

How To Prevent a Slow Season: Motivation, Marketing, and Social Media



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Keep the Clients You Have



How Do I Keep Clients Motivated?

We asked personal trainers, “How do you keep clients motivated?”

The nearly unanimous answer: ‘give them results.’ That’s all well and good, and results are very motivating, but if a client isn’t motivated to stick with you long enough to see measurable results, what do you do then?

What is Motivation?

There are two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motives are those that fulfill a person’s needs for belonging (acceptance by society) and self-esteem (an action that makes the person feel good about themselves).

Extrinsic motives fulfill more basic needs such as physiological needs (food, water, rest), safety, and also belonging (peer pressure or social status). As you see, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations have some overlap.

Examples of Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation:

Extrinsic:

Winning the ‘Biggest Loser’ contest at the gym and getting a \$500 gift card.

Earning a 1st place medal in their age group during a 10k race.

Completing their hour-long workout so they can run to the smoothie bar and get their favorite smoothie.

Intrinsic:

Having the energy and stamina to enjoy climbing to the top of Half Dome with their spouse during their anniversary vacation next June.

Learning more about how muscles work and grow.

Controlled extrinsic motives (indicated when a client says, “I have to go to the gym”) typically motivate a client to get started with an activity, but do not create lasting change. That’s why trainers should not “preach” to clients.

Rather, we help clients fulfill three basic psychological needs:

Autonomy: The trainer can empathize with the client, supports their choices, and doesn't pressure them to perform.

Relatedness: The client is part of a group or feels a connection with other gym members. They feel supported and encouraged by these relationships.

Competence: The trainer limits the amount of negative feedback given and provides challenges in which the client can be successful.

Therefore, trainers need to consider both intrinsic and extrinsic motives and how to provide opportunities for clients to fulfill those three basic needs. When you [change the client's mindset](#) from "have to" to "want to" (or "get to") then your client is working on intrinsic motivation and will likely sustain the behavior.

Now, according to research, "Controlled forms of motivation, which by definition are not autonomous (i.e., they lack volition), are predominant when the activity is perceived primarily as a means to an end and are typically associated with motives or goals such as improving appearance or receiving a tangible reward."

Many of your clients will come in with these controlled extrinsic motives, and it will be up to you to capitalize on them during your intake process, which we'll discuss in a moment.

Motivation and Behavior

The idea behind the Fogg Method is that behaviors can only be changed when the client feels sufficiently motivated and capable of handling the task. Additionally, they must be "triggered" to perform the task.

When a client is sufficiently motivated and finds that an activity is challenging but manageable, they fall within the activation threshold or the point in which a trigger is needed to stimulate the behavior. (You act as the trigger.)

However, if a client is motivated, but finds an activity to be outside their comfort zone or capabilities, it will be much more difficult to motivate them to engage in the behavior, even with a 'trigger.'

If a client finds an activity that is easy for them to do, but which they are not motivated to do, they won't engage in the activity.

Simply preaching to a client that they will lose weight or inches is not going to motivate them. The way you greet, interview, and assess new clients is a key component to shifting your client's mindset about exercise and motivating them to stick with their routine.

Drawing Clients Into a Fitness Program and Lifestyle

The ISSA Drawing-In Process is an essential part of motivating your client. Let's put it all together.

Stage 1: Establishing Yourself as a Professional

As you walk through this stage, ease client's fears by demonstrating that they can trust you and your expertise to help them achieve their goals, therefore fulfilling their need for confidence in this decision.

Don't "preach" here. Educate and demonstrate.

Stage 2: Data Collection

In this stage of the process, you'll discover your client's current medical conditions, past medical history, current diet and motivations for seeking out a fitness professional.

You'll also conduct fitness assessments and record the results.

Keep a journal for each of your clients and keep them in a safe place in your office or facility. (If you send the journal home with a client, you may never see it again.)

This is a great time to create short- and long-term goals and discuss your client's motivation for achieving those goals. Although clients will say, "I have a class reunion," or "I'm going on vacation," or "I'm getting married," as their motivations, you'll find that if you dig a little deeper, you'll uncover those intrinsic motives.

Try asking probing, open-ended questions like:

"Once you achieve this goal, how will you feel?"

