



Increasing Personal Training Revenues

by Len Bell

Personal training is a great member service for clubs to provide. Maximizing your profits in this area can have a big impact on your bottom line: personal training is typically the second highest revenue generator – second only to memberships. Are you doing everything you can to ensure the best results? There are a few areas where a little effort goes a long way:

Marketing

Make members aware of your services and explain their benefits and value. The majority of members will never see the results they want without proper guidance.

- Are your services internally marketed? Do members know your offerings and are they presented in a “results-oriented” manner? Do you have graphs showing the differences? ...Testimonials? ...Before-and-after shots? It has been proven that members see better results with personal training. So, tell your members about personal training, and be sure you explain it in a way that everyone understands – words, pictures, and graphs should all be used to get the message out.

- Do you target members that have shown interest in personal training? (A member interest profile helps to determine their interests.) Do you market to people that have purchased personal training in the past? Or, to members that are not using the center as often as they should? Software is available to help produce reports, labels and do mail/email merges to easily target specific membership segments. Members could be offered a free consultation or “teaser” to get them re-motivated. This effort can save members from canceling; show that you care about them reaching their goals, and create great leads for your personal trainers to solicit more business.

- Does your fitness staff walk the floor and engage members to see if they are obtaining results with their current

workouts? Do you run group presentations, such as core exercise presentations, weight management seminars, etc.? Be sure these presentations are held in a visible part of the club so other members can join in, or will have their interest piqued.

The Sales Process

Once your internal marketing is working, does your staff have a script to persuade members to invest in personal training (and themselves!)? Following are some suggested questions for a script:

- *What are your goals? When did you last feel happy with the way you looked and felt? How did you get there?* (Help them to get specific.)

- *Why is that goal important to you?* (Find out their emotional reasons for reaching their fitness goals – i.e. heart disease in the family and they are scared of the same fate, or self esteem issues, etc).

- *Are there obstacles to accomplishing your goals?* (Try to elicit and address objections before they happen.)

- *Does your family know that you are considering a personal trainer? Are they supportive of it?* (Pre-handle the “spousal approval” objection.)

- *How long have you been thinking about hiring a personal trainer?* (Pre-handle the “think about it” objection.)

- *How many days per week do you have to set aside to exercise?* (Pre-handle the time objection.)

- *How much have you budgeted to reach your goal of _____?* (Pre-handle the money objection.)

Closing the Sale

Your goal is to determine objections before asking for the sale so that you can handle the objections as a consultant, as opposed to a salesperson. You also make it less likely for prospects to use those objections because you have already “handled them.” For example, if they had said they were planning on working out four days per week, and then you ask them for the sale, and they say they don’t have time to work

out – call them on it!

Acknowledge any objections – this softens your response and doesn’t make it seem argumentative. Next, respond logically with why, although their objection may have some validity, it is not an important enough reason for them not to purchase a package...For all of the positive reasons discussed. Finally, close “assumptively.” Ask them which package they want to purchase, not *if* they want to purchase one. Ask the prospect, “Which package is best for you?”

Tracking Software

Without tracking software it is difficult to manage the fitness department and to know what needs work:

- Do you track trainers’ consultations and the number of members who become personal training clients?

- Can you easily track – for payroll – the number of sessions a trainer performed?

- Can you easily track the number of sessions a member has left, to know when to renew them?

- Do you track the members’ results to demonstrate how personal training is working for them (strength, body fat percentage, blood pressure, etc.)?

- Can you offer a “cycle EFT” for members’ convenience on large purchases? Instead of coming up with \$3,000 up front, you could bill \$500 per month over six months, automatically drafting from a member’s account.

If you are set up in advance to market and manage your personal training program, you will see better retention of your members and higher personal training revenues for your center. Good luck!

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