not make an appointment for a consultation and offer them one.
- If they decline, ask if you can send them monthly information related to their fitness goals via e-mail. Most people will say yes. A "No" is just as important as a "Yes." The question is "What do you do with each person who says no?" Do you write them off as a loss? Of course not. They still have value. If you

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remain a health and fitness resource for them even though they have not purchased anything, you still gain the positioning in their mind as an expert consultant. Just because they didn't purchase anything immediately, doesn't mean they will not purchase in the future. By placing them on an e-mail list and forwarding articles and resources from fitness related websites in a global e-mail every month, you create a target marketing campaign of people who personally know you. Work for them as a fitness consultant. Keep your name and value in front of them. At the very least they can be a valuable source of referrals.

If you speak to 40 people per month and 35 of them do not accept a consultation or purchase sessions, you still have their contact information. If you speak to 40 people per month, once every quarter, 35 of them not accepting any offer immediately, you still have a captive audience of 140 people per year. That's 140 people you are constantly providing information, motivation and resources to. If none of them ever purchase a thing from you, they will still be incredibly valuable as a referral source. Use the law of reciprocity in your favor. When you give to others, they will be more inclined to give to you in return.

Every quarter, send a global e-mail to your referral base. Offer them a \$25 to \$50 gift certificate to their favorite department store, restaurant, salon, or theme park for every person they refer to you as a client. Why would you ever want to pay money for a referral? Because if you had to go out and prospect yourself, it would cost you

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at least the price you charge per hour. Every hour you're out prospecting, you're not training! Figure out the average number of sessions each new client trains with you. Is it 5, 10, or more? If each new client purchases an average of 10 sessions (some more, some less), at a price of \$400 to \$500, isn't it worth investing \$25 to \$50 in order to make \$350, \$475? Let's say only 20 of the 140 respond to your offer, and they produce 40 referrals. Ten percent of those 40 referrals buy sessions, and as a result, you acquire 4 new clients. Multiply each client by the number of sessions they train per week and your rate per session. Now figure out how many hours you would need to spend prospecting in order to get that many clients? Keep in mind what we said about the cost of prospecting per hour. How much time did it take you to send the global e-mail? How much work did you personally have to put in? You decide, is it worth offering an incentive for referrals?

Newspaper/magazine ads

If you are going to utilize this means of marketing, pay close attention to:

- Emotional connection: What feelings or response do you want the advertisement to produce? If your ad does not connect on an emotional level, it will lack persuasion. Have you ever seen a health club ad, with a seemingly endless list of features and amenities? It lists the total pieces of cardio equipment, square footage and even the total quantity of free weights expressed in tons! Who cares if you have 40,000 pounds of free weights. Am

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- I going to use them all at once? Remember: benefits, advantages, experience, entertainment, self-esteem, possibilities, that's what people buy. The greater the emotional response the greater the impact and retention of your ad. Speak to the desired outcome or solution to a problem, more than to the goal. The goal is simply a perceived means to an end. Town Sports International (TSI) and Virgin Active are great examples of advertising that is emotionally provocative. They create some of the cleverest marketing campaigns in the fitness industry. Both of these companies do an excellent job at making parodies of every day situations, human nature and then relating it to fitness. Visit their websites to see what I'm talking about for yourself. Another genius marketing campaign was featured in New York Magazine a few years ago, launched by David Barton Gym. David Barton pioneered the term "Look Better Naked", as a marketing campaign. It was cool, distinguished, and went right to the nucleus of what benefits his target market were looking for. Marketing can be stated as the communication of a compelling story. What is your compelling story? Why should your audience care? As long as your message is not, prejudice/sexist, offensive or overly obnoxious, take a risk and make a distinct statement. If your presentation looks, feels and sounds like everyone else, it won't be inspiring or motivating. .
- Acquisition Costs: If you are paying \$600 per ad, what is your return? How many sessions do you need to deliver as a result of that ad in order to break even, generate a profit? Is that ad generating that volume? How do you track the results of that ad?

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- Comparisons: Try running two slightly different ads within the same demographic area. The ads should have the same tone, branding and message, but make small changes to the content or the headlines. Compare the performance of the two ads over a 30-day period based on:
 - The number of calls
 - Appointments made
 - Training packages sold

Discontinue the ad that did not produce the greatest response, then test another ad against the current ad. This will enable you to gain an understanding of what ad is most effective when appealing to the same market, in the same publication, within the same duration. Be patient with this process. Keep in mind that you will have to run ads for a while until your market begins to recognize and become familiar enough with you to respond. Include a call to action. This tells the person reading the ad what to do. Do you want them to call or come in for an assessment? Don't just include your contact information. Use the power of suggestion to direct the next step, after reading the ad.