Another great question is, "Why is this goal important to you?"

If they still don't divulge the real underlying reason for their desired goal, ask them, "If you could achieve this goal tomorrow, what would you do then?"

This will often lead you to a better understanding of what they hope that goal will accomplish for them.

Often a client's desire to lose 20 pounds has only a little bit to do with social pressure, but mostly with their self-confidence and desire to do activities which will be easier or more comfortable once they lose the weight. Focus on the deeper issue as you progress through the Drawing-In Process and tie-in your exercise choices to the ultimate goal.

Stage 3: Guided Discovery

During this stage, it is important to establish an open line of communication. Tell your client that you are discovering activities they enjoy and that will serve the overall objective. Note the exercises your client seems comfortable with - maybe they are comfortable on the treadmill, but not on the stair climber. Keep detailed notes in your client's journal, perhaps rating each exercise from 1 to 5. A 'one' indicates that they hate the exercise and will curse your name if you include it into their routine and a 'five' indicates that it was an activity they enjoyed and they would like to challenge themselves to do better in the future.

Allow them to work in their comfort zone as long as it achieves part of the goal.

Celebrate the completion of each set and repetition and educate them as you move through the routine.

Correct them as necessary, but sprinkle in praise for their hard work. This goes a long way in fulfilling their needs for autonomy and competence.

Introduce them to facility staff, other members and clients to increase their feelings of connection and belonging.

Stage 4: Testing the Water

During this stage, you and your client will work together to create a program that will ultimately become a lifestyle. It is very important to fit your program into your client's day, not try to get them to fit their day around the program.

For example; if your client eats fast food five days a week for lunch, it is much more reasonable to provide them with healthier choices at their favorite fast food restaurants than to expect them to do a meal prep day and pack their lunch. If they get up at 4:00 a.m. to get ready for a 90-minute commute to work, it would be unreasonable to ask them to get up at 3:00 a.m. to exercise. Rather, help them fit exercise into their workday, either during their 15-minute breaks or at lunch.

Again, keep track of how well things are going in your journal. You'll begin to notice patterns in your client's behavior and will be able to plan a program that will fit naturally into their daily routine and help them achieve their goals.

Stage 5: Establishing an Integrated Fitness Lifestyle

At this stage, you and your client know each other well. You have taken the time to discover the activities your client enjoys and that fit into their lifestyle. You understand their extrinsic and intrinsic motives and have set short- and long-term goals.

During this stage, you can increase your client's dedication to fitness by giving them "homework."

You might send them to a yoga or Zumba class (to increase relatedness).

Suggest that they dust off the ol' road bike and take a short ride (increasing competence and autonomy).

Encourage your client to keep up with their fitness journal to demonstrate, in concrete numbers and data, just how much benefit they are getting out of their fitness lifestyle (increasing belief and autonomy).

From this point forward, make sure your client's goals are achievable and encourage your client each step of the way. The more success they achieve in the program, the more committed they will be to following your instructions and developing a lifelong love of fitness.

You'll find that when you follow the Drawing-In Process and ask the right questions of your clients, you'll discover their intrinsic motivations and be able to talk to them using language that gives them hope that by working with you, they will achieve their goals.

How to Use Social Media to Encourage Motivation and Progress

The controversy around the topic of social media seems never-ending. Despite the relative newness of technological developments, lists of harms and benefits that social media users can inflict upon themselves are all over the internet. So, what is the real risk? How does it affect fitness professionals and athletes?

Interestingly, these questions have penetrated the scientific field and inspired an impressive number of research papers. While one would expect a confirmation of dangers, psychologists point to quite the contrary. Apparently, in most cases, the pros often outweigh the cons, if you know the right approach. So, let's get a better look.

Social Media Can Trick Us into Self-Motivation

People tend to portray themselves in only the most flattering ways. Only the best of the workouts, meals, outfits, days, or ideas go online. It is easy to mistakenly assume the lives of others are impeccable, while we are constantly dealing with mundane struggles. We tend to make these comparisons regularly and almost automatically; it is a part of human nature.

To put it in more scientific words, these are upward and downward comparisons. What's the difference? When we make the upward comparisons, we perceive others as fitter, richer, luckier, and simply better in general. While during downward comparisons, we find ourselves to be superior.

