

INTRODUCTION TO SALES



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This sales training course is an introduction to the art of selling personal training sessions in any setting. It is designed to improve sales skills in a simple, user-friendly format that provides strategies for generating more sales, referrals, and increasing overall business. This course supports your growth and development whether you are new or an experienced certified personal trainer. We provide the information you need to develop a successful business platform that will give you an edge over your competition.



Upon successful completion of this self-study course, you should have a better working knowledge of:

1. The general sales process and approaches to earning more income.
2. Handling client objections and learn how to better retain clients.
3. Generating leads and methods for following up.
4. How to educate clients rather than hard selling them.
5. Your role and responsibilities as a trainer.



Personal Training is not your average sales career. A trainer can have the highest credentials, but unless he or she engages and sells themselves to people, he or she will never prosper. It is amazing how many people get involved in fitness and then become discouraged once they realize that obtaining clients can be difficult. A trainer must understand how to approach a client, demonstrate value and educate rather than sell. Measuring body composition, before and after pictures, showing clients your progress notes and strength testing are great tools to demonstrate the value of your services. Helping a client reach their goals is the best way to retain that client and get referrals.



Whether you are a new trainer, manager or a small business owner, it is important to periodically review your marketing strategy. Most importantly write down the things you may not be so good at and a plan to improve them. The number 1 priority is to make a list of your goals and have a timeline.

For example: If you want to train 25 sessions per week estimate a reasonable deadline to achieve that. Do you intend to have 5 in-home clients and 20 gym clients or would you prefer all gym clients? Once you decide your goals the next step is outline a plan on how you will achieve those goals. Cold calls, visiting local businesses or working the gym floor are all great strategies. Asking friends and family is a great starting point.



Keep in mind that you are ALWAYS selling yourself, always noticing a potential client wherever you are. Trainers come in contact with potential clients every day without even realizing it. Leads are in the elevator, the cafeteria, the gas station, and the grocery store.

Always be willing to do the extra work by saying hello to everyone and making small talk with strangers. The more you do, the faster you will build your business. You can average over 25 sessions per week inside of 6 months if you work at it.



RESPONSIBILITIES

Trainer Responsibilities

- Arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled session.
- Maintain a professional appearance.
- Wear uniforms when appropriate.
- Use proper language.
- Be aware of body language & posture.
- No lying down or leaning on equipment when on the floor training.
- No use of cell phone on the floor.
- No outside conversations when working with a client.
- No texting or phone calls.
- Clean and return equipment *as you go*.



Trainer Responsibilities

- No eating on the floor.
- Take water breaks with your client.
- Don't leave personal information on the floor.
- Maintain proper client/trainer relationship.
- Keep your availability on the schedule one month ahead of time (recommended from the 15th of one month to the 15th of the next month).
- Update your schedule daily.
- Keep the gym neat and clean.
- Perform floor shift duties, no slacking off.
- Politely explain the cancellation policy (helps avoid future problems).

Remember:

Clients are paying to get into better shape and improve their health. Keep personal conversation to a minimum and be a good listener. This is your client's time so they should be talking, not you. If you say "I" more than three times in a session, you may be talking about yourself too much. You may find some clients love to talk and it almost seems that they are more interested in venting about their personal life than exercising. Remember you provide a service and you need to keep your clients happy and healthy so find a balance that suits each client.



Training Manager Responsibilities

- Follow- up with assessments.
- Follow-up with new clients.
- Follow- up with MISSING clients who have stopped using the gym and its services.
- Submit payroll and perform administrative tasks assigned to you, always on time.
- Maintain high level of professionalism, you are the authority figure.
- Be available to answer client or trainer questions.
- Be present at events external.
- Maintain relationships, especially with local businesses and charities.
- Monitor client package usage.
- Have weekly staff meetings.



Appearance Counts:

- For men, keep a clean shave or properly groomed facial hair. For women, hair should be neatly presented and preferably kept away from the face. Look clients in the eye, and avoid crossing your arms or slouching.
- Be in uniform and wear sneakers that look neat and clean.
- Maintain good hygiene.
- Do not wear perfume or cologne. Some people are allergic to scents or may just not like them.
- When you are on the gym floor you are on stage.
- Do your job appropriately and treat everyone with respect.
- ALWAYS maintain confidentiality from client to client.



Cleaning Protocol

Many trainers believe that they are above cleaning the gym, and they refuse to pitch in because it is not "their job." The gym is a reflection of the trainers staffing it. A gym that is not clean and organized will make a bad impression and can be dangerous. In the event you are constantly picking up someone else's slack, then tell your manager. On the next slide there is a list of the important things people notice the most, and the busier the gym the more often these things need to be done.

If you are an owner and you see these issues, it is time to hire a new cleaning person or get things done yourself until you find one. It is important to create a chart of what needs to get done; daily, weekly and monthly. Dirty showers and toilets are common reasons people quit their gym.



Responsibilities for Keeping a Clean Gym:

- All amenities must be re-stocked daily.
- Toilets should be cleaned daily.
- Showers should be scrubbed four to five times a week and cleaned daily. Higher traffic gyms need more cleaning.
- Bathroom floor should be mopped and vacuumed daily.
- Gym floor should be mopped four to five times a week and vacuumed daily.
- Dusting should be done twice a week.
- Miscellaneous areas should be dusted and vacuumed, as needed, minimum of once a week.
- Mirrors should be cleaned daily.
- Windows should be cleaned once a week.
- Trash and recycling should be taken out daily.