Networking

How can your business be a resource to other businesses in your community? What can you offer them, in order to create a mutual

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benefit? The returns you receive are a direct measurement of what you have given. Ask yourself:

- What businesses have a customer base that would be most interested in what I have to offer?
- How can I offer my services to their customers in a way that would benefit their business?

In your community right now, what is the number of:

- Tanning salons
- Weight loss centers
- Health food stores/cafés
- Beauty salons
- Exercise equipment stores
- Sporting goods
- Athletic gear and clothing
- Men's/women's clothing stores

What do all of these businesses have in common? They all have customers that desire to look, feel and/or perform better. Visit these businesses in person. Let them know that you are fitness professional in the community seeking to establish a mutually profitable network with them. Resist the temptation to immediately educate them on you, what you offer and your educational background. Instead, let them know that you respect the fact that they're busy people.

Therefore, you don't wish to take up any more of their time than necessary. See if they have a few minutes to answer some questions about their business so you can determine how you can maximize your value to them. Ask:

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- In your business, do you profit most from new customers, frequency or quantity of purchase?
- How do you track each customer's purchasing patterns, total money spent and last purchase?
- What incentives do you offer to encourage greater purchase volume or frequency?

There are only three ways for these businesses (and yours for that matter) to increase revenue. They are:

- Total number of customers
- Frequency of purchase per customer
- Quantity of purchase per customer

Many businesses are not even aware of the precise buying patterns of their customers. Unfortunately, they're ignorance is costing them significant revenue. If these small businesses would simply increase the frequency and volume of purchase per customer, they could potentially double their revenue, without having to acquire even one new customer.

Often you can increase volume and frequency of purchase by just listening to your customers, their needs, desires, and then making a recommendation. Sometimes, it's as simple as asking for a purchase, explaining the benefit and giving an incentive. Offer every one of their customers a:

- Free 15 minute assessment
- Exercise program

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- Article related to their fitness goals
- FAQ sheet related to our prospect/client's most commonly requested information, concerns, advice

This is a win/win for both of you. Every time another business refers someone to you, it's a value added reward to their customers for doing more business with them. That means, the better you do, the better they do. That is the only type of referral business that makes sense, or can be trusted long-term. The benefit for you is:

- An influx of prospects. If they are motivated by the experience, you can expect ten percent (at least) to buy training sessions.
- For every person who does not initially purchase sessions, you have created a prospect base. Utilize this base as a referral source, as I explained earlier. In addition, a "no" today is not a "No" indefinitely. The greater the number of people who experience the potential benefits you offer, the greater the return. This is based purely on the law of averages.

Make sure the businesses in your network are aware of the fact that you are out in the community giving live presentations. Let them know that you would be happy to offer the participant's discount cards and introductory offers on behalf of their business as a thank you for attending, courtesy of their business. You have just increased your value as a marketing vehicle to get their business in front of hundreds of live prospects per year. You have also given them a very logical reason for them to work harder at being a valuable network for you.

Social Media

**At the time this book was written we had not yet launched into the social media revolution. Social media means two very important things for you (and me):

1. The game has changed. How people interact with and respond to you as a company is quite different from just a few years ago. As human beings we are wired for affiliation. Our identity therefore behaviors are largely influenced by our reference group. Social media gives us unprecedented access to the individuals or groups we identify with most. It's those groups, not your company's advertisements that are most influential in how or what people buy.
2. You have just as much marketing power as any large corporation due to the dynamics of social media... as long as you don't violate trust. In what ways can you communicate with your clients and potential clients to build a strong sense of community while adding continual value? You could start a fan page allowing your clients to interact with one another, share and encourage one another. On this fan page you can continually offer free information. How often do you act as a connector or source of invaluable information on social media, establishing yourself as an expert? For more information on how and why social media could be one of your most valuable resources a

quick yet highly valuable read is Seth Godin's book *Tribes: We need you to lead us*.

Myth #6:

My Clients Can't Afford It.

Reality

Think about that for a second. How much does a personal training session cost? Is it \$50, \$60, \$70, \$80, \$100, \$120 or higher? Odds are that the price of training is reflective of your demographic. Is it reasonable that your members spend at least the cost of a personal training session on dinner and/or a movie over the weekend? What about the cars they drive? If you look around the car park at your club, are the cars in there *really* the cheapest cars that can be purchased? How many Mercedes, Infiniti's, Lexus's, BMW's, Jaguars, Audi's, etc could you count? That means that your members have and allocate discretionary income. But we only allocate resources, financial or otherwise to things that we believe are valuable. So if they are not buying training, it may not be an issue of cost but value.

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You are what you charge for. If nothing truly differentiates you from other fitness professionals, in the mind of your prospective clients, you risk being commoditized. This means, we have no unique selling advantage, other than price. If we compete on the basis of price, we are destined for disappointment. This is because our clients perceived value of us dictates what they will pay for. Any price is too high for something of little to no value. If our services are commoditized and can be attained anywhere, they are not valuable, they are fungible.