As you might have already guessed, it is during upward comparisons that most of the social media 'hate' creeps in. Psychologists confirm that this is when the most envy is experienced:

"an unpleasant and often painful blend of feelings characterized by inferiority, hostility, and resentment | caused by comparison with a person or group of persons who possess something we desire."

Not only it is uncomfortable to experience these feelings on their own, but they also lead to a wide range of negative consequences and disrupt our well-being.

Psychologists have discovered that there is absolutely no need to stay away from these online platforms altogether. Instead, we can learn how to use them to enhance our wellbeing. Apparently, the easiest way

to make upward comparisons rarer, and instead promote motivation and happiness is to become an ACTIVE user of social media!

Active Versus Passive Use

What is the difference between passive and active social media use? Active users are the ones who tend to share some content online. They post pictures, update status pages, and share tweets and stories. As for the passive users, these are the ones who stick to scrolling the feed only. There is nothing wrong with being either type of a user, per se. However, being a passive user increases the risk of upward comparisons. In contrast, being an active user decreases it.

Long story short, sharing a flattering workout selfie with your friends may convince you in your progress, while silently observing other people's successful shots will most likely do the opposite.

Can Fitness Professionals Use This in a Practical Setting?

On ISSA blog, we have already noted the importance of [motivating and engaging](#) a client. Building a plan that goes beyond the gym is essential. Most of the nutritional or psychological work is in fact done [outside of the gym](#). Thus, the correct use of social media can become a great tool.

Which path you will choose to follow truly depends on individual differences. Once you get to know your client better, you will find out what suits them the most. You may encourage them to share the journey on their personal profile or share their achievements on your own business page (with permission of course). Or, you may provide an online community space where your clients can interact and support each other.

Social Media Can Increase the Feelings of Connectedness

It's a no brainer that social media can create and even strengthen social connections. Fitness professionals frequently use this tool to create communities where members can exchange thoughts and ideas about their common topics of interest. The mutual support that trainees get through these communities is highly valuable. Especially for those who lack self-confidence and often seek confirmation of progress from their surroundings. Not to mention, it offers a safe environment for sharing personal goals and achievements among each other, or maybe even pictures that the person would not want to expose elsewhere.

If you are a fitness trainer and don't already have an online space for your motivated, healthy community, create one now. The benefits of having one are endless, and dangers are truly minimal.

Working with Every Client is a New Adventure

Psychology is a science of the human mind, and the mind is the most complex creations of all. So, be careful not to underestimate the individuality of each client and their preferences.

When researchers provide recommendations and advice, they rely on the results of the majority of tested people. However, the minority is no less important. There is a chance that the client you're working with belongs to that minority. In such cases, knowing and adjusting to their preferences is simple as long as you stay open to their own preferences and not just what's easy for you.

Finally, before you suggest any tool for motivation or help with a lack of self-confidence, make sure you have gathered enough information about the client. Stay within your scope of practice. Sometimes the reasons behind psychological difficulties are medical and you need to refer your clients to a medical professional.

Social media is just one of the tools you can use to motivate clients to help them achieve their goals. If you're interested in more way to promote healthy behavior change, check out the ISSA's transformation [specialist course](#). You'll learn how to influence behavior patterns and help your clients maximize their overall wellbeing.

Leverage Your Time to Make More Money



Why Your Training Business Needs Small Group Fitness

Small group fitness accountability isn't a fad. It's a proven method for motivating clients, changing lives, and making a good income. But before you jump into recruiting people for your small group fitness program, you have a few things to think about.

Who?

First, decide what you want your small group to look and feel like.

How many people do you want to train? A small group consists of four to fourteen people. If you train fewer than four people, you're not truly leveraging your time. If you train more than fourteen, you're not giving your clients the attention and service they want and need.

Next, decide who you want to train.

Start with your unique story. Invite people who have goals like the ones you've already achieved. For example, if you lost 40 pounds, people who need to lose weight will be attracted to your story. They'll sign up so they can do what you did. Having something in common builds camaraderie and enhances small group fitness accountability.

You can also think about which clients would be the most fun to work with. As the coach, you get to decide who you work with!

What?

What kind of program will you coach clients through?

A cardio challenge group?

Interval training for obstacle races?