MISC:

- Inventory should be taken on supplies to know when they become low.
- Stretching room should be straightened up; for example, dirty towels should not be hanging on the rim of a basket.
- Avoid clutter on counter at the front desk.
- If the gym is not clean, inform the manager.

Everyone loves a clean gym, so treat it like your home...after all, you're at the gym just as much as you're at home!



Tax Information

Whether you are starting your own business or doing part time free-lancing, there are some basic things you need to know. You need to get insurance, a tax I.D. or maybe even establish an LLC (Limited Liability Company). Of course, you will have to discuss this with your accountant. The intention of this course is not to advise on these matters because of the many factors involved in making these decisions, but we do recommend discussing them with your accountant. Your accountant may also advise you on how to best track expenses by using a basic accounting software program.

In most cases, large employers will not allow staff to create a company; but there are still ways to get deductions, so talk to your accountant. Some privately owned corporations will allow high-level trainers to start their own company under their brand. Every gym is different.

Consider working in-house for a private owner or large employer for about 3-5 years before branching out to your own business. You want to set the proper groundwork before starting your own business so that it can be successful. In many cases, trainers are better off when working for a reputable company and keeping their focus on training people. Everyone should start from the bottom and grow to the top in order to learn the ins and outs of the business, even if that means cleaning weights and doing free events.



The Sales LADDER:

Lead generation
Attract prospects
Discuss client goals
Demonstrate value
Execute the deal
Retain and get referrals



L: LEAD GENERATION

A strong sales person is always looking for another sale. As a personal trainer, potential clients surround you each and every day, everywhere you go. This section will outline the simplest ways to generate leads without changing much of your regular routine. Lead generation should continue even when you have grown a successful client base.

Generating leads can be done in a variety of ways. Lead generation is part skill, psychology and part probability. It may not happen overnight, but the harder you try, the better the results will be.



Prospecting Off the Gym Floor

Did you know the average client watches trainers at least one month before entertaining hiring one? Potential clients will see trainers on the floor, but if the trainer does not approach the prospect, they will never make a sale.

Do not be afraid to approach people and ask to work with them. When approaching potential clients, you should be sure to give them helpful information. You may scare a prospect away if you tell them, "that is wrong," or feed them with negativity. You want to approach them in a positive way and offer educational advice. If you give them valuable information, they will be more likely to commit to training sessions with you.

A great way to engage people is to offer a short stretch on their tight/trouble areas. Talk about stretch sessions and the importance of stretching: give them 2-3 facts about flexibility. This is a teaching and a "bonding" moment because you are working hands-on with your prospective client and giving them some advice that they can put to use immediately.



The cardio machines are full of potential clients who may be interested in your services. A great way to start is to put relevant articles on every machine with your business card and a special offer. If the person is warming up or just doing a light workout you can spark a conversation by asking if they need water or a towel. Doing this makes you visible and approachable to a potential client. You may want to start by saying, "Hi, I noticed that you've been doing cardiovascular training regularly. Are you training for an event or specific goal?" Once they answer, immediately educate them on the current research relative to their goal. Ask them if they have been making progress towards their goals and how often they change their routine. Ask if they are familiar with interval training and what they think of it. Explain how beneficial circuit training with weights can be. It is the most efficient way to train in the shortest amount of time if the goal is to lose body fat and increase overall wellness. Keep the conversation short and at the end simply say "I can offer you a complimentary evaluation to go over your individual needs, we can set it up after you are finished or I can contact you by phone or email."



Gym Tours

When giving a tour of the gym, show the prospective member or client the different equipment on the floor, and then explain some of what it's used for. The gym is part of what you are selling. Talk about your club's most popular classes and reservation policies and explain how your guests can obtain class information (i.e. internet, front desk, Group Classes schedule board, etc.) Discuss locker room amenities such as towel service and how many showers are there. If your club has a steam room or sauna discuss the benefits of them.

- Helps relieve stress
- Improves circulation
- Rejuvenates and relaxes body and mind

Explain the different types of memberships you offer and all the services.



Key Points:

- Make sure guests feel welcome and comfortable.
- Walk shoulder-to-shoulder with them; don't lead them or fall behind.
- Be aware of the guest's body language: Are they getting uncomfortable? Are you engaging them by making eye contact? Are their arms folded across their chest indicating defensiveness? Are they smiling/nodding their head in agreement with what you are saying?
- If the guest seems shy or intimidated, take him/her out of the mainstream areas so you have privacy.
- Use the questions on Health/Medical Questionnaire & Waiver to help you understand why your guest is in the club.
- Listen to the guest so you can customize the tour to fit your guest's needs and interests.
- *Practice, practice, practice* - the presentation must be conversational.



Networking

Networking is the best way to get quality leads. This takes a great deal of work and is a long-term way to feed your business. You should start by creating a spreadsheet that includes names and types of businesses within a 3 mile radius of your facility or travel area. Choose businesses that have the types of clients you are seeking, such as hair salons, tanning salons, dry cleaners, local grocery stores, pharmacies, clothing stores, delis, restaurants, sporting good stores, country clubs, and any place that you know someone. Once you create this list, you should visit each location and present them with business cards and brochures.