Yes, we must create value for our services that go beyond simply "knowing our stuff". We must be customer centric, focused, and driven and about forty seven other adjectives. But what does that mean? Pine and Gilmore stress that, "Every business is a stage, and therefore work is theatre." Comparing what we do to a performance: doesn't that premise understate our professionalism? On the contrary, an actor's intention is to use their talents in a specific way, to deliberately cause an affect in their audience. Our ability to use our talents to deliberately create a positive affect in our clients, related to their best interests, doesn't detract from our professionalism, it adds empathy to it.

Who is our client today? They're busy, overstressed, with multiple responsibilities and pressures in their personal and professional lives, coupled with rigid time constraints. What they very often require from us is not only professionalism, but escapism. Consider the following analogy. If you wake up tomorrow morning and make yourself coffee, you can expect to pay about 25 cents per cup (depending on the store

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brand you bought). Now, if you decided to go down to the local grocery store and save yourself some effort, you can expect to pay 50 cents to a dollar, for the same stuff. Now, if you go to some trendy café that offers you heightened ambience, and as Pine and Gilmore state, a “sense of theatre”, you would willingly pay anywhere from \$2 to \$5 for coffee! Why? Is it because there are no grocery stores in your neighborhood? No, it’s the *experience*, they provide. The ambience, effortlessly blended with the right choice of music, the aroma of the coffee perforating throughout the café, creates an escape between home and the office. The greater the experience the greater the perceived value, the greater the perceived value the more people will pay for the same product!

In fact, Timberland the footwear company at one time was doing rather poorly in sales. Out of exasperation they significantly raised their price. Afterward sales began to increase, until they were they even outperformed their competitors. The reason was that the increase in price increased the perceived value of the product. It’s not uncommon to notice an increase, not decrease in sales following a price increase. Many people are not as price sensitive as they are value sensitive. Besides, would you really want people who are price sensitive as your client base? They probably hang out with other price sensitive people too. You would likely spend your time haggling rather than getting them the results they desire. There’s a good chance they wouldn’t be a good referral course either. Personal Training is not for everyone. You want clients who you connect with; who make decisions based on value and desired outcomes.

Solution

One of the greatest contributing factors to buyers' reluctance is risk. I'm not talking about financial risk, but emotional risk. The fear in the client's mind of *"what if I hire a trainer and I still don't see results? ... then I must be hopeless."* Or, *"what if I can't commit to a schedule?"* *"What if I don't like the experience?"* etc.

In this case you may want to offer a money back guarantee. If after the first session for any reason they don't feel that they want to continue, you will refund their money. This isn't nearly as precarious as it sounds. There is a principle in human psychology called cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance is the emotional duress that results from having two opposing views co-existing in your mind at one time. Meaning, that we are driven to be consistent in the present with what we've said, believed and done in the past. If someone purchases personal training from you, they are more likely to be committed. That's because they already at some degree see themselves as someone who is conscientious enough about their health to hire a trainer. If you do everything you say you will do, most people will not use a money back guarantee. Besides, the last thing you want is a dissatisfied client. They're less likely to produce the results they desire, it will be an uncomfortable and draining experience for the both of you and it's not good for your reputation. So for the few people that would use the money back guarantee, it's probably for the best.

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Most importantly, make no assumptions. Follow the systems in this book. Become fully engaged in the process, but detach yourself from the outcome. When something other than what you expect to happen, happens, just say to yourself "that's interesting. I wonder why that happened." After every encounter with a client or member ask yourself: "what did I do really well, that I should probably do more often?" and, "what could I have done better that will make me more effective in the future." Treat every outcome as it is, an opportunity to gain feedback that will make you better. Don't waste time and energy brooding over why someone didn't become a client. That's a recipe for discouragement.

Keep an open mind to learning from each interaction and allow yourself to grow as a result of it. Beyond that, don't spend an exorbitant amount of time on rationalization and examination on things that just are the way they are. You will build a clientele much faster and more effectively if you keep moving on prospecting, connecting with people and conducting appointments. Understand that if you keep following the systems necessary to acquire a client some will, some won't, so what? Next! You can't keep moving if you're suffering from paralysis by analysis.

Myth # 7

Retention Is All about Results

Reality

That's assuming that results is all our clients expect from us and they can't get them anywhere else. Both are false assumptions.