Kettlebells for weight loss?

If you know who you want to work with but don't know what kind of programs they would like to participate in...ask potential clients what they want. Ask about their fitness goals, challenges they face, what kinds of exercise they enjoy, etc. If you know what potential clients want, you can create programs to meet their needs. Then your program will be successful right out of the gate. So, don't be afraid to ask!

Where?

Where will you connect with your small group? For participants to get the most out of your program, they need to feel connected. Many fitness trainers use Facebook. Others use a CRM software. Some create a group text/chat.

The important part about connection is making sure you do it often.

Finally, where will you and your clients meet for the workout? Will you meet at the beach, the basketball court, your home studio, or at the trailhead? Will your workout location change to keep clients motivated? Will everyone have access to the locations you choose? Consider this as you plan your training program.

How Long?

How long is your program going to last? Before deciding on a 12-week program, think about who you're serving and what you're teaching. Some group exercise programs might be more successful and fun if they are only 30 days long.

How long each session will last? A 30-minute group exercise session probably isn't long enough. Remember that you need to warm-up, cool-down, and stretch your clients. And you will need time to demonstrate exercises and get the group ready for the next exercise.

Generally, group workouts should last 60 to 90 minutes.

Avoid 7-day challenges. These are ineffective and cliché. Also don't do single-exercise challenges. The squat and push-up challenges have been done to death. Create something that matters.

How Much?

Finally, it's time to iron out pricing. This varies depending upon the factors we discussed above:

- Where you train
- Who you are working with
- The duration of the training sessions
- The length of the training program

It may take a bit of leg work to get your training program running, but small group exercise programs are a great way to get started as a personal trainer.

You can charge less, which will draw prospective clients without putting a dent in your income. You can also practice your programming skills, get lots of testimonials, and build your business by referrals. Participants may even hire you for some personal training sessions.

Of course, if you're just getting started, we have some other great ideas for you to get experience in our article, [Getting Experience as a Personal Trainer](#).

What Small Groups Expect

You know who you're going to train, what fitness goals they have, where you will train them, and how much money you could earn. Now it's time to design your fitness programs.

As a fitness trainer, you know that periodization is the key to success in fitness programs. The principle holds true for small groups, too. Design group workouts so they build upon previous workouts. Clients want results and without periodized training, they won't get what they're paying for.

When working with a small group, focus on lifestyle modification. Motivate them to set new, healthy habits to lose weight and maintain a healthy body composition. Don't try to push clients into a certain lifestyle or force them to do only HIIT workouts because that's what you do.

Create well-rounded training programs that meet their needs, fit into their current lifestyle, and help them achieve their fitness goals.

Some group workouts you should try are interval training and circuit training. High-intensity interval training (aka HIIT) is a great way for clients to build muscle, increase cardio endurance, and see quick results. High-intensity interval training also makes the hour seem to fly by! You can use kettlebells or battle ropes to increase the challenge.

Circuit training is great in groups. It's easy to incorporate kettlebells, sandbags, or plyometrics into circuit training because you don't need equipment for everyone, just for one or two stations.

If you'd like to try running a boot camp, read our [Boot Camp 101](#) article to find out how to get started. But understand that boot camps, although lucrative, have their flaws.

For one, boot camps are cheap. Most trainers charge five to ten dollars per session. Client's need to have

skin in the game to be successful. Losing a few bucks isn't incentive enough to keep them motivated. Although small groups are not as expensive as one-on-one personal training sessions, because client's pay up front for the program, it's harder to quit with money on the line.

Another con, boot camps are open-ended. Anyone can join or quit at any time. This makes results inconsistent. With a small group exercise program, you set the start and end dates. This allows you to set goals for your clients, hold them accountable for showing up, and track their progress so they see results.

How to Run Your Small Group and Manage Your Community

The clients you're working with expect you, their coach, to keep them motivated and moving. But you shouldn't be the only one they count on. Build camaraderie by assigning fitness buddies within the group.

If clients want to lose weight, then accountability partners are key. Encourage them to text each other photos of their meals, pictures of them during workouts, or drinking water, etc.

Set goals and create incentives. Let your group decide the rewards they get for meeting milestones and what happens when they don't.