When you arrive at the business location, politely introduce yourself to the front desk person and ask for the owner or the manager. When they ask who you are, explain that you are a personal trainer and have clients that would be interested in their goods or services. Ask if they could give you a special offer for clients you refer to their establishment. In exchange you can offer all their customers a special discount on your services and gym memberships. For example we can waive the initiation fee and give your customers a free fitness evaluation. You can even make special business cards with a coupon on the back; for example: complimentary evaluation and gym pass courtesy of John's Sporting Goods.



Networking

Doctors are a great source for building your client base. Make sure that you know your science before approaching a doctor. Doctors expect you to understand anatomy and common conditions.

Here are some effective ways to get a doctor to connect with you:

- Start by asking your doctor if he/she knows any doctors that would be open to referring to you.
- The easiest way to build a list of doctor contacts is to ask your clients who their doctor is. Your client will need to give their doctor permission to speak to you.
- If you know a doctor by reputation you can refer a client to them and then call in reference to that client. The best way to get referrals is to refer to other providers.
- From your list of doctors find out the office managers name and contact info from each office. Send them some information about yourself by mail and by email. Be sure to communicate that you want to send your clients to the doctor because of all the great things you heard about him/her. Include a special offer for the patients and a better offer for the doctor and the staff.

Once you get a meeting, explain how you are different from other trainers, and tell the doctor the types of clients you have worked with. Most importantly tell the doctor you will advertise their information in your facility and/or your website.



Cold Calling

Cold calling is the easiest way to start generating leads. You can be assertive and ask the gym manager or sales rep for leads and volunteer to make calls. Make sure to follow a well-rehearsed script, which has been practiced repeatedly. Be prepared so you can hit the hot buttons every time and practice enough until it sounds natural. Remember that what you say is just as important as how you say it.

When making cold calls, you may often find that the lead is already seeing a physical therapist or an orthopedist. You should not be intimidated and back off. Instead, you should approach the topic head on.



Cold Calling

Both of these scenarios require similar approaches and are important to address when encountered:

- If they respond with, "I am seeing an orthopedist," you may want to follow up with some questions. "Would you be able to tell me his or her name? We work with a few orthopedists in the area and we are familiar with dealing with patients who are currently injured. Our clients actually see better results by working with a combination of orthopedists and trainers. We can work around the injured area and increase the strength around the area. This will help after surgery to shorten your recovery time."
- If they are seeing a physical therapist, you should follow up with some questions such as, "Oh really, who?" Then proceed to follow with similar information describing your knowledge of those in the area, like, "We work with a number of physical therapists in the area. Our clients will typically see quicker results from the physical therapy by incorporating personal training."

During the conversation you want to get the physical therapist and/or doctor's information. This gives you a topic for discussion and some common ground, which is a perfect way to start up your relationship. If you contact your client's doctor you have a chance to sell yourself to him or her. Do not ask a doctor for referrals until you have referred patients.



General Script:

This is a sample script if you are part of a large brand or a small start up. Be sure to mention any doctor or therapists you work with.

"Hi, this is ____ from _____. I'm calling to find out if you've taken advantage of the orientation we offer here at the club?"

"Who are you?"

"My name is _____, I've been a trainer for ____ years and currently work with Dr. ____."

"What is the orientation?"

"The orientation is a tutorial of how all the equipment works and a goal/health assessment. When are you free?"

"I already know how to use everything."

"Ok, then we can use the time to go over what your goals are and what you have been doing. When are you available?"



General Script

"Have you ever had a movement screening (evaluation)?"

"No, what's that?"

"Anyone who works out should know what their strengths and weaknesses are. The evaluation will give me the information I need to help you determine the best exercises for you. Our functional assessment differs from the average personal trainer evaluation in that we focus on faulty movement patterns and muscular imbalances. Initially we are not as concerned with your ability to lift heavy weights or run long distances. We believe that correcting imbalances and building a solid foundation is first and foremost. We offer custom-tailored exercises that will optimize your workouts and bring you to a new level of health. The movements of everyday life can be stressful. We'll help you feel better and move better in a functional way."

"I already had an evaluation..."

"That's okay since it wasn't with me I can review the results, retest and do a free 30 minute personal training session."



"I already had an evaluation..." (continued)

Ask about their experience and if they met their goals since the last evaluation. Do not be overly concerned with closing a sale, we don't want clients to become our 12 o'clock appointment or our 1 o'clock appointment rather than individuals with personalities. Remember, your client leads are people and if you treat them like a number they will recognize that.

Explain why working with a trainer is a better option for the client – even better, demonstrate it! Don't knock other trainers. Instead, talk about some of your strengths, such as, we work with doctors and all staff here is required to complete approved education programs. Knocking other trainers leaves an insecurity gap and you want to steer clear of that.



Leaving a Message

You may think leaving a message is ineffective, but it shows commitment and engages the client. Whenever you leave a message, also send an email introducing yourself and give them a few times you are available. Be sure in your message to mention you are sending an email so they can expect it. Make sure to leave your contact information and follow up if you do not hear from them.



Sample message for past member

Hello my name is _____ from _____. I'm calling to let you know we are offering a special rate for all past members. \$ _____ per month membership with no contract, one free personal training session and nutritional evaluation from a Registered Dietician (*offer nutritional consult only if you have a nutritionist*). Please contact me directly to redeem this special offer. I am sending an email with more details.