The bare minimum our client expects from us is the ability to help them produce results. Why else would they hire us? This goes beyond our knowledge and competency. It encompasses an experience that empowers individuals with an altered self-concept and confidence. Their time with us is an escape from their daily anxiety and stress. We not only design programs for short and long-term change, but the environment for an instantly altered state of mind. It's a false assumption that our client's appreciate or even notice our business for the functions it performs. With literally hundreds of thousands of certified trainers in the industry, distinction is the minimum criteria for survival. What is needed is the ability to individualize an experience that is educational, entertaining and empowering. What our clients

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will retain us for is not our offering, but the outcome our offering provides coupled with the experience it's packaged in.

Remember our discussion on IBM in its glory years? If you purchased hardware from IBM in the 1960's and 1970's, they would provide your company with a full implementation plan, at no cost. In conjunction with the hardware purchase, they provided a peerless service plan that encompassed the necessary services to maximize customers return on their investment.

Back in those days this strategy was rather innovative. This earned them the slogan, "IBM Means Service." IBM dominated their competitors. However, as customer demand began to exponentially increase and the justice department began intervening in the company's operations, IBM began to charge explicitly for their service and give away their hardware. They found, that their customers were willing to pay a premium for their services. It wasn't the hardware or operating systems that customers valued, but the benefits of peace of mind and the increased performance of their business. In short, delivering what customers expect in the first place is no longer enough. Eventually IBM became less and less innovative relative to its competitors and to say that it lost its dominance in the market place would be an understatement. Lesson, you can't maintain a competitive advantage, you must be willing to continually reinvent it.

Solution

The CRM: Client and Customer Retention Management System

The growth of our industry has resulted in numerous choices afforded to our clientele. This means that our clients/customers are in control. They have greater demands and expectations. In addition to providing an optimal experience and delivering a superior service, individuals expect that your service address their specific needs. Not just related to fitness, but their concerns, lifestyle motivation and every aspect pertaining to them as an individual. They don't care about your knowledge and skills until you demonstrate their utility for that customer specifically. Each person believes that they are different than everyone you have worked with and that their situation is different. Authors, Michael Hammer and James Champy, of (*Reengineering the Corporation*), put it this way:

"There is no longer any such notion as the customer; there is only this customer, the one with whom a seller is dealing at the moment ..." *"The mass market has broken into pieces, some as small as a single customer".*

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We are up against two emerging forces in this industry. They are the growth of information and competition. In order to position yourself effectively, you must have a systematic approach to individualizing each component of your programming strategy, for each individual you work with. In addition, the cultivation and preservation of professional relationships is preeminent in its relationship to your success.

Relationships

Risk is among the most prevalent reason why people will not make a purchasing decision. Trust and familiarity are among the most influential factors in customer retention. Regardless of your technical competency, if you neglect relationships, your business will suffer. Make a personal investment in your customers and their outcomes. Focus on the outcomes they desire beyond their goals. How many points of contact do you have with your clients, outside of the time you spend with them during each session? Each of the following steps is interrelated to the creation and fortification of our relationships with our clients.

Five steps to retention:

1. Emotionally Engage them

Does your program progression strategy continually energize and appeal to your client's highest aspirations, in addition to their training needs? Does the session stir them emotionally as well as make sense logically? University of California researcher Paul Ekman, demonstrated that certain postures and facial

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expressions have a profound impact on emotional state. Using an Electroencephalogram (EEG) subjects showed more activity in the left hemisphere, the part of the brain associated with feelings of happiness, when they produced a sincere smile. When they ceased to perform the pattern of movement consistent with a sincere smile, the activity in the left hemisphere diminished. Doctor William James of Harvard, stated in his book *The Principles of Psychology* (1890), that emotions are the result of our physiology or body language.

"...We feel sorry because we cry, anger because we strike, afraid because we tremble, and not that we cry, strike or tremble, because we feel sorry, angry or fearful..."

Researchers Cacioppo, et al (1992) & Rome, et al (1990), have recently reported similar conclusions. In addition, Hatfield, Cacioppo & Rapson (1992) propose that not only does our body language and facial expression control out emotional state, but is contagious to others as well. People have the tendency to unconsciously mirror our body language. Therefore, be aware of how you show up to your sessions? If you are in a negative emotional state, your body language will reflect that; and that means you may adversely affect the state of those around you. We desire to be around people who make us feel good. If your client experiences a negative state change most of the time they are with you, obviously this can hurt retention.

- ❖ Be keenly aware of your body language and posture, in addition to your clients?

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- ❖ Be conscientious about the messages you send through your facial expressions, vocal tonality, etc.

Think of a session when you were feeling confident, passionate and everything seemed to flow perfectly between you and your client. What were your posture, facial expressions and your tone like? Imitate that physiology on all of your sessions. Move and speak in a way that exudes passion, focus and confidence. Your client in turn will be affected by this. So will you. When you coach your clients on their postural alignment, ask them how they feel emotionally in an ideal posture vs. their typical forward head rounded shoulder misalignment. When your clients feel particularly good during their session, point out everything in their physiology that's consistent with their emotional and mental state. For example: your client is standing up straight, shoulders back, spine and head is in a neutral position, and you notice a slight smile on their face, ask

- ❖ What emotions are you feeling?