Finally, educate your clients along the way. The more they know, the better equipped they are to make healthy choices and continue their fitness lifestyle.

Ready for more? To get the best resource to help you write great programs and improve your skills for group training, ISSA's [Group Fitness Training](#) certification will set you on the right path. Get started today to build your business and your brand!

Use Down Time to Build Your Social Media Presence



Social Media Marketing for Personal Trainers

Social media marketing is great, but do you know what to do first? And after that? Using social media isn't rocket science but using it effectively as a marketing tool for your business requires more than simply starting an account and posting a few inspirational pictures.

To reach a wider audience, get more clients, and become a genuine influencer, you need a strategy, a plan, quality and varied content, and so much more. Let us help you figure out what to do next in your plan to start dominating social media.

For a Personal Trainer, Social Media Marketing is Essential

Sure, you can work as a trainer without having social media accounts, but if you do you are at the mercy of the gym where you work. Your potential client list is limited. Yes, old fashioned word-of-mouth can eventually work to expand your business, but you'll grow faster if you take an active role in your own marketing. Here are some of the reasons it's essential to get into social media for your brand and business:

- With social media sites, you'll reach hundreds and thousands more people than you possibly could with traditional marketing and word-of-mouth.
- Posts on social media allow you to showcase your expertise and authority.
- You can also show off your expert knowledge in a particular niche, like vegan nutrition or youth fitness.
- You'll be able to multiply your credibility by connecting online with other experts and influencers.

If you're looking to add online services, like coaching groups, to your business, social media accounts will give you greater reach to find interested clients.

Use social media to stay connected with past and current clients. [It's always easier to keep clients than to find new ones](#), and by engaging with them online you'll ensure they don't forget you.

Develop a Social Media Marketing Strategy

The most important thing you'll do to start leveraging social media marketing for all of these benefits is create a plan. If you just start creating accounts and posting content without a plan, success will be hit or miss.

Check out some of the personal trainer sites you like the most or that have huge numbers of followers. Track the content posted for a couple of weeks and look for patterns. Successful influencers have accounts that seem natural and spontaneous, but when you dig into it you'll see that they are actually well-planned and not random at all.

Start with Some Brainstorming and Research

Good social media marketing isn't random. You need goals, a mission, and a brand. As you look at those other sites that pull in so many followers, see if you can pick out the following factors:

Niche. There are so many trainers online that if you don't have a niche, a special corner of the market, you will simply blend in. A niche may be nutrition for runners, training for fat loss, or postpartum training, just to mention a few possibilities.

Targeted demographic. Who are you targeting online? It could be seniors, millennials, moms, anyone who wants to lose weight, or amateur athletes.

Brand and message. Your niche and target audience will help shape a brand and message. Think about the kind of trainer you are or want to be: tough-love trainer, organic nutritionist, relatable mom, hip young trainer, or mindfulness trainer.

Consistency. Once you know who you are as a trainer, what your brand is, your area of expertise, and your audience, you need to keep them all in mind as you develop your pages. Good social media marketing is consistent.

Set Goals and Decide How to Measure Them

For any endeavor to be successful there has to be an ultimate goal, right? You know this from working in fitness, and the same is true for marketing. And, as in training, goals need to be specific, achievable, and measurable. A goal to "get more clients" is no good. It's too broad. Some better examples are:

- Add one more full online coaching group by the end of the month.
- Get one new individual training client by the end of two months.
- Start and fill one group training session at the gym in one month.
- Add 500 new followers to each site in six weeks.
- Connect and exchange links with five top fitness pages this week.

All of these are reasonable and specific, and you can measure them. You'll know if you're hitting them based on the timelines given. And if you don't, revise the goals and plan a new strategy.

A Sample Personal Trainer Social Media Marketing Content Calendar

Making a content calendar takes a little time, but in the end it will save you time and ensure that you have a good mix of post types, content, and calls to action. Plan at least one month in advance. Here's an example of what a content calendar for one week might look like for the social media sites of a trainer targeting busy men who want to shape up their dad bods:

Monday – Inspiration. Share client Walter's before and after pictures from our six-week training session.

Tuesday – Technique. Share a video showing good form for pushups and why they're important for pecs and overall upper body development.

Wednesday – Engagement. Ask followers to share their biggest hurdles in getting fitter and meeting their goals.

