

INTRODUCING
FITREC DNA:
SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS!

RAISING

INSPIRATION FOR EXTRAORDINARY FITNESS CAREERS

ISSUE 6

THE BAR

TRAINING
OLDER ADULTS

WHY YOU NEED
AN EXIT PLAN

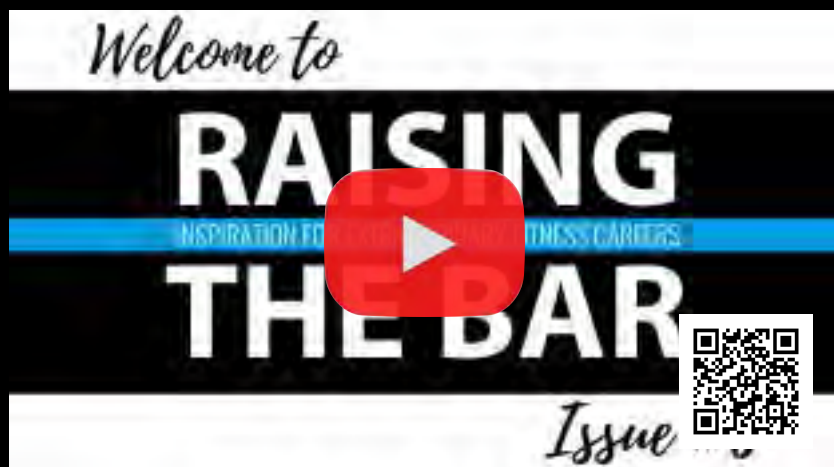
FIRST AID
FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

LIFE IN
LOCKDOWN

WHAT HAPPENED
WHEN A MEMBER
TESTED POSITIVE

WHY
REGULATION
IS **NOT** THE
ANSWER

WELCOME FROM DENNIS HOSKING



Hi all

So how about 2020, then? I'm pretty sure none of us expected this year to pan out how it did!

In this issue we've got a great combination of tips and info to help you stay motivated, inspired and charging ahead.

Plus, you'll hear from the first of our FITREC DNA Ambassadors and share in the many and varied experiences of some of our regional fitness businesses in Victoria, who are now out of their extended lockdown (at the time of writing this, they are - fingers crossed at the time of *reading* they still remain so!).

With the new year almost upon us, I'm sure we'll all appreciate any time we get to spend with our loved ones. I wish you and your family a safe, healthy and relaxing time together - goodness knows, we've sure earned it!

DENNIS HOSKING

Founder & Managing Director

FITREC & HealthyPeople

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FITREC **DNA**

DIVERSITY INCLUSION AND AWARENESS

As the Founder and Managing Director of FITREC, there is no mistaking that FITREC reflects my own values with regards to diversity, inclusion and ethics.

As such, I am confident that our actions and dealings with members have ensured that we are viewed as ethically run and supportive of diversity and inclusion.

Notwithstanding, I have come to realise that we all have blind spots and in truth, the bar must be raised higher.

If FITREC is to be seen as an industry body that reflects the industry's values, it's imperative that we more clearly demonstrate leadership with regards to social responsibility. FITREC must provide a benchmark in ethical behaviour and be seen to actively campaign for diversity and inclusion. At the very least, we must be the equal of the best in our industry.

The pursuit of this aim can only be of benefit to our registered members and the industry as a whole.

FITREC DNA is a badge to publicly and proudly declare that we are committed to doing better. It is a reminder that we should be open to potential blind spots in our understanding and awareness. And it represents FITREC's intention to hold itself accountable for representing the best of the fitness industry with regards to diversity, inclusion, ethics and accountability.

Among the first activities for FITREC DNA is the acknowledgment of women's issues; women's health, domestic violence, financial abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment. To this end, throughout 2021, FITREC DNA will be actively involved in the IGNITE Women's Fitness Business events.

Why did we call it FITREC DNA? Apart from representing Diversity, iNclusion and Awareness, DNA is typically known as the molecule containing the instructions for life. Similarly, FITREC DNA instructs our team and those who share our passion as to best practice for individuals and as businesses.

FITREC DNA will be led by FITREC Co-Founders and Directors, Chenille and Dennis Hosking and our FITREC ambassador, Mel Tempest.

We welcome any applications to join the FITREC DNA leadership team (must be FITREC-registered) to help us raise awareness of diversity and inclusion.

For more information and/or to join the leadership team email chenille@fitrec.org ♦

DENNIS HOSKING

Founder & Managing Director
FITREC & HealthyPeople



MEET OUR DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & AWARENESS

Ambassadors

Get to know three of our
fantastic FITREC DNA
Ambassadors.

You may recall having seen our callout on social media, for applications to become FITREC DNA Ambassadors. As expected, we had a sensational response and to all who put their hands up, WE THANK YOU! We are so impressed (but not surprised!) by the passion within our industry and the shared commitment to our DNA concept of striving to be better, of expecting and delivering more, and leading by example.

Here are three of the awe-inspiring fitness professionals that we're proud to call FITREC's DNA Ambassadors. If you'd like to join the Ambassador team, please drop us a line at editor@fitrec.org

FITREC DNA

Ambassador



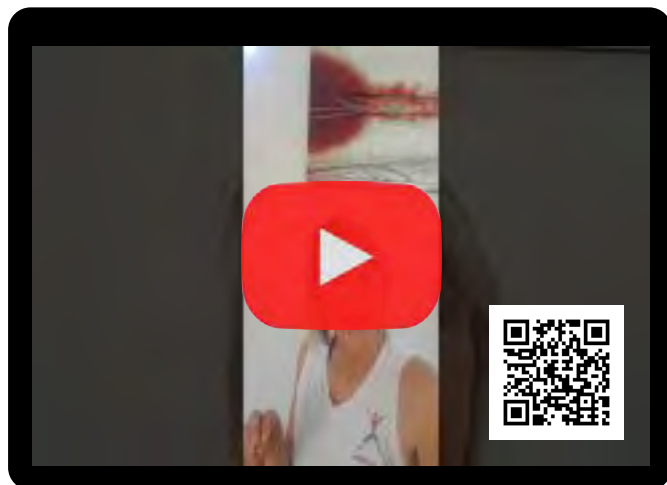
NANCY CASU

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Ph: 0412 405 076

Nancy Casu is a fitness and functional ageing specialist. She is passionately committed to strengthening the 'community' component of exercise and educating communities about its importance, particularly among the 65+ years population.

Nancy's valuable experience and insight into the training of older adults was shared at the Healthy Ageing Summit and the IGNITE Women's Fitness Business events in 2020. Nancy also featured on an episode of the Gym Owners' Fitness Business Podcast, where she discussed the point that many 'boomers' are living longer and simply want more life in their years. Check out the video below to discover what Nancy has in store for us, in her new role as FITREC's DNA Ambassador, or to learn more about Nancy go to www.olderfitterbetter.com ♦





MEL TEMPEST

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If there's one fitness professional who is wholeheartedly passionate about inclusion, it's Mel Tempest. Mel Tempest is a club owner and thought leader who turns conceptual ideas into tangible results. Mel has carved out an award-winning career of applying her superpower to help businesses, organisations and individuals acquire unforeseen levels of success. Mel is the founder of IGNITE Fitness Business events, and the founder and podcast host of the Gym Owner's Fitness Business Podcast. She's also the founder of the Gym Owner's Business Network, founder of the Women Leaders' Fitness Business Platform, and a Brand Ambassador for FITREC, the Healthy Ageing Summit and FIBO USA.