Say your name again and leave your cell and club/gym number. Thank you! I look forward to hearing from you again soon!

Email template for past members

Hi _____,
My name is _____. I'm from _____. Our system shows you were a member in the past. I would like to extend a special offer to help motivate you this *holiday* season. I can offer you a special no contract membership price of \$ _____ per month or \$ _____ for the entire year. In addition I would like to offer you a complimentary Personal Training session to help guide you through your gym experience. Please contact me to redeem your offer and let me know what times usually work for you. Thanks and have a great day!

Your Name and SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS HERE

Please see www. _____ for free exercise articles and pictures.

**If you don't have a site or blog it is important to set something up.*



Sample phone message for prospect

Hello my name is _____ from _____. I'm calling to let you know your 5 day gym pass has expired and that you have not redeemed your complimentary orientation. I would love some feedback on your gym experience here with us. Currently we are offering a special \$_____ per month membership with no contract, one free personal training session and nutritional evaluation from a *Registered Dietician (If you do not have an RD say nutritional consult)*. Please contact me directly to redeem this special offer. I am sending an email with more details. Say your name again and leave your cell and club/gym number. Thank you! I look forward to chatting with you!

Email template for prospect

Hi _____,
My name is _____. I'm from _____. Our system shows your 5 day gym pass has expired and that you didn't redeem your orientation. I would love some feedback on your gym experience with us and hope you will join our club. I can offer you a special no contract membership price of \$_____ per month or \$_____ for the entire year. In addition I would like to offer you a complimentary Personal Training session to help guide you through your gym experience. Please contact me to redeem your offer and let me know what times usually work for you. Thanks and have a great day!
Your Name and **SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS HERE**
Please see [www._____](#) for free exercise articles and pictures.
**If you don't have a site or blog it is important to set something up.*



Adjusting the Special

The special may be different for different groups of people. Target the audience you want with a specific call to action. For example, for past members we are offering a special rejoin rate of \$_____ month to month with a one year commitment. If you are running a special attach a flyer or other relevant literature.

****This is also the perfect time to attach an article they are interested in. For example, if this prospect said they played golf when you met them then send an article on how weight training can improve your drive.**



Building a Database

It is very important to keep a record of all prospects and clients' contact information; this includes phone numbers, home address and email addresses. This information is critical because it allows you to build a database for potential sales, and it also gives you the ability to follow up and reach out to old leads. A client that you didn't sell 3 months ago may be interested now. Many times touching base with an old lead and offering a special will help get them to come in.



A: Attract

Now that you have generated some leads from your contacts and physically meeting people it is time to Attract new prospects. The Attract component is unique because the prospects are people you have never met or contacted and are outside of your social network. They are coming to you because of an advertisement they saw online, in a newspaper, at a bus stop or from an article they read written by you. This component can get expensive but is usually the best way to appeal to the masses.

Advertising/Marketing:

One way to generate fresh leads is through advertising and marketing. There are a variety of avenues you can use to get your message across such as presentations online, powerpoints, public speaking, charity events, email blasting purchased leads, cold calls, SEO, brochures, flyers, mailers, written articles for publications, TV spots, radio spots, business cards. Social media is a critical component in generating leads from your current network and attracting prospects beyond your network. It is also a way to network without visiting physical locations.

Business owners need to understand that advertising and marketing are not the same. Advertising is basically a paid announcement from a vendor to the public. The goal is to exhibit the services being offered to potential customers or to current customers. Marketing is the plan and implementation of the different advertising strategies being used.



Special Offers and Promotions

A call to action is a great way to attract new leads and convert current leads. A 'call to action' is a piece of content or advertising that induces the reader or listener to do something specific, it is to-the-point and instructs the reader to take a next step (i.e. 'Click Here', 'Buy Now').

A simple offer may attract clients and convert current leads you never expected. Convey your message clearly and concisely in as few meaningful words as possible. Always include a call to action after your message. Offers and promotions should have just enough information to get the buyer excited.

An example is to offer a free evaluation to any lead or current customer. You want to explain to the prospect what they are getting and why it is valuable to them. You are not "giving away the farm." You are getting the prospect excited about the "sample" of goods. Your goal should be to *educate* and *entice* them into thinking either "Why didn't I try this sooner?" or "I have to try this out; it seems valuable."



Evaluations

A free evaluation should be simple and cover the basics:

- Explain how a program is designed based on their individual needs and goals.
- Take a general health history according to standard guidelines.
- Perform a short version of the movement screening.
- Give a brief equipment tutorial and review things they should do.
- Should be no longer than a ½ hour.

An initial evaluation with a training package should be more comprehensive:

- Provide measurable statistics for client's baseline for comparison in future evaluations.
- Should be about an hour.
- Should include: height, weight, posture analysis, health history, circumference measurements, body fat analysis (BIA or Calipers), flexibility screening, functional movement screening, muscular endurance testing and strength testing (when appropriate).
- Results of each test should be explained to the client.
- Repeat every 3-6 months based on the client's goals. Select the parts of the evaluation that apply to client's goals.