Thursday – Nutrition. Talk about how I plan meals for the week with tips for avoiding the temptation to eat junk.

Friday – Network. Share a link to a trainer that my followers will like.

Saturday – Promotion. Request followers sign up for my new online accountability group and daily pushup challenge.

Sunday – Funday. Share the meme about sore quads the day after leg day.

Take your online presence to new heights. Check out our comprehensive guide to becoming a social media influencer.

Mix up Your Content

Your content calendar should be a big part of your overall strategy. Content is king, and the quality, variety, and frequency of yours is what will snag new followers and keep them coming back. For a personal trainer, these types of posts are most important:

Inspirational

One of the main reasons people follow trainers and fitness pros online is for fitspiration. They want to be inspired to work harder or to just get started working out. And you want to inspire followers to take the step and start working with you.

There are all kinds of different things you can post for inspiration: share your own journey, including triumphs and failures; share some of your clients' stories, with their permission, of course; post before and after pictures; post healthy food pictures; and share your favorite inspirational quotes.

Informational and Educational

Another reason people come to social media to follow trainers is to learn something. They want your professional advice and tips. Not only are you helping people learn more about nutrition or exercise with these types of posts you are also establishing credibility.

Demonstrate your authority in fitness or nutrition with videos that showcase a new move or recipe; share tips and tricks; summarize some of the latest fitness research and share some of your favorite routines and workouts.

Interactive

Engaging with your followers is so important. You can engage by responding to questions and shares or commenting on your followers' posts and comments, but you can also inspire greater overall interaction with your original posts. Ask questions, start conversations, create polls, or even host live Q and A sessions.

Networking and Connecting

Posts that connect you to other fitness professionals or related business will help you expand your network. Post links to other pages and posts you think your audience will appreciate. Follow other trainers you respect and admire.

Also consider partnering and sharing links with other types of pages and businesses. Connect with nutritionists, chiropractors, massage therapists, gyms, healthy food services, bloggers, and anyone else with followers who would like your page.

Just Plain Fun

While social media is a genuine business tool for personal trainers, it is also entertainment for your followers. In your mix of posts include some that are purely for fun. This is a great way to showcase your personality and sense of humor and to let your followers see that you are human, not a fitness robot. Share funny memes, gifs, and jokes related to fitness and wellness, but avoid anything that might be controversial.

Promotional Calls to Action

The ultimate goal in all of this is to find potential clients and turn them into actual clients. For approximately every five posts you share, include one promotional post. This can be a call to sign up for your online accountability group, and advertisement for your latest group fitness class, or a request to get more people on your email list.

The Best Social Media Platforms for Trainers

You're ready to get started, which means creating accounts and putting your marketing plan into action. But there are far too many social media sites for you to hit them all. Don't stretch yourself thin over too many sites, or you will have ten mediocre accounts instead of three excellent ones. To save your time and your sanity, choose a few to focus on. Here are some of the best platforms for personal trainers.

Facebook

Facebook is the most popular social media site with more than one billion users. It's a no-brainer to start a FB page. It's versatile too, and will allow you to mix up your content with long-form posts, short posts, links, pictures, and videos. Facebook also offers an advertising scheme, which you can use or not.

Instagram

To connect with the youngest and hippest crowd online, you need an Instagram account. IG is mostly known for photos, which is great for fitness pages. It's also easy on this site to use filters to make pictures look better and more professional. This is a great site for storytelling. Use it to share your personal journey with fans.

YouTube

A YouTube channel is ideal for educating followers. A lot of people who follow fitness influencers on social media are looking to learn something. YouTube is a great platform for sharing little tidbits of information about targeting glutes, correcting form, and trying a new warm-up routine. These videos engage potential clients but also show what you can do as a trainer.

Twitter

Tweeting is ideal for quick, short posts and connecting quickly with hundreds or thousands of other people. Twitter is especially useful in making connections with other fitness influencers. You can boost your own standing by following these experts and sharing their tweets with your followers.

Pinterest

Health, fitness, and wellness are the most popular topics on Pinterest. When you share tips, workouts, recipes, and other information on Pinterest, your image will come up in any search on a related topic, not just on your followers sites. This helps you reach more people just by posting useful content that users search for. Pinterest is especially popular with women, so if that's your demographic it's a must.