Having been a forger of her own path for her entire life, Mel brings that unique dogged determination and "no holds barred" attitude to business. And while some people are challenged by Mel's brutal honesty, the thing that everyone can agree on is Mel's professional commitment to help as many people and businesses as she can – so they can achieve their potential, perform at their optimum and create the best version of themselves. And this is why Mel Tempest has expanded her FITREC Ambassador role to include being a DNA Ambassador as well. Watch Mel's video below to learn more or visit meltempest.net ♦

FITREC DNA

Ambassador



FITREC DNA

Ambassador



RACHEL YOUNG

Email: Rachel@areyousupercharged.com

Based in the UK, as the founder of Are You Supercharged? Rachel is ferociously committed to chewing the living daylights out of life, and believes she was put on this planet to get people moving and to make a positive difference to their lives.

Simply put, Rachel loves the fitness industry and she loves nothing more than helping others to become the best version of themselves. Discovering all of this meant Rachel was a natural inclusion in our DNA Ambassador program; after all, she epitomises the ethos and embodies the very spirit that we are striving to promote. Hear what Rachel plans to do in her role as FITREC's DNA Ambassador, then find out more about Rachel at www.areyousupercharged.com ♦



BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

There are many practical ways to build an inclusive workplace, and we have some easy solutions below. But before we share these ideas, it's important to appreciate that "diversity" and "inclusion" are not one and the same. Read on to discover more.

Think about it this way, you can hire people from a mix of genders, ethnicities, ages, religions and backgrounds to fill a quota or to tick off the "diversity" box, however, without a workplace culture of inclusion your business will be less likely to reap the benefits that diverse teams can provide. For example, if you liken "diversity" to having a band that consists of multiple instruments, then "inclusion" ensures all those instruments can be seen and heard.

An article in Forbes provides examples of simple, yet impactful ways companies have started to foster inclusivity within their organisations. Examples include; adding nursing rooms for mothers, meditation or universal prayer rooms, gender-neutral bathrooms and acknowledging all religious and cultural holidays celebrated by employees. However, successfully creating an inclusive workplace culture really begins by actively soliciting feedback from employees about how the company can improve diversity and inclusivity throughout the organisation. Doing so can also spark additional ideas while also strengthening the sense of belonging among employees. Other key ideas include:

Be Purposeful

Leaders need to be purposeful about including others who see things differently from them, so as to continuously highlight the different, positive experiences that people from all backgrounds, identities, faiths and orientations bring to the business.

Sensitivity Training

Sensitivity Training is a tool used to help educate managers and leaders about behaviour that they don't necessarily realise is inappropriate. It helps to address a lack of knowledge or skills that might seem obvious to others.

Measure "Thanks" in Real Time: By measuring recognition moments and analysing the data, employers can hold a mirror to their recognition practices. For example, a company may learn that it's not recognising women as often as men, or that one team is being recognised more than another, which gives them an opportunity to step back, ask why and then take corrective action.

Democratise Recognition

Encourage all team members to take an active role in recognising their colleagues. Businesses that democratise recognition can harness positivity and empower all employees to have a voice in their teammate's success. This lessens the impact of unconscious bias felt by any single individual, promotes inclusion and brings a broader perspective to what good work looks like.

Provide opportunities for introverts to shine

This might include the provision of training for managers to make space in meetings so that employees who may be more inclined to hang back, or who feel anxious arguing a salient point are given a space to speak up. This might include opportunities to give non-verbal feedback, such as suggestion boxes.

An article in the Harvard Business Review suggests that leaders need to create a safe team environment where all employees can speak up, be heard, and feel welcome. They should embrace the input of employees whose backgrounds or expertise differ from their own, and foster collaboration among diverse staff, ask questions of all members of the team, facilitate constructive arguments, give actionable feedback, and act upon the advice of diverse employees.

The fitness industry provides the perfect opportunity for people of all backgrounds to come together, whether as staff, members or clients. And while diversity and inclusion measures and training help address the known boundaries and expected behaviour in the workplace, it's greatest benefit may well be to illuminate blind spots in our own behaviour and thinking that we did not know existed. ♦





WHAT'S YOUR
THOUGHTS ON
THIS TOPIC?
JOIN THE
CONVERSATION
[HERE](#)

THE CONVERSATION

In this new feature we'll share topics that provoke thought and inspire conversation. So keep an eye on our Facebook page, where we'll invite your input on these topics. Or you can share your thoughts directly by emailing them to editor@fitrec.org – we look forward to having you join in the conversation.



ARE CASUAL EMPLOYEES UNDERRATED?

One in four Australian workers are casually employed. It's not great news for job security – as highlighted during the height of COVID-19 – but the Australian workforce needs casual staff.

A recent article about wage theft and casual workers in universities across Australia raised some concerns, which got us thinking: if universities can get away with underpaying casual staff and demanding them to do some non-paid work, could this occur in the fitness industry too?

The question arises: are casual jobs in our industry actually that casual, given group fitness instructors teach the same class on the timetable every week, often year after year; and the same faces work the gym floor every Monday morning?

This type of work is regular, ongoing, and relatively stable; yet staff are engaged under casual terms of employment. But should they be? ♦





THE CONVERSATION

COMPLIANCE

THE CONVERSATION

WHY REGULATION IS NOT THE *answer*

The fitness industry won't be regulated, so let's just get on with it.

The argument for regulation of the Australian fitness industry has again been circulating.

Among those extolling the virtues of regulation, the arguments surround a desire for more respect as an industry, a desire to be more trusted and ultimately better represented at a Government level.

Unfortunately, the time and energy put into pursuing regulation is likely wasted and only diverts our attention away from efforts that could yield genuine results. The pursuit of regulation also fails to acknowledge that regulation comes at considerable cost to businesses and professionals in the form of time, money and innovation.



Is the fitness industry in Australia likely to ever be regulated?

No.

"The Government's default option will always be not to regulate." (1)

"The Government's rigorous approach to policy making seeks to ensure that regulation is never adopted as the default solution, but rather introduced as a means of last resort." (2)

"The Government has a clear approach to regulation: we will reduce the regulatory burden for individuals, businesses and community organisations." (2)

And if you're still on the fence, in 2019 the Government created a 'Deregulation Taskforce' with the goal to minimise the impact of regulation on businesses. In the aftermath of COVID, *"the Deregulation [Taskforce] will continue its work to reduce red tape, make it easier for businesses to invest and create jobs, and assist COVID-19 economy recovery."* (3)



Why is the Government so anti-regulation?