Marketing

Think of marketing as the pie and advertising is a piece of that pie. Other pieces are:

- market research
- media planning
- pricing
- sales strategy
- public relations
- customer support
- distribution methods

There are many low cost ways to advertise your services. Do not get caught up spending a fortune placing ads, doing random web banners or Google ads. Develop a plan and keep it simple. As your budget grows, you can expand. Develop your plan and focus on the basics before spending huge amounts of money.



Cross Marketing

This strategy requires you to do networking with local business that serve the type of client you are looking for. Remember the offer has to benefit you and the business you wish to work with. For example, visit a local business that sells in home gym equipment and offer a free in home demonstration on how to use the equipment they purchased. Another example is to visit your local running store and offer their customers a coupon for a free running mechanics screening. The store benefits because it adds value to their brand without costing any money and you get a lead.



Social Media

There are many social media platforms out there. We suggest starting with Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. Make sure that you integrate them with each other so your content is consistent. The most important thing for any campaign is having content that peaks interest. You need to gather and create content that attracts the people you are looking for. Videos of yourself, videos of clients, testimonials and getting people to review you are important aspects of a social media campaign. It is a great tool for getting your content and special offers to the masses.

As soon as you get a lead it is imperative that you contact them immediately. Write a weekly blog and post it on your social media platform. If you have a published article be sure to put a link on your page. Published content is extremely valuable and gives you a level of authority and endorsement that is invaluable online. If you don't have your own educational content to provide, find something relevant to your target that you can endorse.



The best way to get started building a social media network is to physically meet with owners/managers of local businesses. Ask the owner/manager to like, share and comment on your social postings and, in exchange, you will do the same. Have a special offer or an announcement about the business that you are exchanging this 'social love' with ready for posting to kick this relationship off. It can be something as simple as sharing with your followers that you visited and enjoyed this business' product or service today.

Keep these things in mind when it comes to using social media:

- It is a tool that should be used purposefully; with intent to attract people to the bigger message.
- Be careful with how you mix your personal and professional messaging, do not allow them to overlap.
- Set time aside each day, or at least a few times per week, to focus in on your social platform (constantly monitor, but purposefully post).
- Keep learning and growing in this area, do not be narrow minded. Remember, there are entire teams of people and businesses that make their careers out of the power of social media.



Web Sites

The most critical components of any website is great content and making sure it is simple to navigate. You need to gather and create content that attracts the people you are looking for. For example if you want wellness clients looking for overall health then have videos of circuit training and stretching not some powerlifter bench pressing. Videos of yourself demonstrating exercises, videos of clients, testimonials and affiliate links to Amazon products you like will help generate traffic.

For gym owners the website is crucial. These days that is the first place people visit to learn about you. Make sure all your staff have bios on the about page and all owners and management are featured. Websites can get expensive but have been proven to generate enough business to more than pay for themselves.

For career trainers working in a gym a website can still be useful but should be no more than 2-3 pages. It must include a contact form, links to any published articles, extensive bio on the trainer and content relevant to their audience. If possible, make your website interactive by offering online program design to those potential clients who cannot make it into the gym. You can use Skype sessions or purchase an existing software application with exercise pictures, demos and fitness program generating tools.



D: DISCUSS CLIENT GOALS

Listen, Listen, Listen!

Now that you have clients interested in utilizing your services it is time to ask questions and listen to what they are looking for. Is it long term- health, losing weight for an upcoming event, training for a marathon or to manage a condition? Listen to what they might have been accustomed to in the past. This will help you tailor a program to meet their needs and keep them engaged. Be sure to keep clients accountable for exercising on their own.



Client Interview and Health Screen

A health screening should be done before you perform any tests on the client. This is for safety purposes to ensure you have all the necessary facts about their history. You must know any physical limitations and medical diagnoses in order to design a safe program.

The screening is your greatest sales tool because you have the chance to educate the prospect and demonstrate value. Do not interrogate your potential lead by bombarding them with personal questions. Ask them to tell you about themselves and interject a few questions to get the conversation going in the right direction. As you are listening to them talk about these topics, note the information on the screening questionnaire. They will answer many questions just by talking about themselves. After about 5 minutes transition into asking them specific questions on the health questionnaire. Make sure any questions they already answered you repeat back to them with their answer. For example if they said they have a cholesterol issue simply say "You mentioned your cholesterol is high, tell me more about that."



Trainer Bio

Start the second part of the assessment by telling the client about yourself. Here is a real example (from one of the authors of this course, Justin Petraglia):

"I have been in the business for 10 years. I was an All-State Soccer Player until I severely injured my ankle because of inadequate strength and conditioning in my high school. Because of the way the injury threw off my gait, I developed a contra-lateral injury of the knee. I started going to physical therapy, which didn't really help, and they treated the problem (the knee) and not the root cause (inadequate strength and conditioning). Eventually, I got back to the point where I could go back to the gym and decided to rehab myself. I started out at Equinox in Scarsdale, where I became certified as a trainer and got into natural bodybuilding. I can now squat pain free with hundreds of pounds. I worked there for several years while going to school, ultimately graduating from Fordham University. I never stopped training and held on to my in-home clients because I loved to train and also because I had developed friends and lasting relationships with my clients. After college, I became a Stockbroker for two years and despite the money, I went back to my first love, which was training. I hooked up with an old friend of mine, who was co-owner of a sports medicine business in Greenwich, CT. Under the supervision of many doctors, I learned sports rehab and in depth training techniques. I currently study under the supervision of Dr. Robert Inesta of Westchester Sports and Wellness. What we do is a little different than your average trainer. I'm not knocking other trainers, but I feel that we have more to offer and are a cut above. We check for faulty movement patterns and muscular imbalances. If your goal is fat loss, muscle gain, or sports specific training, we are going to address it. So, why not try to fix any issues that you may have now, or prevent any from developing in the future along the way? It's called Functionally Integrated Therapy, it's like combining personal training and physical therapy."