If they tell you that they feel powerful, confident, happy or energized, ask them in what areas of their life would be impacted if they could feel like that more often? Was there a time that they performed in a meeting, sales call, presentation, or in their personal life in a way that produced considerable success? What were they feeling at that time? Ask them what the impact of feeling those emotions on command would be? Then remind them that every component of your training

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addresses their posture and therefore their emotional state.

Always make your clients aware of and *subtly* remind them of all the areas in their life that you contribute to.

Take nothing for granted, determine:

- ❖ How your client feels emotionally, mentally and physically at the start of each session.
- ❖ What is most important to them during (?) each session? Tie in every component of your session to that thing.
- ❖ Monitor their emotional state throughout the session. Is it improving? What sessions did they find especially enjoyable? What was it about those sessions they liked most? How can you replicate that every session?

Finally, emotional engagement results from challenging our clients beyond their current scope of possibility. What separates leaders from laggards and excellence from mediocrity, is vision: the ability to see our clients beyond who they are, but rather, as who they could be.

The greatest contribution you can make in your clients life, is to help them in creating that vision for themselves as well. Continually challenge them. Push them. Help them set and achieve goals beyond their current self-expectations. That gives them a glimpse of the possibilities within them, which in turn

alters their self-concept. By altering ones self-concept you can far exceed incremental progression to their goal, you can create a substantial shift in your client's self-efficacy.

Multisensory Training

No, I'm not talking about the importance of multi-planar, proprioceptively challenging exercises. I am talking about learning pathways. The greater the correlation between your teaching style and your clients preferred learning style, the greater the memory of the experience. This encompasses everything from instructing a client through a new exercise to creating an individualized motivational strategy. It comprises the way you speak to the visual images you create for your client. All of us communicate with ourselves and the world around us through one or more of the five senses. Out of the five, we use three of them predominantly. They are our kinesthetic, visual and auditory sensory pathways. Or, what we touch/feel, see and hear. The greater the inclusion of these pathways into the training experience, in a manner that mirror's the communication pathway of your client, the more memorable and enjoyable the learning process. To learn more about your clients preferred learning and communication styles, here are some resources you may find helpful:

- *Understanding the Enneagram, Riso & Hudson*
- *Art of Speed-reading People, Tiger, Baron-Tiger & Swick*

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- *Personality Selling, A.J. Valentino*
- *The Platinum Rule, Alessandra & O'Connor*
- *Introduction to NLP, O'Connor & McDermott*
- *Precision: A new approach to communication: How to get the information you need to get results, McMaster & Grinder*

What enduring impression or feeling does your client associate to you and each session? How do you measure that? After every few exercises, have your client evaluate the experience. How can you adapt your talents and program design strategy to incrementally increase:

- Your clients' enjoyment of exercise?
- Their perceived ownership and involvement in their session?

The greater your clients association between the session and enjoyment, the greater the likelihood they will adhere to the program long-term. Never take for granted any aspect of the session or experience. Or worse, make an assumption of how they evaluate you.

We must clearly identify the aspects of our sessions that our clients find most enjoyable, empowering and even distracting. We must have the empathy and conscientiousness to change accordingly. Continual attention to your client's feedback regarding their experience is essential to providing you with the means to eliminate distractions, in order to better engage them. The experience you present is equally as important as the program design itself. Regardless of what we are emotionally compelled to believe, we are not in the business of

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training people, but of making people's lives better. Exercise science and our training methodology are the vehicles we employ to achieve that. What is it that our client truly aspires to become? What is the distance between his/her aspiration and his/her current reality?

What is the greatest source of their pain? The answers to these questions are where optimum experiences take place. If ever we separate the person from the process, we not only fail to provide a memorable experience, but cannot even claim to offer customer service. Instead, we present customer sacrifice. This is what Pine and Gilmore describe as, the gap between what the customer expects and what they settle for.

This is analogous to the patient's aspirations for seeing a doctor. They do not desire the prescription, but the hope of how that prescription can make them well. Yet, without a proper examination (assessment) preceding a diagnosis, the appropriate prescription (program design) cannot be given. Consequently, there will be narrow dimensions along which the desired transformation can occur. If in fact it can or will manifest at all.

Unfortunately, I do not believe that the ability to provide uncompromising positive experiences can be learned if it is not at some level innately present within you. It is simply something you are or fail to be. It is the difference between possessing a sense of purpose and having a job. An individual who doesn't possess an emotional compulsion to give beyond what is required will not easily be transformed into a purveyor of optimum experiences through

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processes, rules, or policies. You cannot regulate your way to greatness.