Because regulation increases the cost of doing business, which is ultimately passed on to the consumer; and this is what many in the fitness industry do not realise. With regulation comes greater administrative costs, additional staffing and auditing costs, associated costs with changes in the design, pricing or marketing of services, increased barriers to entry and a stifling of innovation. This means, as our cost of doing business increases, so too will the cost to our clients and members.

Beyond the Government's anti-regulation agenda, the fact that consumers have the ability to choose from multiple providers in many formats ensures market forces prevail. And, most importantly, protections already exist for clients and

members in the form of the Competition and Consumer Act 2010, and for the employer/employee relationship by the Fair Work Act 2009.



'Self-regulation' has been good to us.

.....

The fitness industry has evolved constantly over the years. Practices we take for granted now would have been considered 'fringe' not that long ago (e.g., the wider use of Olympic lifts, functional exercises, 24-hour unstaffed facilities). The progress and innovation we enjoy would be stifled considerably under a regulated fitness industry.

We are hugely diverse. We have leaders who specialise in group training, personal training, exercise to music, fitness instructing, online programs, special populations, exercise physiology, rehabilitation, sport coaching... the list goes on. It would be impossible for regulation to address the beautiful diversity that makes up our fitness community.



Rather than governance, we can achieve much more with transparency and accountability.

.....

The internet has put considerably more power and information into the hands of clients and members, enabling them to ask

better questions and more easily assess the pros, cons and capabilities of fitness providers. I would be surprised if anyone felt that the fitness industry is the 'Wild West' it once was.

The internet has also given us greater powers of transparency and accountability.

Indeed, the commercial value of transparency is already well understood by many fitness businesses, as evidenced by their use of Google reviews, Facebook reviews and other rating sites. For professionals, FITREC registration provides both transparency and accountability to the benefit of recruiting employers and curious clients. More importantly, in an environment where credentials and experience are laid bare, it's easier for us to have faith in ourselves as an industry. And the more respect we have for ourselves, the easier it will be to inspire the same respect from Governments, the medical profession and allied health communities.



Beyond transparency and accountability, could we be doing more?

.....

Throughout the pandemic, there has been much call to recognise the contribution provided by fitness industry services to the mental, as well as physical, health of local communities. However, without a unifying message, it's not unreasonable to see how we could be viewed as simply a bunch of businesses looking to protect our interests.

Maybe it's time to get behind a collective health promotion message? An idea reminiscent of the 'Life. Be in it.' campaign. One with a very low barrier to entry, has no cost and encourages everyone to be active in some capacity. We don't need a huge marketing budget; it's a program that could easily be promoted in the window of every fitness club and studio.

Recent history has given us all a valuable insight into who we are and how we are viewed. If we'd like to be seen as more integral to community health, the pursuit of regulation is definitely not the answer. Beyond the very limited chance of this ever occurring, there are many reasons why regulation would, in fact, make life harder for all. It's time to embrace our diversity and innovation. Let's focus instead, on becoming a transparent and accountable industry. And with renewed respect for one another, let's begin exploring ways in which we can truly lead the nation to improved health and quality of life.

In short, let's not wait for someone to lead us. Let's just get on with it. ♦

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- ▶ The Australian Government Guide to Regulation - March 2014, PDF
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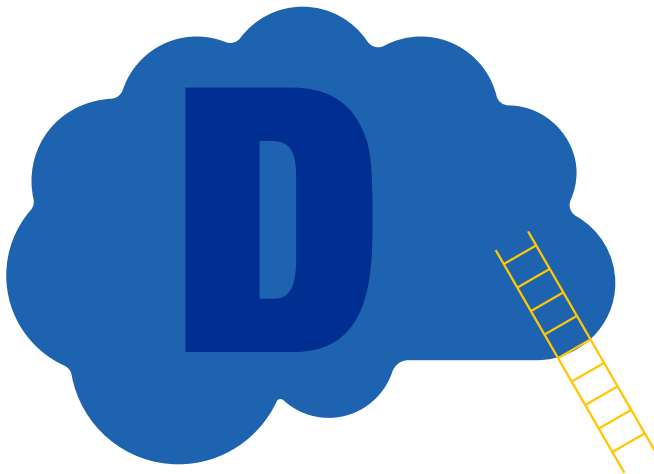


WHAT'S YOUR THOUGHTS ON THIS TOPIC?
Join the conversation [HERE](#)



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

2020 could have pushed even the calmest person to the brink! So here is a unique DR ABC model from Mark Mathieson, to provide some much-needed mental health first aid.



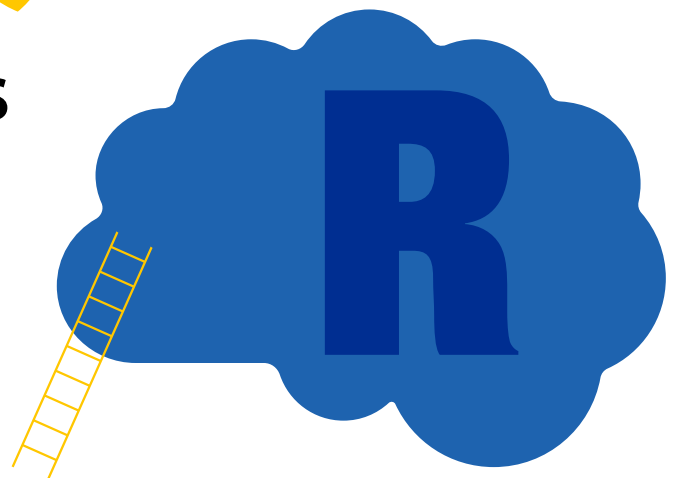
D = DANGER

- ▶ Assess if you believe the person is in any immediate danger (harm to self or others)
- ▶ If YES – seek immediate support. Call 000.
- ▶ If NO – gather further information about what the issue is:
 - What has been going on for the individual?
 - How long has this been happening?
 - What have they tried to do to fix or alleviate it?



R = RESPONSIVENESS

- ▶ Assess how immediate the issue is (does it need to be solved in the next 24 hours and if so, will you be able to sleep tonight)?
- ▶ Is the person willing or wanting to talk with you, or is there someone else better suited?
- ▶ Assess what other resources the person might have available to them within their current life that they could access?





Mark Mathieson

Mark is an Extreme Psychologist and the founder of Mounted Missions and Psyched Up. Over the past 20 years Mark has worked in some of the strangest, harshest and least 'clinical' environments on the globe. Mark is the developer of the Patterns of Life model of extreme performance, and he currently spends his time working with elite performers from his base in North East Victoria on a 130-acre farm. Learn more at www.psychedup.com.au

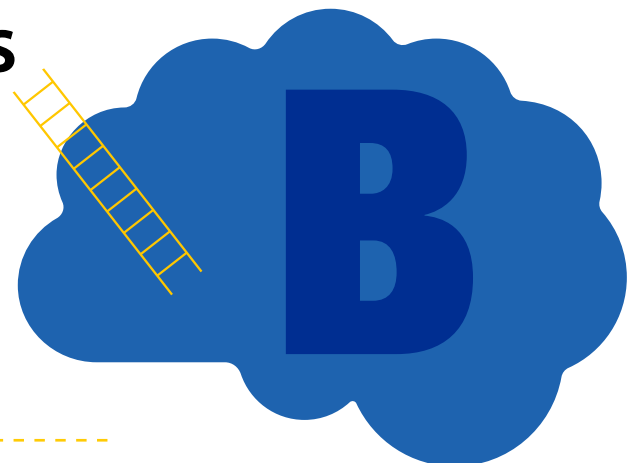
A = AROUSAL REDUCTION AND ACT WITHIN YOUR LIMITS

- ▶ Try and calm the person if they are agitated, anxious or panicked. Suggest they try doing some calm, deep breaths for at least two minutes.
- ▶ Try and get them moving slowly – walking, outdoors, calming space, anything that establishes a rhythm that will slow them down (cognitively and physiologically) – think cool down!
- ▶ You are not responsible for the person's wellbeing – only for trying to help.