D: DEMONSTRATE HOW TO ACHIEVE CLIENT GOALS

Evaluation and Assessment

After completing the medical history, you will begin the actual movement screening. Before going into the evaluation itself, explain to the prospect this evaluation will give us the information we need to create a custom program. As you perform each test briefly explain why you are doing the test and what it means.

Before you start the functional screening tests ask them about any aches and pains they have and what aggravates them. While performing the test ask if it causes any pain and if it is difficult. Once the tests are complete demonstrate one or two exercises they should be doing based on the results of the tests.

Movement tests for the general fitness client should be no longer than 30 minutes. If you are assessing a serious athlete, then you will need to be more in depth and perform a longer evaluation specific to their sport.



After completing the evaluation, explain how you can design for them an exercise program based on the results of their assessment. Talk about how your custom program will help them overcome the challenges they mentioned during the health screening. The most important thing is to make sure the client knows how the movement test results explain why they are struggling and not meeting their goals. For example if the goal is to improve running times a faulty squat will disrupt running mechanics. Explain that during the squat test you saw the knees caving in and excessive shearing over the toes. This means that the adductors are tight and the quadriceps are over working. This can only be corrected by correcting muscle imbalances and faulty motor pathways. The dysfunction will eventually lead to a repetitive stress injury.

Remember do not confuse your new potential client! Do not overload him or her with technical information they do not understand. Make sure to 'read' your client's response. Most clients only care about how much fat they will lose, how much muscle they will gain or how their favorite activities will be affected. The general population usually do not want to hear a long-winded scientific explanation of their issues. Give them a little bit of technical information to demonstrate your expertise but know when to turn it off. Keep it interesting and explain how their weaknesses directly affect the things they enjoy doing most.



Here are some examples:

Golfer with back pain during their swing: "I found that your gluteus-medius is weak and your gluteus-maximus is not firing correctly. Every time you turn to swing the club, you will lose power on the drive and place excess stress on your lower back. This dysfunction will negatively affect your drive and your putt and lead to injury. I have some exercises and stretches that will correct your issues and greatly improve your drive."

Grandparent having shoulder pain while picking up grandchildren: "Your shoulder pain is because your chest muscles are tight, your upper back muscles are weak and you're hunching forward. This happens from being in certain positions for too long a period of time or repeating poor movement patterns throughout the day. I can show you a few simple stretches and exercises to correct the issues and get you playing with the kids pain free."

Former tennis player with knee pain: Explain how you noticed during the squat test their knees were caving in, their quads were over active and their heels came off the floor. These dysfunctions will diminish performance, overload the knee, cause pain and eventually injury. "With proper core stabilization, mobility drills, rotator cuff exercises, and scapular stability, we should have you playing pain free tennis soon!"



During an evaluation and as you transition to conducting a training session, you should:

- ASK
- TELL
- SHOW
- DO

Example: Cardiovascular Training

ASK

"What type of cardio do you enjoy? Do you know how to maximize your cardio workout? Have you ever tried to combine your cardio with a weight lifting routine?"

TELL

"Circuit training is a great way to maximize gym time because you get the benefit of strength training along with a cardio workout."



SHOW

Point to a poster or provide some written literature showing the benefits of cardio. Studies prove cardio can improve and extend your life. The benefits of regular cardio training include:

- More Energy and Stamina
- Increased Weight Loss
- Better Overall Health
- Less Stress
- Deeper Sleep
- Improved heart health

DO

Here is where the rubber meets the road, it is time to commit to them, if they are ready to commit to you. Get the client started as soon as possible, do not procrastinate. Explain your workout plan for the next four weeks and book the appointments right there.



Key points to know:

- The best way to be successful at cardiovascular training is to find the type of cardio the client enjoys most.
- The goal is to help them maximize their results in the least amount of time. It is about the value of the client's time.
- Trainers can help clients to accomplish any goal.
- Trainers should demonstrate how to use the equipment correctly.

Recommend that they mix up their cardiovascular routine with weight training. The benefits of regular resistance training include:

- Greater overall strength
- More muscle, less fat
- Lower risk of osteoporosis
- Increased metabolism
- Looking and feeling better
- Makes cardio more efficient because more muscle burns more calories
- Better sleep
- Better posture
- Overall higher quality of life
- Helps prevent most disease



E: EXECUTE*Closing the Sale:*

This can be in the form of personal training sessions or gym membership (which can turn into future personal training clients). Do not be afraid of the words "guaranteed," "no-risk," or "money back". Only offer a guarantee if you are prepared to refund the client in the event you cannot deliver. Set rules and make the client accountable. For example, You must see me twice a week for a 60 min session, check in the gym at least three other days and turn in a food log at the end of each week. Be sure to put this in writing so there are no misunderstandings.