Every break through, is a break with; a departure from disempowering thought patterns. This begins when we shift our focus from our rights to our responsibilities: the adoption of the attitude that we are privileged to serve our clients, rather than the belief that they are fortunate to train with us, regardless of our "credentials". It is in living our life not as though we're entitled to much, but that we have been endowed with much, and therefore are accountable for what we give. Giving is the only key that unlocks the door to receiving in our lives.

Everything we do in the presence of our clients is a performance. It either adds to the experience, or detracts, but everything counts. What we think about is reflected in our actions. We are never not communicating. Communication is by default. What we communicate is by design.

2. Uncompromising Customer Experience

Would your clients describe their experience with you as exceptional? Do you continually WOW them? Usually, professionals think of service as being courteous and giving the most you can within the confines of your job description. The only problem with that is IT'S BORING. Our clients are

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inundated with so many products and services today; the only thing they will notice is something that goes far beyond a typical point of contact. Essentially, uncompromising customer service is what we are willing to do beyond what's required. Performing a session with professionalism, excitement and delivering superior program design and coaching is not extraordinary. It's simply the minimum measure to be retained. The word *uncompromising* means that you're adamant, rigid and unwavering in your commitment to do whatever it takes to ensure an optimal experience and maximum results for your clients. This does not mean offering a free session for every ten that they purchase. That's so common; it will eventually become expected by your clients, not appreciated. If the value of your services is worth what you are charging, a free session is not an added value.

Industry consultant Tom Plummer says, "*Never discount, always enhance!*" Instead, do something special that they will remember. If you gave away one session per every 10 package sold, you would lose the cost of the session, in addition to the time slot you could have booked someone else. Don't forget the hour you could have been prospecting to build your business. That's at the least twice your hourly compensation, for an experience that's no different in your clients mind, than the past 10 sessions!

Some other more effective ideas include:

- ❖ Tickets to their favorite sporting event.

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- ❖ Tickets to the theatre.
- ❖ If they told you that they would like to fit into a certain outfit or size pants when they lose 10 pounds, get them a gift card at their favorite clothing store when they achieve that goal.
- ❖ To augment their self-myofascial release and integrated flexibility program, buy them a massage. This is a great investment in your network as well. If you are sending business to a massage therapist in your club or community, they will be wise to send business to you as well.
- ❖ Dinner at their favorite restaurant.
- ❖ Merchandise from your facilities pro-shop if applicable. This also promotes another profit center in your facility.

You are rarely if ever noticed, not to mention appreciated for service that is within your client's expectations. It's what you do that's unexpected, that differentiates you.

I have known trainers who on occasion:

- ❖ Drove over to a client's house to dig them out of the snow, so they can make their appointment.
- ❖ Sat in their client's car to warm it up in the middle of the winter, so their client's would not have to go from the shower into a freezing vehicle.
- ❖ Had hot soup and groceries delivered to the home of a sick client.

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But that's not my job! Right THAT'S THE POINT. If any of this is beneath our dignity we

(1) Take too much for granted. Regardless of how well we're doing, our relationships and reputation with our clients is either a key advantage or a devastating liability. Everything can change, quickly.

(2) Lack the humility to recognize that our products and services don't define what we do. What defines us is the change we bring about in the lives of our clients through servitude. The extent that your attention is exclusively focused on activities that offer immediate reciprocal benefits, rather than continual contribution and relationship enhancement, the less value you have. The paradox is the less value you have the less retention, referrals and stability you attain. Meaning, the willingness to do only what you're paid to do results in you ultimately earning less long-term.

3. Innovation

Determine what matters most to your clients. The believe that we have a sustained competitive advantage in the minds of our clients is a delusion. You must reinvent yourself continually. Innovation is accomplished by anticipating the unexpressed needs of your clients. Don't ask them what they want. Our clients are not aware of the possibilities afforded to them, that's our job. How many people were demanding laptop computers, fax machines, cell phones and the Dodge Minivan, before they

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were introduced to the market? Introduce solutions continually into your training program, and then evaluate your client's response. Based on their evaluation, continually adapt your sessions to enhance their results and experience.

Habitually ask:

- ❖ What's most important to you about this session today?
- ❖ On a scale of 1-10, how do you feel at this present moment?
- ❖ What would have to happen in this session to increase your emotional state to a level ___?

Identify what aspects of your training program your clients like the most, the least, and why? Is it something about the exercise, or is it their perception of the exercises effectiveness and relevance to their goals? After every few exercises, quantify the experience from your client's perspective:

- ❖ On a scale from 1 to 10, how enjoyable/effective did you find that last set?
- ❖ What would it take to bring your level of enjoyment up to ___ for this exercise?