B = BRAINSTORM SOLUTIONS

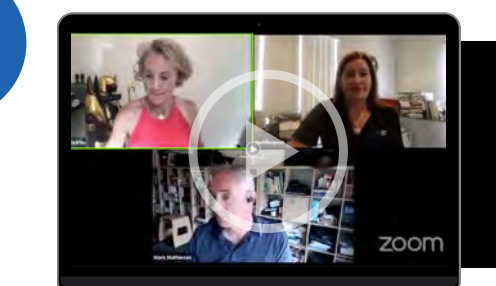
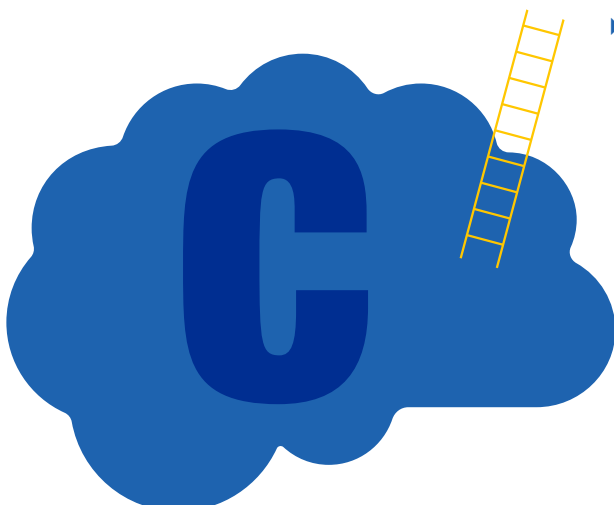
- ▶ Try and spend a few minutes brainstorming solutions:
 - Have they tried taking a five-minute 'time out'?
 - Have they tried talking with another person?
 - Have they tried distracting themselves or getting some more sleep, if possible?
 - Ask what has worked in the past.
 - Ask what has NOT worked in the past
 - Put a time-limit on this – be prepared to perhaps admit that you can't help.



C = CONSULT WITH OTHERS

- ▶ If it's safe to do so, call in some help. For example, try and consult with someone more experienced such as a team member or a family member or friend who knows the person well.

By being mindful of these DR ABC elements and applying them appropriately, you can support the people you love and/or work with, to help them retain optimum mental health. ♦



CLICK HERE to learn more watch Mark Mathieson discuss this topic and more at the Victorian Business Breakfast with Edwina Griffin and Mel Tempest.



SURVIVING LOCKDOWN: REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Clubs in regional Victoria have finally come out of lockdown (hoorah!). Here are five who have emerged to tell the tale...



ON THE ROAD TO NORMAL



By Jamie Logue, Franchisee,
Plus Fitness Shepparton

“

I'm not going to lie. It's been extremely challenging.

As the local franchisee of Plus Fitness Shepparton we decided to do whatever we could to engage our members during lockdown. This included Facebook live workouts for free, and once we got the green light to deliver them, personal training and group training outside by the local lake; given the time of year, this was often in the rain and freezing cold!

We spent a lot of our time on the phone to the Department of Health and Human Services, Business Victoria, accountants and lawyers, trying to figure out if we would still have a business to return to!

The unknown factor was mentally challenging. Everyday I put on a brave face for my family, friends, members and the local community, telling them that we would bounce back. But on the inside, I wasn't 100 per cent confident.

Since reopening it's been good to see the members back; but due to the COVID Safety Marshall rules, we've had to get to the gym at 5.30am and stay onsite until 8pm for 7 days a week with reduced hours on the weekends.

I'm tired, I'm stressed, I'm frustrated and I just wish the Victorian Government would show some greater understanding. At the time of writing it's been 11 days with no new cases but no change to the rules for operation - let us trade properly, already! ♦

”





GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND FOR MEMBERS



Allison Everett, Owner/Sole Trader
Fitquest360, Ballarat

“

In March I heard the news of this COVID-19 thing, which I was oblivious to since I barely watch the news; my head is usually buried in my 50 amazing members and how *their* days are going. This is my life as a sole trader and the creator of my little fitness studio which we began almost five years ago on a grassy oval. The Fitquest360 “gym” isn’t actually a gym as such; we are a community – a group of people who I lead as a trainer/coach/personal support in their health and fitness journeys - and through life. This is why when we had to shut our doors (being classed under the same banner as anyone who had a fitness business) I went into overdrive, saying to myself “there’s only one thing I can do here. Keep everyone going because if I don’t show them that we can, I will be letting them all down.”

Aside from all the things as a business owner I needed to do (i.e., survive, pivot, develop new COVID-19 ways such as extra cleaning, new booking systems, reducing numbers when we opened, and hiring a contractor to help run sessions because I couldn’t be in two places at once. We trained outdoors when we had to, even training in the rain to keep members moving. And of course Zoom! Who *didn’t* get on to Zoom in this industry? To keep my strength training members going, I purchased TRX-type

suspension trainers and gifted them to my members, then I created a program to use them. I also changed our equipment-based classes to full-body workouts in our cardio sessions and we delivered them online. I even created COVID-19 fitness survival kits that I drove around and delivered door-to-door to my members! Plus, I had signwriting done to liven up the drab concrete walls, and I put up pictures of all my members around the room so that when they came back inside, they saw that it was not only the workouts I was working on, but I was also continuing to create a space and place that they would want to return to. For many members, this is the only “gym” they have ever been in, so it’s important they feel like it’s truly their space.

I laugh now, realising just how much into overdrive I went! I just kept going – proud and exhausted, I just kept going.

I must thank all my amazing members, including the new ones I welcomed online. I also must acknowledge my family who took the brunt of my many tears, fears and doubts, which I lobbed on them daily. It’s said that we are the sum of the five people we regularly surround ourselves with. But I have 50 incredible humans who I see every week, so it’s no wonder I pushed so hard to get through this time. ♦

”





LAUNCHING A REBRAND AND SURVIVING A MEMBER TESTING POSITIVE



By Lee-Anne Martin & Tracey Robinson, Owners,
Elements Health & Fitness

“

In early February 2020, we completed a comprehensive rebrand of our business.

As part of the rebrand, we moved into a new building and filled the space with Life Fitness and Hammer Strength equipment.

Our official open day fell on the same weekend that all gyms were forced to shut their doors.

