

HOW TO BECOME A PERSONAL FITNESS TRAINER

You must understand your job as a personal fitness trainer and plan on becoming the best personal fitness trainer you can be.

Congratulations on your decision to enter the personal fitness training career field! You are entering a career that can earn you tremendous rewards; not just financial, but emotional as well. As is often documented, personal fitness trainers can earn tremendous incomes, all the while working in beautiful fitness settings in country clubs, spas and resorts, cruise ships and well decorated health clubs. But what is *not* often documented is the high degree of job satisfaction personal fitness trainers can derive while helping their clients achieve healthier and happier lives. While the material rewards often attract individuals to the personal fitness training career, many of the best personal fitness trainers remain in the industry not because of the GOLD, but because of the GOAL! The best personal fitness trainers love the challenge and rewards of helping their clients achieve their fitness, health and nutrition goals. The best personal fitness trainers love helping their clients live healthier, happier and more successful lives. It is a by-product of the personal fitness trainer's value to society that they make such highly lucrative incomes.

Everything in this manual, this course, this IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Program is designed to help you become the best personal fitness trainer you can become. You will find that there are few wasted words here. You will also come to find that on a variety of levels, you have been very fortunate to discover this program. You will soon learn why the IFPA has become the leader in practical fitness sports and nutrition, education and certification. You will learn that the IFPA has developed the very best programs in the world to teach all our students precisely what they need to know to become highly successful personal fitness trainers. You will find no academic fluff in these pages. The sciences you are required to learn here are what you must know to do your job in personal fitness training safely and effectively.

In order to demonstrate in the clearest possible manner the precise nature of your job as a personal fitness trainer, the IFPA went through great time, effort and expense, utilizing the finest minds in the fitness industry to construct the most realistic and detailed job description for personal fitness trainers available anywhere in the world today. The entire project was a painstakingly detailed process, and while it is not important that you know every step that was involved in the process, it is critical that you learn the following summary of the process so you can be assured that you have chosen the IFPA wisely, that you understand the need to learn everything contained in this course, and that you clearly understand the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) needed by the personal fitness trainer to do the job in the safest, most effective manner.

The IFPA Personal Fitness Training Certification process was begun with the fitness industry's most thorough job analysis. The finest minds in the industry were asked to develop an extensive Job Analysis Survey (JAS) to determine the precise KSA needed by the personal fitness trainer. The JAS was sent throughout the industry to be evaluated. The data collected from the JAS was sent to the IFPA Consulting Psychometrician, Dr. Michael Brannick, for analysis. NOTE: Psychometricians have extensive knowledge in educational and psychological testing and study, as well as psychology, statistics, and other areas used to set standards for testing and learning.

The information obtained from the JAS was used in creating the extensive job description and documenting the critical KSAs to be taught in this course and manual. A panel of experts was convened to identify the essential job duties of a personal fitness trainer and provide input and the KSAs needed in performance of personal fitness training sessions.

The first task of the panel was to create a survey that outlined the KSAs needed by a personal fitness trainer. The second task was to develop a rating scale for the KSAs. The third task was to identify the population to which the survey would be administered to, and the fourth task was to determine the format in which the survey would be administered.

Throughout this detailed process, it was decided to focus on the skills needed for the "Entry Level" personal fitness trainer. The entry level personal fitness trainer is described as: a fitness professional capable of safely and effectively conducting one-on-one personal fitness training sessions with a generally healthy client, meaning no medical restrictions to exercise. Clients with medical restrictions to exercise or with special needs are classified as "Special Populations". Special populations are restricted in terms of the exercise frequency, intensity, type and/or amount of time/duration of exercise. Examples of special populations are people with diabetes, cancer, COPD, CAD, CHD, arthritis, osteoporosis, obesity, pregnancy, or certain diseases and/or dysfunctions. Other special populations may occur due to age (for example: children, senior citizens, frail elderly, etc.). Personal fitness trainers must complete separate, more advanced IFPA course work and certifications in order to safely and effectively manage the health and fitness needs of these special populations.

Utilizing the process above, the panel of experts created a job description to better describe the duties and tasks of the personal fitness trainer. The duties and tasks help communicate the content of the job.