What you'll get out of social media marketing is equivalent to what you put into it. A few half-hearted posts here and there won't add much to your credibility or client list. But if you take the time to plan, strategize, and post quality content regularly while also promoting your services and engaging followers, social media can be a powerful tool to grow your personal training business.

Getting Personal Training Clients

Business doesn't have to slow down during the holidays or summer or ever! If you actively pursue clients all year long, you'll never be without a list of potential clients to call up and invite to your gym. Here are some top tips to find clients throughout the year.

Connect with Potential Clients

If you work at a large gym, spend a lot of time in the gym. Become a familiar face and meet as many people as possible. And it never hurts to look the part. Show that you know your way around the gym and that you understand the importance of keeping yourself physically fit.

A smart way to get noticed is to provide a free training session for a friend, colleague, or family member. It allows everyone else to see you in action. It will speak to how you interact with clients and put your knowledge to work.

Remember, you are among like-minded people in the gym, so don't be afraid to start up a conversation. Let it be known you are a certified personal trainer looking for business. Be willing to share your knowledge and offer tips to anyone who seems open to the information. Seek out anyone interested in weight loss, strength training, or incorporating new exercises into their workouts.

It is beneficial to offer a free training session to someone who appears to be a potential client. They might come away from the workout impressed with your knowledge and comfortable working with you.

For the most part, people prefer to not make a financial commitment when "going in blind." Let your assets work for you while making potential clients feel better about their investment.

Go Local

Reaching out to the local community offers another way to reach potential clients. Distribute business cards and flyers to area businesses that agree to share them with their customers. Include a description of the services you offer and a way to contact you. Offering a free consultation is a good way to convince people to make that all-important initial contact.

Local health organizations offer another way to reach potential clients. Connect with various clinics, doctor's offices, and senior living facilities. Let them know you are local and interested in helping anyone recovering from an injury, in need of losing weight, or wanting to live a more active lifestyle. Become their go-to contact for anyone who would benefit from the use of a certified personal trainer.

Tailoring Your Business

Not to be overlooked is the fact that there are several [different ways to make a living as a certified personal trainer](#). The career path you start with doesn't necessarily have to be the one you stay on forever.

Developing sales and marketing skills is key to success. Practice patience, but also to be willing to invest your time building your brand. This can lead to a financial payoff down the road.

Looking for more ways to build your client list? [Add an ISSA specialization](#) or two to stand out from the crowd and draw in specific clients. As a certified personal trainer, you have plenty of options to make a living in the fitness industry.

Grow Your Business: Overcome Objections to Personal Training

If you're like most personal trainers you got into this business because you have a passion for fitness, wellness, and working with people to help them hit their goals.

You didn't get into this business to be a salesperson. But to be a successful personal trainer, to reach more people and actually make a living doing this, you have to sell.

Most people aren't good at selling right away. It's a learned skill. With practice you will get better at it and your business will grow. Get someone to help you and run through the sales process, pitches, and scenarios. Write an actual sales script for each practice session and get comfortable running through it.

One thing you need to learn to do is recognize the main objections people have, the excuses and reasons for not signing up for personal training. Only then can you figure out how to blast through those sales objections and earn more paying clients. Here we'll give you some of those top objections and insights into how to overcome them.

Objection #1 – I Don't Have Enough Time

This is a big one. Expect to hear it a lot as you get into selling sessions. Time is an issue for just about everyone, but you can find a way around it. Asking a lot of questions is especially important with this objection because it will help you find the time in a potential client's schedule.

Sit down together and pin down exactly how much time per week your prospective clients can commit to training of any kind. Don't push your services at this point; just focus on the practicalities. Once you've determined the time they have, show them what you can offer. Outline the specifics of what you can do together with that time in terms of working out and hitting their goals, even if it's only one hour per week.

You may even want to consider offering a guarantee here to close the sale. A person is more likely to feel comfortable making the time commitment they know they can look forward to a concrete, guaranteed result. Just make sure it's a reasonable one or that it's time-based, such as guaranteeing they can cancel in the first three weeks and get their money back.