Immediately we suspended everyone's memberships. We hired out our equipment to help people to continue to move. Within a week of closing we contacted every member and asked them if we could help them stay physically active from within their homes via a private Facebook group. We ended up with a weekly timetable of over 30 classes and this kept our members moving during the first three-month lockdown.

We opened again on 22 June (for six weeks).

During that time we had a member attend our facility for a spin class who later tested positive for COVID-19. Contact tracing for all other members in that class happened within minutes and we all self-isolated for 14 days.

From the time the member attended to the time we were informed of the active case by the

Department of Health and Human Services, we'd had approximately 400 visits in our facility. There was no transmission, which we credit to our strict cleaning and hygiene policies.

In early August we were told to close again, for Lockdown 2.0.

This time we set up a private Facebook group, again to help those members who wanted to continue moving while confined to their homes. Again, we hired out our equipment. This time we also ran weekly challenges with great prizes.

In Lockdown 2.0 we got tech savvy and implemented Zoom classes where everyone had to book and check-in upon commencement.

It's been an incredibly hard year. Having spent countless hours getting our facility ready to open in February 2020, only to be told to close the doors with no idea of when we'd be able to reopen or how we'd pay our staff and bills. It was heartbreaking having to deliver outdoor personal training to clients during winter, when we have 900 square metres of indoor space!

We are very excited to be back – restricted, but back – and we're ready to help our members again. ♦

”





ENGAGEMENT IS THE KEY THROUGH LOCKDOWN



By Daniel Hickin, Regional Business Manager
Genesis Health and Fitness

“

When COVID-19 hit, we had to act quickly and make decisions based on what would be best for members and staff, whilst also being strategic about how best to equip ourselves for the future. Going into lockdown for a second time in Victoria, while the rest of the country continued to operate, felt like being the naughty school kid who had to stay behind for detention while your friends kicked the footy outside!

Quickly we turned our attention to engagement, giving members free access to our online platform: the Home Fitness Network, along with each club locally delivering a live class timetable on their social pages. This was supplemented by clubs renting out fitness equipment from the gym to members so they could increase their ability to have a great workout from home. We ran a free 28-day challenge for members and non-members in October, which saw more than 1,000 entrants taking part and confirming that even with the doors closed, member engagement was still alive and well!

Everything we did to engage our members proved to be the very thing that helped keep our staff engaged as well. Feedback from the instructors

and coaches taking the sessions, identified that this strategy gave them a daily and weekly routine, and they thrived on the social interaction achieved via the live classes.

Operationally, staff from Victoria helped the interstate clubs that were open by adding extra support as they reopened. Our regional team came together and worked on solutions and strategic planning to create a new environment. This helped everyone work through the complexities of reopening and enabled them to all feed off each other's positive energy and enthusiasm. This was also seen in our increased interactions with our franchisees, who we have worked consistently with and supported through each step of the lockdowns.

Did we get it right? Did anyone? What I do know is that being on the ground in Victorian-based clubs as they reopened, we saw members and prospects eager to get back to the gym. All of whom had a very clear understanding of the restrictions we need to follow. Similarly, the energy from our teams on the ground reflected how ready we all were to deliver a safe and motivating environment.

Now is when the hard work really starts! ♦

”



OUR BUSINESS HAS SUFFERED GREATLY



By Ian Coutts, Co-Owner
QuickFit Delacombe



“

The impact of the COVID-19 'second wave' lockdown in Victoria, on our business and mental health, has been significant and will be felt for a long time to come, especially due to the additional requirements now imposed on gyms. Our business has suffered greatly as a result of the tarnish that was applied to gyms, and even though we are now open, we are seeing many membership cancellations due to the public discourse about gyms being 'unsafe'.

Gyms have always placed a high priority on cleanliness but early on, following the arrival of COVID-19, at our own initiative we implemented additional hygiene measures (at our own cost), including hands free sanitisers, relocation of gym equipment to ensure 1.5m distance, additional cleaning protocols and also signage throughout the gym. We also developed our own COVID-safe plan long before it was an official requirement.

Now even when we have been allowed to open, the requirement (at least until 23 November 2020) to have COVID Marshalls onsite at all times, has placed an additional financial cost on our business, at the time when we can least afford it. We have had to employ staff to be onsite at all times (we have had to reduce our opening hours significantly as we cannot staff our gym 24/7) and bear the cost of these additional salaries.

Given our business structure, it also soon became apparent we would be ineligible for most grants available, as our personal trainer employees are subcontractors, and therefore not classified 'employees' as such. In fact, the only grant we have been able to apply for (Sole Trader Support Fund for \$3,000) has now been 'Under Assessment' for almost two months. It was also very disheartening to see specific support packages being released for other industries, but nothing for gyms and fitness centres.

All of the above has left deep psychological scars and questioning about the decision to go into the fitness industry in the first place and open our own gym. Only time will tell if we survive this upheaval, but the overall feeling of lack of support from the government (and even the denigrating the fitness industry) has left an overall feeling of disenfranchisement. We have been fortunate in having a understanding landlord where we are, but some of our other creditors (we had only been open 12 months, and so have significant loans relating to our gym equipment) have been less supportive and have kindly increased our payments to make up the almost six month pause we were forced to take.

During the lockdown, we undertook a number of initiatives to keep our members engaged virtually whilst we were unable to open our doors. This included setting up a dedicated 'Members Only' Facebook page, which included virtual workouts from our personal trainers, nutritional advice, and also mental health tips and support. We also undertook outdoor bootcamp sessions, when restrictions were eased enough to allow it.

Finally, I feel a voice that has also been left out of the conversation is from our members themselves. Just speaking to some of our members gives a greater appreciation and understanding of not only the physical benefits people get from going to the gym, but for most of them more importantly it is about maintaining their mental health also. I believe this point was ignored completely by Government and given little credence. It also appears a large amount of money will have been allocated to mental health support post-COVID-19 – what a shame this shows little recognition of the impact gyms have on positive mental health and that none of this initiative is to be directed towards supporting gyms and their members. ♦

”



SIX STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL RELAUNCH

COVID may have changed how you operate; but this change needn't be a negative. Steve Jensen explains how you can create a successful relaunch for your business.



With this year's lockdowns wreaking havoc on our industry, right now is the perfect time for clubs and studios to introduce upgrades, new services or add-ons.

Following is a "pre-sales and relaunch strategy", which we've used with health clubs and fitness businesses all over the world, to successfully generate loads of qualified leads and sales. And now you can too. Here's how.

STEP 01

Add-ons, new services and upgrades

For this strategy to work, you'll need to develop and implement two or three new programs, upgrades, services or add-ons, and then create a special offer promoting these new offerings. Doing so provides you with a unique opportunity to appeal to former members or clients, or people who have previously toured the facility before but not joined.

STEP 02

Successful marketing

Effective marketing will result in people taking action to respond to your offer, so the goal of your promotional efforts is to create leads who want to know more and, ultimately, join up; this can be achieved if your offer is well structured and easy to understand.