People are natural skeptics, especially when it comes to purchasing decisions, and even more so during economic down times. If you remove risk, you are more likely to close the sale. For example, if your potential client is overweight, and focused on weight loss, don't be afraid to say "I guarantee if you follow my program you will lose 6 lbs in the first 15 days".

The truth is, the majority of people will **NOT** ask for their money back nor will they complain if they don't lose 6 lbs in 15 days, as long as they come close and are seeing some kind of improvement. A client that would ask for a refund when they are making progress is probably not a client that will work out long term. In this case, you are better off to refund and cut those ties before the relationship becomes more turbulent.



Closing

Use the results of the evaluation to help you close the sale. Your knowledge is your best sales tool. After the evaluation is completed, then sit down with your prospective client and thoroughly explain the findings and how to correct the issues. Present your strong close at the end of the evaluation by reviewing how their test results relate to their goals. Tell them, "Since you said you are going to devote 4 days a week in the gym, I feel as though 2-3 of those days would be most productive with a trainer."

There are many different types of selling techniques, but it seems that the easiest way to sell is through education; bullet, benefit, and close. As a trainer, you must be able to throw out "bullets" to your prospective clients. After the bullet, talk about the benefits the client should expect. Also, have a few different types of "closes" for the sale of your services. For example, some clients will need more explanation of the benefits of eliminating pain, while others will benefit more from explaining how you will help them improve sports performance.



High and Low Pressure

If the potential client seems willing and receptive, attempt to close the sale by asking when they want to come in next. Show them the price list and explain how the larger packages will save money. Talk about how their commitment will be worth it, and glorify the beneficial aspects of health.

If a potential client seems hesitant, change your strategy and lower the pressure. Jumping straight to a high-pressure sale will cost you money in the long run and upset potential clients. Lean more in the direction of education rather than selling. Remember that selling something at a discounted rate is better than nothing. Ask them what they would prefer, listen to their needs and adjust accordingly. Many gyms will allow you to sell a smaller package at the larger package per session rate just to get the initial sale.



Rebuttals

All trainers should be able to address rebuttals. If you do not address rebuttals appropriately, you may come across as unsure of yourself, which may cost you the sale. Also, many times, new and inexperienced trainers rush the close and end up with no sale.

- *Rebuttal:* "I don't have the money."
Your answer: It's an investment in your health. What is more important than that? I can offer you a small package to get you started. In three sessions I can design a custom program for you to do on your own. Seeing a trainer just a few times to educate yourself will lower your risk of injury and better utilize your time in the gym.
If they still say it is too expensive try recommending shorter sessions or forming a group to cut down individual cost.

Rebuttal: "I'm hurt."
Your answer: "If the issue is minor, proper exercise has been shown to help speed up the healing process. Perhaps the pain stems from lack of flexibility." If it is serious, refer the client to your Chiropractor or Orthopedist contact. When they recover the prospect will come back and buy training.



• *Rebuttal:* "I have no time."
Your answer: "Obviously, you see the importance of what I am telling you. It only takes a few hours a week. I know that this is a priority to you and so I'm betting that you can find the time if we do a shorter session."

Rebuttal: "I have had a previous bad experience with a trainer."
Your answer: Don't bad-mouth that trainer! Explain that the industry is not regulated and you never know what you are getting. Explain how your credentials are above industry standards and what you would do differently.

• *Rebuttal:* "I need to think about it"
Your answer: Ok but why not do your free evaluation so you can make a more educated decision.

There are many kinds and styles of rebuttals, learn them or make your own. Also, make sure that you are able to offer an on-the-spot discount, offer or special rate to the prospect so that you can close leads without going back and forth (if not a self-employed CPT, make sure to ask your manager and have this pre-approved).



If they say NO—That's okay, don't get defensive about a 'no', a 'no' can turn into a future 'yes' if nurtured properly. Let them know what you can do for them later, like, "well in the future, if you'd like to do a 3 session program design I can still get you a discounted rate."

If they are a hard NO—say something like, "OK, no problem, I hope you enjoyed the evaluation portion and maybe got a bit of information that you can use to help you achieve your fitness goals. I completely understand that now might not be the right time, just please know that I'm here for you when you want to take that next step. In the meantime, would it be okay if I email you with some articles on common exercise mistakes and tips to help you reach your goals. I'd also love to send you info on any specials or events coming up that would benefit you. Would this be okay?"



When trying to close, some prospects just won't budge, this means it is time to move on. Let them know that you are available if they need any help in the future.

You should follow up in approximately 3 days after the evaluation to see how they liked it. If there is no sign that you will close the sale then wait three weeks contact them as a reminder that you're there to help. Even though they may not buy a package, it is not a waste of time. Keep this lead in your file and follow up again in 2 months.

When you follow up it is important to have the evaluation notes in front of you. Start by asking how their injuries are, how their workouts are going and if they are on track for all their goals. Ask a couple of specific questions based on the evaluation you did. For example, how has your knee pain been or have you added any yards on your drive. People need to understand that you care regardless if they are buying or not.



