



LIVING THROUGH LOCKDOWN: A CLUB PERSPECTIVE

Health club owner Mel Tempest, shares her first-hand challenges from COVID-19 and the tips that others can take away from her experiences.

What does it take to be successful through a lockdown? No live clients. Closed until... who knows?

Strength.

And an attitude that says "I will win this, no matter what!" Shutting the doors to my club on 22nd March was gut wrenching.

I opened my club in 2003 to create my own destiny and forge my own path; to be a catalyst for change in an industry that I love and am deeply passionate about. Now, all of a sudden, I'm turned into what feels like a puppet on a string at the mercy of a government trying to contain a highly infectious virus.

Ultimately we are all facing the same challenges, united by the fact that none of us were ever likely to have been prepared for what's eventuated.

So here we are, six months later and in Victoria we're into Lockdown 2.0, just six weeks after opening after Lockdown 1. Following are some insights as to how things changed in our club.

LOCKDOWN 1

We rented out group fitness equipment. Some people paid and some didn't.

LOCKDOWN 2

Everybody paid!

LOCKDOWN 1

We delivered free group fitness classes via Facebook Live. We uploaded them to a web-based app and the whole community got active.

LOCKDOWN 2

We set up a closed members only Facebook group for classes and sold online Facebook memberships to non-members. We charged everybody \$5 per

week for the web-based app. We only leave the classes on the Facebook group page for 48 hours.

LOCKDOWN 1

We texted and rang members consistently, and did video updates on our social media platforms to stay in touch with our members. We ran silly updates and random question posts to create some light-hearted conversations. And it worked – our members remained engaged with our club.

LOCKDOWN 2

Repeat the above!

On opening after Lockdown 1 we gave our members 25% discount off their current direct debit membership fees for a month. And, of course, all members who had paid upfront received an extra 13 weeks on their membership

63% of our members returned after lockdown. The rest stayed on hold and participated in our free weekly Facebook Live classes. With only 10 people per in-club class allowed, we had to figure out a way to stay connected to the rest of our paying members who couldn't get a spot, as well as the non-paying ones who weren't ready to return.

The large majority who did return to the club were "gym" members (and WOW, they sure did love the wipes!).

“Our industry impacts thousands and thousands of lives for the better... we are all facing the same challenges, united by the fact that none of us were ever likely to have been prepared for what's eventuated.**”**



Mel Tempest

Mel Tempest is a club owner and an innovative thought leader who turns conceptual ideas into tangible results. She's been doing this instinctively since she was a kid, and now 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. Learn more at meltempest.net