Make sure you avoid using the word "changes" in your marketing, as some people don't respond positively to change. You should also avoid creating an offer that attracts people who have a low value mindset. This often occurs if your offer is low-cost and available for purchasing online without any consultation with a "real" person – also referred to as the "Groupon effect". Your marketing should be designed to generate leads who want to join; NOT something that attracts lots of people to pay low-priced memberships that you'll have to work really hard to upgrade later.

Your promotions should always focus on the results and benefits that people will enjoy once they've signed up for your program or membership. You need to communicate that their goals will be achieved, and how your offer will save them money (you should state the savings but not the price itself). And these elements should be presented in this order, in your marketing.

STEP 03

Expression of Interest

When your prospects and former members want to take action in response to your marketing, you need to be able to capture their interest (and details). One way to do this is to direct them to an "expression of interest" form, which is typically an online opt-in form that captures the lead's name, phone number and email address.



Steve Jensen

Steve Jensen is the Founder and Managing Director of Impact Training Corporation and the National Sales Academy. As a highly-awarded and globally in-demand sales expert, Steve's latest "Selling by Zoom" offering is generating massive results among salespeople all over the country. This innovative training webinar teaches you the must-have skills to present effectively and close more sales via Zoom. If you're ready to update your skills and get ahead of the game, find out more at www.impact-training-net

Of course, you can contact each person who has submitted an expression of interest and book them in for a physical tour (if COVID restrictions permit, and if the prospect is comfortable doing so) – and with the right processes, skills and systems in place, you'll still achieve conversion success. However, in the current climate of uncertainty, a more effective and efficient method of following up your registrations is by booking Zoom calls. This way you can have the conversations to qualify where their pain-points are and what they want to achieve, a lot more quickly and easily. Then, once you've identified them, you can explain how your services and programs will serve as solutions.



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...in the current climate of uncertainty, a more effective and efficient method of following up your registrations is by booking Zoom calls.

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STEP
04

Target markets

To promote your offer, use SMS and email to notify your previous prospects, former members and lost leaders. You should also share your expression of interest opportunity on all your social media pages – both personal and professional, if you have both. Video content is king now, so do some live broadcasts and consider creating a simple 30-second to 2-minute promotional video. Remember to always include the link to your offer, so people can immediately enter their details in your expression of interest opt-in page

STEP
05

Conversion sequences

Your team must be confident and knowledgeable in how to present and close well. The key to achieving this is having clear processes and procedures in place, so that everyone can convert the leads received into sales. Of course, practising the price presentations, so the offer is delivered in a smooth and very easy-to-understand way, is also essential. ALWAYS ensure that when you present your prices, you focus on the results and feelings that the prospect wants; NOT just on your offer and the price. The key to delivering this information successfully is practise, practise, practise!

Keep in mind, your expression of interest process is just THAT – an expression of interest. Once you receive those leads, the key to successful conversion lies in contacting all of them – immediately!

STEP
06

Selling via Zoom

Most people nowadays are comfortable using Zoom, and this is reflected in the incredible results we've had with many of our clubs, studios and PTs who have mastered and implemented our "Sell Via Zoom" skills. The bonus of this process is that the sales cycle is also shortened, while closing percentages are increased. With all that's going on in our industry and in the wider economic climate, making sales this way will become an essential skill in the not too distant future.

After following these six steps, your fitness business will be well positioned to relaunch and start smashing your sales goals, once again. ♦



This issue, we're featuring FitPros, Colleen Wilson-Lord OAM and Matthew Sutherland.

COLLEEN WILSON-LORD OAM

JINDERA NSW

Colleen is the Director of Healthy Lifestyle Health Promotion Services and the Director of Community Education and Development, and Coordinator of Community Education and Development for Community Fitness Australia. A highly awarded professional, Colleen is also the National Manager and Master Trainer Lifeball, National AquaFitness Trainer and National Pole Walking Trainer.

At age 80, Colleen is thrilled to still be working in an industry that she loves and retains a passion for! During her dark days of cancer treatment Colleen kept thinking of all her wonderful "Exercise Energisers", and she attributes their energy and passion to helping her get through. Colleen aims to go back to delivering her Healthy Holiday programs with Camps Australia, and continue her Aqua training programs. She also likes to help people who have lost their way while enduring a chronic illness. She says she still has a lot to do and hopes to contribute working in her beloved fitness industry for many more years to come. ♦



"Everyone should have the opportunity to find a class/gym/fitness centre that suits their physical, emotional and mental needs; and everyone should be made to feel special when they attend."

MORE ABOUT COLLEEN



"To grow and develop as a FitPro and business owner, learn from people who have already done what you are trying to do; get help when you need it and take daily action towards your goals."

MORE ABOUT MATTHEW

MATTHEW SUTHERLAND

CHELTENHAM VIC

Matt is the owner and head fitness coach at Great Shape Bayside – Personal & Group Training Studio, which offers one-on-one and small group training in Cheltenham (Melbourne). Their mission is to help busy Bayside men and women to prioritise their health and fitness and get real results from their training.

Matt's passion has been helping people to breakthrough their self-limiting beliefs and take their lives to another level. He's dedicated his career to help people achieve great results and make continuous progress towards their goals. He's an enthusiastic and motivated fitness professional, with over 13 years of experience working with personal training and group fitness classes, offering expertise, personalisation, accountability, and creating workout plans that match his client's needs. Matt believes that physical health and wellbeing are essential for a successful and fulfilling life. ♦



THE SPOTLIGHT IS ON...

Check out these leaders in their field, and what they can do for you.



EVOLT 360

Turning Information into Inspiration

Evolt is a technology-driven health and wellness company that is powering connected and digital health. Our cutting-edge technology provides data driven insights, giving a holistic view of a person's fitness levels, physical health and wellbeing goals. The Evolt360 Body Composition Analyser is a simple-to-use 60-second scan that provides data intelligence through 40+ measurements in real time. The high-tech platform allows you to make data driven decisions to help your business achieve, increased referrals, customer engagement & additional revenue streams. Special offer: Register your interest today and receive a FREE demonstration PLUS a 10% saving off the Evolt 360.

LEARN MORE

ONFIT TRAINING COLLEGE

Professional development courses for existing health and fitness professionals

Onfit Training College is one of Australia's leading online health and fitness colleges, offering accredited qualifications in fitness, weight management and allied health (RTO 32107). They also offer a range of professional development courses for existing professionals to expand their skills and services. Having delivered online education for over a decade, you can trust that your learning experience will be filled with interactive lessons and videos, and that you'll be supported seven days a week by Onfit's expert team.



LEARN MORE

CLOUDFIT

Digitally display your workouts

CloudFit has made gym display technology accessible and affordable to studios of all sizes. With CloudFit you can be up-and-running within minutes.

You're the boss, create your own workout program with our app and display it on TVs. No long-term contracts or custom hardware required! To find out how CloudFit's digital display platform can help scale your business visit <https://cloudfit.tv>



LEARN MORE



FUNCTIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

Helping people fulfill their potential

The Functional Training Institute is an international education company that focuses on designing and delivering world-leading functional training courses. We deliver these courses in every major city worldwide and every course is accredited with the appropriate governing body.