This enables them to give you specific feedback on how to continually modify the session to increase their enjoyment. If for example your client says their enjoyment was a level 7 on their last exercise, how can you make it a level 8? If that is achieved, level 9 and so on. The more positive of an experience your client has, the greater their adherence. Regardless of your

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client's level of discipline, people tend to keep doing things they enjoy (which is an overstatement of the obvious).

Equally important is the question:

- ❖ What would it take to bring your level of enjoyment down to a level ____?

Let's say you ask your client where they are on a scale from 1 to 10 on a particular exercise and they tell you a 6. You ask them what would make it a 7 and they say "*If I could work up more of a sweat.*" Then you ask, what would it take to make this a 5? They say, "*If it was any more strenuous.*" But they just said they wanted to work up a sweat! Working up a sweat may mean greater intensity to you, but not them. If you didn't ask that question, you may have just increased the intensity, followed by asking them, "How was that." They may believe that if they want results, strenuous workouts are a necessary evil.

Therefore, their response is based on how they believe they should answer. So you increase the challenge on all of their exercises. The cumulative effect is that they don't enjoy the session, but they don't say anything. This could cost you a client. If they want to work up a sweat, but greater strain is a negative, you could decrease rest time between sets. Or, you can integrate circuit training. Make no assumptions. Explore every part of their session, so you can come as close as possible to matching their criteria for an optimal experience.

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No two clients are going to have the same exact experience. The first step in creating differentiation, is offering our clients individualization. How customized is our assessments, program design, exercise implementation and total interaction with our clients?

Customization? What about in a semi-private or group environment? I understand the importance of customizing personal training sessions, but how can I customize our interaction with members in group exercise class or during prime time?

Joseph Pine and James Gilmore in their book "The Experience Economy" recommend *Mass Customization*. *Mass customization* describes the process by which you can combine the low cost of mass production with the experience of individualization.

Consider a health club chain that I consulted for in the United Kingdom; at one of their prime locations in London, the fitness team would conduct a group exercise class where one instructor would lead the members through an exercise circuit, while the other would do an assessment on each participant. The evident experience was a class designed as a fun, engaging, high energy group approach to training core, balance, power and strength. The indistinct, yet equally important benefit was that each component of the class served as an assessment.

During the class, each participant received a high level of attention from the instructors. After class, the participants could elect to do an orientation session. The orientation customized a workout and

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program design based on their assessment. Each orientation was a potential training package. The Health and Fitness Manager was never told he should implement the class. It was just understood that an optimal member experience was a shared goal of everyone within the company. The class was an innovation entirely created by himself and his team. Not surprisingly, they had one of the top producing training departments in the company. That same company at another location in Teaside England used periodic seminars to lead into individualized training opportunities for their members. The attendance would be as high as over 80 members in one class! How can you create an exciting experience for a large number of members and still offer individualization?

There is a crucial difference between a service and an experience. A service is the delivery of something intangible. An experience stages something memorable. Our memory is intimately connected to our emotions. When we are in a peak emotional state, our retention of the event is heightened. What can you do to create an elevated, positive emotional state in your client?

In Parsippany NJ, a Fitness Manager for one of the largest health club chains in the United States created Work out Wednesday (WOW). Clients would compete with other members in creative fitness contests that were fun and exciting, while the trainers cheered them on. The exercises included in the events were fast paced and performance based. The WOW challenges created a memorable weekly outlet from the member's frantic, stressful weekly routine. The assessment

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personalized the experience and added value to the membership. It was also a great means of driving personal training revenue.

Many companies pay meticulous attention to every detail in their environment to enhance their customer's mood and state of mind. Starbucks aims to create an environment that delivers a better coffee experience. Barnes and Nobles, a better reading experience. Infiniti trademarked the phrase "Total Ownership Experience." What's your total training experience?

If you are an independent trainer, ask your client to describe what type of music puts them in a positive state. What type of music relaxes them, excites them, reminds them of a magnificent time in their life? Can you provide that music for them during the session? Have you tried aroma therapy? Visualization exercises? Can you clearly describe what type of emotion you want to evoke during the session? Can you get them to articulate it?

Every performer needs to have the right props. What are the peripheral services you can provide to add to the experience and keep your brand in front of the client? When was the last time you gave a branded gift to a client?

Everyone loves cool T-shirts, customized pens, coffee mugs, etc. These are inexpensive memorabilia for your clients that they will appreciate. One club in Greenwich Village, NYC, gave all of their clients T-shirts featuring a picture of them with their trainer and a

choice of printed phrases that would most closely match how each client would describe the “training experience.”

4. Be their raving fan

Know your customers life inside and out. Keep records of every significant event in their life. Acknowledge and celebrate your customers, every chance you get. Let them know that you value them above everything else. One of the greatest human needs is the need to be appreciated. If you acknowledge this, it will greatly strengthen the relationship between you and your clients. During your sessions, keep the focus off of you. Focus on your clients training goals, their feedback regarding the session, their performance in each exercise you select.