Objection #2 – I Don't Have Enough Money

This may be the second most common objection you'll hear when you get a no on training sessions. It's not necessarily true; what someone may really mean when they say this is that they don't see the value in the service. Some think they can do just as well with only a gym membership and without forking over more money for personal training.

When answering objections over money, and in any sales pitch really, be specific both about what you're offering and what it will cost. Be prepared with specific prices for your sessions as well as different levels of training packages with one or two lower-cost options.

Also be ready to outline your value and tell potential clients why you're worth the price. Ask yourself these questions before trying to sell anyone:

- What is my experience helping other clients achieve goals?
- What are my credentials and education?
- What do I offer that other trainers don't?
- What guarantees can I afford to offer clients?
- Do I have examples of satisfied previous clients, with testimonials?

Outline what working with a trainer can provide over simply working out at the gym, like accountability, motivation, progress monitoring, and a better chance of hitting goals more quickly.

Objection #3 – I Need to Talk to ... First

Many people will say they need to talk to their wife, husband, boyfriend, girlfriend, or partner before signing up for training. If they truly do need to run it by a partner first, there is only so much you can do to get a new client right then and there. Push the limits a little, but respectfully. Here are some questions you can ask:

What do you think he/she will say about signing up for sessions?

Does your spouse/partner support your wellness and fitness goals?

What if I offer a money-back guarantee for the first two weeks?

Can we meet with him/her to discuss your options?

Would it help if I met with your spouse/partner to go over what I can offer and what the costs will be?

Most people will think it's a pretty good idea to have their partner in on the meetings, but you'll need to push for a specific time. Set an appointment for as soon as possible. It may even help to offer a free session to both at the same time.

Objection #4 – I Want to Check Out Other Gyms/Trainers First

People who say they want to shop around are either unlikely to ever commit or are ready but just want to be sure they are getting the best value. You can work with the latter. A lot of what you need to do here goes back to the money objection: be specific about costs and what you offer.

Emphasize what it is you offer that makes you different and better from other fitness professionals. Maybe you offer nutrition counseling as part of the paid sessions. Or you have an elite or master certification or specialize in training for athletic performance.

This is also a good time to bring out your [client testimonials](#). Have before and after pictures of clients of yours who have met their goals working with you as well as written or recorded testimonials describing how satisfied these previous clients were with their sessions.

Objection #5 – I'm Not Ready to Commit

Change is hard. Someone who isn't ready to commit is afraid to make a lifestyle change. This is where you get into the psychology of motivation and change. By talking to you about seriously getting started, this individual is well into the process of change and just needs a little more push to take the plunge.

Tap into emotions with these prospects. A little bit of fear can be a good thing. Remind a prospective client who is hesitant what the consequences of not changing will be: staying the same, remaining unfit, not improving, or not losing weight.

If potential clients come to you because they are unhappy about their health, fitness, or size, and you just need to remind them that without a commitment they'll remain unhappy. Be gentle and respectful here, but also firm. You're being truthful.

Overcoming Objections to Personal Training is Your Business

Too many personal trainers make the mistake of thinking that their only role is to create fitness plans and complete training programs with clients. The truth is that selling is a big part of your business. As a trainer you are also a business owner.

Become a successful trainer by embracing the idea that you are also a business professional. Only when you do this will you get the clients and hit your goals.

Start identifying the objections you hear most often and use these tips to plan your own strategies for breaking through them. Don't be afraid to be a salesperson; it's part of who you are now, and that means you can't be afraid to be pushy. Yes, you may put a few people off, but overall you will win more than you'll lose.

What's next?



The ISSA supports our students and their clients by sharing valuable content like this on our blog, in our CEUs, and our courses. We are dedicated to the success of our trainers and their clients.

If you're looking for a community of driven fitness professionals who support and encourage one another and celebrate each other's success, then it's time to join the #ISSACertified family. If you're new to training and want to specialize to better meet the needs of your community, check out our [specialized training certificates](#).

If you're new to the fitness industry and want to start helping others, our [Certified Fitness Trainer course](#) sets the bar for fitness professionals around the world. We are the gold standard in personal training education.

What's more...we're there for you when you have questions or whenever you need support. You truly are one of the family!

There has never been a better time than now to get started on the path to making a difference in your health and the health of others. Become an ISSA Certified Trainer today!