[LEARN MORE](#)

EFFECTIVE & AFFORDABLE CLEANING PRODUCTS FOR YOUR GYM

Designed by gym owners for gym owners

You've probably spent a lot of time lately thinking about cleaning, hygiene and how to have your members feeling safe and comfortable. To achieve a hygienic environment you need supplies that not only effectively clean, but also disinfect and sanitise. Blue Magic commercial cleaning products were designed by gym owners for gym owners. We know what you need! Try the Essential Starter Pack, which includes three core products for hand hygiene, surface disinfecting and floor cleaning.



[LEARN MORE](#)

ph360

The 80-20 Myth with ph360

It's NOT 80% Nutrition and 20% exercise... It's the WHOLE environment.

Research in epigenetics teaches us that our genes respond to the environment around us and that means the:

- ▶ Air you breathe
- ▶ Water you drink
- ▶ Food you eat
- ▶ Time spent moving
- ▶ Quality of your thoughts
- ▶ Relationships you keep
- ▶ Place you work
- ▶ Hours you sleep

Helping your clients achieve long-term health is a result of understanding their unique relationship with the world around them.

THE 80:20 MYTH



[LEARN MORE](#)

10698NAT
Diploma
of Weight
Management



AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF WEIGHT MANAGEMENT & ALLIED HEALTH

Get qualified to write individual meal plans

Plan, conduct and evaluate advanced weight management programs and nutritional plans fully customised to your clients' needs and backed by insurance with the 10698NAT Diploma of Weight Management. Apply specialised skills and knowledge in order to recognise interrelated contributing factors to weight gain and to develop research-based programs. RTO 45052.

[COURSE INFO](#)

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NASM

The premier evidence-based certified personal training program

Be your own boss, set your own hours, and work in your gym clothes. Best of all, have the job security of working in a growing industry! NASM is the premier certified personal training program founded on evidence-based content and the proprietary Optimum Performance Training™ (OPT™) model. Start on the path to a new career and follow your passion for fitness.

[LEARN MORE](#)

ELEVATE YOUR PT BUSINESS WITH MIHA BODYTEC EMS

A safe and efficient way of exercising in this COVID era

Due to COVID-19 there is a notable shift towards smaller, personal training as people negotiate the new normal. miha bodytec's EMS training model provides either 1:1 or 1:2 training sessions with a maximum of three people in one room. EMS ticks all the boxes in this COVID era, providing an efficient way of exercising with focus on personal safety. While gyms and health clubs are down on new members, EMS studio sign ups were up 60 per cent on pre-COVID times.



[CONTACT US](#)

TOP TIPS FOR TRAINING OLDER ADULTS

Nancy Casu shares her training tips for working with older adults.

ask my clients: “What’s your dream for retirement? Do you have travel plans? Do you want to be the best grandparent ever, and play with your grandchildren? Do you want to be a really good golfer, or participate in outdoor sports that interest you like bushwalking, dragon boating? Or do you have some other thing on your bucket list?”

It’s important for those aged over 65 to have enough money to retire, but it’s more important to have your health. And if you’re feeling unwell now, how are you going to feel in 10 years’ time?

Following are four tips to help you train the older adults in your community, so they can stay young and independent for as long as possible.



TIP 1. IT’S NOT ALL ABOUT THE EXERCISE

For this population, staying motivated to continue to train may require more than just a professional exercise program. For example:

Friendships and social connectedness

Make sure that your clients have a buddy and get to know all other participants in the class.

Fun

Don’t be so serious with your classes; after all, laughter is the best medicine! Allow and encourage a little banter in class.

Games

Try adding some games in your class. Use balls, balloons, pool noodles, ladders or hurdles. A little competition is great but remember, not everyone is competitive.

Music

Human beings synchronise naturally, so try adding some simple dances to choreography or maybe



boxing with repetitive moves. Some fun songs are: "YMCA", "La Macarena", the "Shoop Shoop" song, "Jump" or the "Time Warp" from The Rocky Horror Picture Show.

Social

Holding a coffee catch-up after class gives your participants the opportunity to talk about, not only the challenges in their lives, but the great things.

Cognition

Although most participants are not willing to come straight out and talk about it, many of them may feel worried about dementia, Alzheimer's and cognitive decline. Introduce games and skills where clients can improve their cognition, or at least reduce the rate of decline.

Positivity

The Dalai Lama said, "Choose to be optimistic, it feels better". Even though there has been a lot of doom and gloom with bushfires and COVID in 2020, it's important to believe that it's better to be positive than negative. Enter each class with a smile and offer empathy – your class may be the highlight of your participant's day.



TIP 2. NOT ALL OLDER ADULTS WANT TO TRAIN IN A GYM

For older adults, it may be worth considering where the best place is to deliver an exercise session. Keep in mind:

- ▶ you must make the participants feel comfortable in their surroundings, so asking someone to train straight after a young sweaty man, may not be inviting for some

- ▶ the space should be safe, clean and secluded
- ▶ community halls are often suitable if you don't use too much equipment.



TIP 3. SEEK OUT OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

As more of our population live to an older age, and more Retirement Villages and independent living facilities develop, there are ever-growing opportunities to work with this demographic. For example:

- ▶ You may be able to work for the institution and deliver classes within their facility.
- ▶ It's possible to have clients come to you for training/appropriate classes, who can fall into the normal payment structure.
- ▶ You may be able to work with your local council or state's health department to provide physical activity classes.
- ▶ Working alongside a not-for-profit organisation may enable you to facilitate physical activity sessions that would provide many benefits for the group (e.g., dementia, depression, Parkinson's disease).

And keep in mind that grants/funding may be available to support the delivery of some of the above.



TIP 4. SOME OLDER ADULTS PREFER TO TRAIN IN THE WATER

Aqua classes have become increasingly popular with clients who suffer from arthritis or other conditions where weight-bearing



Nancy Casu

Nancy Casu is a FITREC DNA Ambassador. She specialises in training older adults to stay young and independent and is the author of Older Fitter Better. Learn more at www.olderfitterbetter.com

can be challenging. Water-based classes can include hydrotherapy, bootcamp-style or even dance classes, depending on the wishes of your participants or group.

Aqua classes often have a very high attendance rate and the participants are typically very loyal. This may well be related to the fact that water-based aerobic exercise has been shown by many studies to be highly effective at reducing pain for patients with arthritis and populations with disabilities; as well as improving flexibility, strength and balance disorders, while also having a significant positive psychological effect.

It's never too late to start introducing fitness into one's life, and while we may all be ageing, becoming old is optional. Success simply lies in putting in the required effort to improve fitness levels and gain the rewards of being healthy and well – for the long term. Often these "rewards" come by way of "functional fitness" (i.e., having the physical ability to easily perform a function). Functional fitness is a gift to you and your family; however, effort is needed to maintain the strength, vitality and vibrancy required for such abilities. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "It is health that is the real wealth, not pieces of gold and silver." ♦



BUSINESS HEALTH CHECK: THE BENEFITS OF AN EXIT PLAN

To some, thinking about an exit plan before you buy or start your business is kind of like considering a divorce before you've even gone on your first date. While the ego may think it's a bad idea, smart business operators understand the value of this process. Damien Bain and Paul Leach explain.