Types of Sales

Defined by example:

- **Up-sell:** inducing a customer to purchase a more expensive item, add-on or upgrade (i.e. selling training services with the gym membership, or selling a larger training program package at a volume discount)
- **Down-sell:** narrowing the expectations of a customer to fulfill their specific area of need, selling the minimal but still selling (i.e. free evaluation with a 50% off training session or 3 day custom workout, the very minimal to keep them in the door)
- **Cross-sell:** selling something different, more services to an already existing customer (i.e. selling personal training sessions to group fitness/class participants)
- **Re-sell:** selling something that one person purchased for someone else (i.e. offering a free evaluation to one friend or family member of an existing client, or compromising on a refund/problematic situation by allowing the client to transfer their remaining sessions to a person of their choice).

New clients mean new cliques of people, so capitalize and network with any contacts your clients may have.



R: RETAIN THE CLIENT

The most important things for client retention is to show the person you care and demonstrating value at every session. It is important to review progress with clients and show them how well they are doing. For example, during their initial evaluation they said their goal was to do a plank for one minute without pain, once they achieve it, show them.

Scheduling for success

All clients should be urged to schedule appointments monthly, month-to-month. Once a client is scheduled, you can always adjust the time when needed. Booking ahead helps the client to stay consistent and allows the trainer to foresee any issues ahead of time. Clients should not be encouraged to go day-to-day or week-to-week. All clients are required to pay for sessions up front, or you *don't get paid on time in most gyms*.



Explain What to Expect

Confirm sessions with clients in advance and do not cancel on them, especially repeatedly. Clients will not hesitate to use this against you if they feel you are wasting their time. Clients can be inconsistent on their own for free, they do not need to pay you if you cannot lead them to their goals.

Discuss your cancellation policy upfront so there are no surprises. Talk about session fees and give the clients adequate notice when their training package is getting ready to expire. Consistently show them how you are helping them reach their goals and why you are a valued service.



Beginner Clients:

- When training beginner clients, explain how they are going to start with simple exercises that over time will progress into more difficult movements.
- Talk about how their lifestyle contributes to issues they may have, and offer helpful, realistic solutions.
- Educate them on exercises they can do to reverse their dysfunctions.
- When they can't perform an exercise, make a note and immediately follow with an exercise they can do.

Advanced Clients:

- Keep them on their toes by tracking their workouts and highlighting progress. If someone had an injury that has healed and now feels fine, remind him or her how far they have come.
- Introduce new quality exercises, tempos and varied repetition ranges.
- Use a stopwatch, not the clock, to track time.



In-Home Clients

When doing an in-home session, or trying to explain benefits of in-home training to a potential lead, inform the client of all the possible exercises that they can do within their home. If the client does not have a home gym, show him/her how you can utilize a small area in their home. We have found that it is not an issue to ask a client to buy an exercise ball, foam roller, 4 sets of bands with handles, 4 sets of mini bands, and a set of dumbbells.

As long as you have a minimum basic understanding of how to use a client's house as a training ground, you can succeed at it. If a client is willing, suggest that they buy a few medicine balls, suspension straps for body weight training, and a doorway pull up bar.

While you are in a client's home, remember that it is their space. Don't risk knocking something over or throwing a medicine ball into the TV. Also, be careful when conversing with your client and do not comment on anything personal that might offend him.



Referrals

The close does not mean that the sale is over. In fact, it is actually just the beginning! You are now opening a new relationship that marks the beginning of more potential clients. Clients that endorse you and your gym help broaden your sphere of influence.



Referrals

Your strongest leads will come from your existing clients. If they see results and are happy with their training programs, they are more likely to refer you to friends and co-workers.

- Do not be afraid to ask your clients if they know anyone who would be interested in training with you.
- Offer them a free session or discount for every person they refer who buys a package.
- Get testimonials from clients and before and after pictures when possible.

A great way to generate leads is by offering clients rewards for referrals. Tell all your clients that you will offer each of their friends and family members a free initial session and evaluation. If their referral signs up, then your client gets a free session. In many circumstances, we find that clients actually prefer a gift card to their favorite restaurant or another service, like a massage, rather than free sessions.



We hope that you have enjoyed the learning material in this course.

Develop Your Plan:

- Make a to-do list of things that you can do to better yourself and your business.
- Create an order of operations for contacting prospective clients and the process that follows for maintaining communications with them. Keep accurate records for follow up dates and communications to prospects.
- Make a list of local area businesses for lead generating and referral purposes.
- Execute your plan and stick to a schedule of events for lead collection, communication, and follow up.
- Write your short and long term goals down and review them every month.

Contact us at info@fitandfunctional.com or call 914-774-3644 with any questions. Thank you!



About The Authors

Charles DeFrancesco has been a certified NFPT trainer for over 20 years. Charles has managed commercial gyms, owns a gym, testifies as an expert witness and consults with many gym owners and doctor offices on sales and management protocols. During his career he has found even the most educated trainers cannot demonstrate value to their prospective clients and end up closing very few leads. This course was created using the same techniques Charles used to close over 95% of his leads, generate new leads and ultimately generate enough business to open an 8000 square ft. facility. This system works for everyone who follows it.

Justin Petraglia has been an NFPT trainer for over 10 years. Justin was a stock broker before becoming a personal trainer and actually used many of these methods to sell stocks. He is currently the co-owner of Next Level Speed athletic training and also runs his own real estate sales business.

Dr. Robert Inesta was a personal trainer for almost 10 years before becoming a chiropractor. Currently, Dr. Inesta owns his own chiropractic and acupuncture practice in New York.