Additionally, concentrate on who they are as a person. People love to talk about themselves. To the degree that it does not interfere with the success of their session, let them. Not everyone will open up as much or as fast, but usually most people will talk about themselves. Never ask a personal question or discuss anything that crosses professional boundaries. However, find out things like

- (1) Their birthday
- (2) Children’s name(s) and birthdays,
- (3) Holidays they celebrate,

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(4) Occupation,
(5) Recent accomplishments,
(6) If married, their anniversary. This information gives you the opportunity to create meaningful points of contact with your clients.

- ❖ Create a file containing the information above, for each of your clients.
- ❖ Transfer every significant date into your planner. Make sure you enter it three days prior to the actual event. For example if your client's birthday is June 23rd, enter a reminder in your planner for June 20th.
- ❖ Send a card or a gift acknowledging the event, the day you receive the reminder. Books make very professional gifts for birthdays and holidays, as well as plaques for recent accomplishments.
- ❖ Acknowledging their children's birthdays are especially meaningful to your clients.

Harvey MacKay, of MacKay Envelope uses a process called the MacKay 66. He gathers 66 key pieces of information on every one of his clients in order to create constant contact with them aside from typical business transactions.

Consider your relationships with your clients an emotional bank account. Every time you receive anything from them, without offering value beyond what is expected, you make a withdrawal. Every time you do something that is unexpected and important to them, you make a deposit. The more deposits you make, the

greater yield you will receive from that account in the form of renewals, referrals and word of mouth endorsement.

5. Partnership

Appoint yourself their personal consultants. What areas of your clients' lives can you add value to outside of the few hours per week you spend with them? Have any of them mentioned to you that they are interested in the nutritional value of the foods they feed their family? Do they have a promotion coming up? A leadership opportunity within their company? By keeping the focus off of ourselves and listening intently to our clients, we learn things about them and their needs that we wouldn't learn otherwise. Decide to become your client's most valuable resource.

- ❖ E-mail them articles from the internet on exercise, health and nutrition that pertain to their goals and their family's interests.
- ❖ Each month browse through various trade publications (*Forbes, Fortune, Fast Company, Wired, Business 2.0, Success, Entrepreneur,*) that pertain to their career. When you come across something that is of interest or benefit to them, buy them the magazine. It's a five dollar investment that will yield exponential returns.
- ❖ Books, audio-tapes and seminars are a great investment for your key clients. Each community has listings of workshops and seminars in the area. This listing covers everything from increasing memory, sales and leadership, to keeping a better garden. You can send your clients to

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one of these workshops. At the very least, get them the information on how they can register. It shows your concern for things that are important to them.

The relationships you cultivate with your clients are the strongest undercurrent in the success of your business. The more your client feels that you care about them, understand, acknowledge and appreciate them, the higher they will esteem you. To the top achiever, facilitating outstanding results for your clients is the minimum standard, not the optimum. By following the 5 steps in this text your clients will be more likely to reciprocate, through referrals and re-signs. By acknowledging the goals, needs, personal aspirations and interests of your client, you place yourself in their daily conversation. A passionate endorsement from someone whose life you have impacted is more effective than any means of traditional advertising and less expensive as well.

Your rewards, financial or personal, are directly correlated to the value you deliver to others. As we stated in the beginning of the book, the fact that you're reading this right now leads us to assume that you want more out of your business. The goal of this book is to share ideas and applications that will enable you to experience greater success in your business and life, by assisting you in the development of strategies to help other people experience greater success in theirs. The probability of you producing the results you desire is greater than most. This is because most people wish to be, to have, and to do more but do not take the necessary actions to bring their hopes into

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reality. The simple fact that you have read this book to its conclusion separates you from those who fail to act on their aspirations. For that we congratulate you. Your willingness to take action reflects your intention to do what it takes to become who you desire to be.

Every outcome is determined by an intention. Your intentions are reflected in what you focus on. Whatever you focus on magnifies. Whatever you fail to focus on diminishes. Awareness and power over our focus is imperative to producing positive, deliberate results. Questions serve to refine and direct your focus. Without the ability to direct our focus, we risk results that are random and ineffectual.

Living a life that inspires you, gives you self-respect, fulfillment and high achievement begins with the preliminary questions:

What is the purpose of my life? Who and what means the most to me? What is it that I stand for? What would I never stand for? What do I want my life to be about and how is that accomplished through my work? Use those questions to evaluate and direct every aspect of your work towards creating the life you want for yourself. The more what you do in your work is aligned with what you desire in your heart, the more successful you will become in leading others to live their hearts desire as well; and that's not a myth.