Damien Bain & Paul Leach

Damien Bain and Paul Leach are the co-founders of Fitness Business Sales, which is a specialist consultancy that guides gym owners through the process to successfully and profitably sell their business. To learn more visit www.fitness-business-sales.com.au

Having an exit plan for your business is not something that should be left until you decide to sell. Great businesses have an exit plan from the very beginning. And it's not just about getting more for your business when it comes to selling. With an exit plan in place, you'll be building a more efficient and profitable business.

Running a health club doesn't give you a lot of free time to think about the end game, irrespective of whether it's a small boutique studio or a full service club with 3,000+ members; spare time is very limited. As a result many gym owners don't have a plan in place when it comes to exiting their business.

For many business owners, the first thought of the exit plan is when the decision to sell has already been made. In many cases, this decision is forced by circumstance – sometimes they didn't see it coming; other times, they're simply just over it and by their own admission, should have sold a while back.

Selling, when you are in this position, is understandably difficult and often results in receiving substantially less for the business. In addition, when you have to sell quickly, the process becomes significantly more stressful.

But having an exit plan is not just about avoiding stress and loss from an unprepared sale. A well thought out exit plan can do amazing things for the profitability and success of your business.

Know your numbers

If you do not already know your key metrics and margins, then now is the time to make a start - don't put this off any longer! You don't need to be a financial whizz but you should be able to see how your business is tracking and spot any potential issues before they get out of control.

The four main areas that you should be tracking

1. Member movement: New members minus any cancellations.
2. Commercial business management: Where is the revenue coming from, what is the cost of sales?
3. Member satisfaction: What are your members/clients saying?
4. Your people: What are your team saying and feeling? This is your engine room. Are they a custodian of the business?

If you're not tracking these areas already, try it for a couple of months and you may be surprised at the difference this knowledge makes to your operations. As they say, 'what gets measured gets managed'.

Keep track of your weekly, monthly and quarterly profit and loss results. Make this monitoring process a non-negotiable part of your admin, and watch the numbers improve.

By consciously tracking and improving systems surrounding each of these four pillars, not only will you have a business that's more attractive to a buyer, you'll undoubtedly be leading a more profitable fitness business. ♦



1

CAN YOUR FITNESS TRACKER PREDICT COVID-19 INFECTION?

The research

A team of scientists from the Scripps Research Translational Institute examined six weeks of data from a study by DETECT (Digital Engagement & Tracking for Early Control and Treatment). Their goal was to determine whether smartwatches and wearable activity trackers such as Fitbits, might improve public health efforts to control COVID-19.

Launched on 25 March 2020, the data was collected from consenting participants via a mobile phone app. Self-reporting data and diagnostic test results from electronic health records were also included.

The findings

By evaluating changes in heart rate, sleep and activity levels, as well as self-reported symptom

data, the researchers found they could predict, with 80 per cent accuracy, whether a person was likely to have COVID-19.

In particular, they noted that participants who slept more and did less activity than normal were more likely to have contracted the coronavirus infection. Compared to other models that only evaluate self-reported symptoms, this method shows a higher potential for success.

What this means

Smartwatches and wearable activity trackers have the capacity to help us identify and slow the spread of COVID-19. While results are very encouraging, a larger study sample is needed to determine whether this method would be effective global strategy. ♦

THE SOURCE

THE STUDY 1

THE STUDY 2

2

COMPRESSION GARMENTS REDUCE STRENGTH LOSS AFTER HEAVY TRAINING

The research

A team of researchers from the Graduate School of Biomedical Engineering at Tohoku University in Japan, examined whether wearing a below-knee compression garment reduces fatigue-induced strength loss and joint position sense (proprioception) in the lower leg.

For the study, healthy adult subjects were tested using a computerised dynamometer when performing leg extensions until fatigued. Tests assessing changes in the maximal strength and knee joint position sense were conducted straight after the training, 24 hours after and then 1 week after the training.

The findings

Results revealed that wearing a below-knee compression garment during strenuous training does

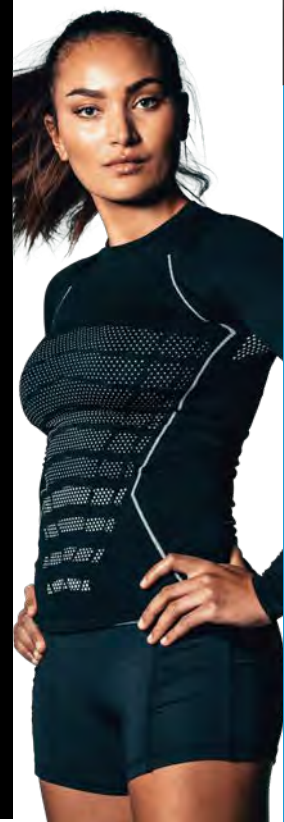
reduce fatigue-induced strength loss, immediately following the exercise and 24 hours later. However, the findings confirm that the compression garments do not provide protection against knee joint position sense errors. The research team aims to conduct further studies on longer maximal intensity programs lasting weeks, to determine whether the outcomes differ.

What this means

Although compression bandages have been widely used in the fitness and sporting arenas to prevent injury or aid in recovery for some time, we now know that wearing a below-knee compression garment can reduce strength loss after a heavy workout - good news for athletes on a tight training schedule. Although this study only looks at lower leg compression garments, more studies are needed to see whether the same effects apply to other parts of the body. ♦

THE STUDY

THE SOURCE



WHY CHOOSE FITREC FOR FITNESS REGISTRATION?



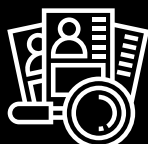
Put an end to CEC/PDP accumulation

Ongoing development is essential, but let's not focus on points. At FITREC we've scrapped the points system and instead we focus on transparency by displaying your complete learning history. No more scrambling into an educational opportunity merely to gain points.



Raising the bar on professionalism

When you join FITREC, you get a lot more than just registration. You get a highly visible, industry-leading FITREC profile, so potential employers and clients can gain a thorough snapshot of your industry experience. Plus, you get FITREC's unwavering commitment to help you develop and sustain a winning fitness career.



Unmatched assistance with employment

Whenever you're looking for work in the fitness industry, FITREC (via **HealthyPeople**) will put you in front of all local employers. This service normally attracts a fee, but for FITREC registered professionals, it's FREE – every time you need it!



We guarantee accurate information and unbiased support.

Where is your information currently coming from? FITREC is the first and only fitness registration service to provide true clarity for industry professionals around registration, ongoing development, qualifications and insurance.



Registration that reflects you as an individual

At FITREC you're not "just another trainer". We recognise that fitness professionals differ by qualification, specialisation, experience, further learning, client focus, and peer influence. FITREC is the only provider capable of adequately reflecting your unique background as a fitness professional.



"The structure of the FITREC system is great. It makes updating and maintaining insurance simple and easy, thanks to FITREC and their constant support."

Hannah Altman, QLD

To join the FITREC family or to find out more visit **fitrec.org**

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