Job Description

Entry-Level Personal Fitness Trainer

Establishes ongoing appointments with clients for fitness training sessions. The entry level PFT should have a clear understanding of exercise physiology, exercise science, anatomy, nutrition, biomechanics and exercise safety guidelines as they apply to the generally healthy (no medical restrictions to exercise or fitness type activities) adult population. Personal fitness training programs include all of the following elements:

- 1) **Client Consultation and Assessment**
- 2) **Fitness Testing & Evaluation**
- 3) **Program Design (Exercise Prescription)**
- 4) **Exercise Management**
 - a) **Exercise Physiology**
 - b) **Anatomy**
 - c) **Biomechanics**
 - d) **Safety**
 - e) **Instruction/Motivation**
 - f) **Tracking Progress of Client**
- 5) **Nutrition Education**
- 6) **Exercise Physiology and Anatomy**

Duties and Tasks

(1) Client Consultation and Assessment

- Establish client's health and fitness goals
- Interview client with Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q) to identify if the client is physically ready to exercise-use in combination with Health History Questionnaire (HHQ)
- Interview client screening using a Health History Questionnaire (HHQ) to identify medical conditions that may affect workout
- Interview client with other forms to learn about diet, nutrition, exercise, and health practices/habits that might be improved (example: Lifestyle Profile Evaluation Form)
- Determine the Client's knowledge (or lack thereof) of nutrition
- Prepare to consult, advise, educate client on the fundamental need for healthy nutrition, nutrition planning and implementation
- Nutrition education: the majority of clients have little knowledge & understanding of proper, healthy nutrition. In order for the PFT to guide their clients to achieve their health & fitness goals, PFT must educate their clients on nutrition.

As a minimum the PFT must be prepared to educate the client on :

- Macronutrients: Carbohydrates, Fats & Protein
- Micronutrients: Vitamins & Minerals
- Hydration: Healthy Water Intake
- Energy Management: Caloric Intake vs. Outgo
- Meal Planning: Frequency & Volume
- Nutrition for Health Improvements
- Nutrition for Body Composition Improvements
- Nutrition for Optimal Performance
- Explain Consent & Release forms
- Explain policies and describe the program
 - a) what client is to expect
 - b) rules
 - c) payment policies

- d) cancellation policies
- e) administrative forms

(2) Fitness Testing/Evaluation

- Test client to compile “resting” fitness data
 - resting heart rate
 - resting blood pressure
 - height
 - weight
 - body composition analysis
 - circumference measurements
- For active clients, test clients to establish
 - Muscular endurance
 - Aerobic endurance
 - Flexibility
- Evaluate 10 components of fitness of the client and determine if any component is lacking:
 - 1) cardiorespiratory endurance
 - 2) muscular endurance
 - 3) muscular strength
 - 4) body composition
 - 5) agility
 - 6) balance
 - 7) coordination
 - 8) joint flexibility
 - 9) speed
 - 10) power
- Nutrition Education: All components of fitness may be affected by both nutrition (optimal performance issues) and/or body composition (fat loss vs. lean tissue [muscle & bone]). The PFT must be prepared to educate the client on healthy, nutritional and lifestyle changes necessary to guide their client to their health and fitness goals. In some cases, it may be necessary to refer their clients to a registered dietician for help in achieving their goals.

(3) Program design—establish a workout plan (see chart for an example)

- Needs analysis; establish a workout plan that fits the client’s goals, and information obtained from initial consultation and fitness testing
- Review fitness data to determine level of fitness of client: beginner, intermediate, advanced, elite
- Evaluate 10 components of fitness of the client (cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, body composition, agility, balance, coordination, joint flexibility, speed, power) and determine any component is lacking
- Review/Incorporate the goals of the client (example: weight loss, lean muscle gain, general health improvements, strength and power gain, flexibility, etc.)
- Identify obstacles (example: pain, prior injuries, health and medical issues-refer to advanced personal trainer for special populations) that need to be considered when creating exercise program
- Design exercise program incorporating level of fitness, level of each component of fitness, goals of the client and obstacles that affect training
- Establish periodization for resistance training (utilize exercise physiology principles (-GPO, FITT, SAID, etc.)
- Professional Program Design requires a thorough knowledge in:
 - Exercise Physiology
 - Exercise Science
 - Anatomy
 - Biomechanics & Safety Guidelines

Example of periodization - 3 phases for resistance training

- 1) First 4 weeks-hypertrophy-high volume, low intensity; goal-increase volume and muscle size and strength (example: First 4 weeks-high reps 12-15, sets 1-2)

2) Next 4 weeks-strength phase-moderate volume and intensity; goal increase strength (example: next 4 weeks moderate reps 8-12, sets 2-3)

3) Next 4 weeks-power phase-low volume and high intensity; continue increasing strength along with peak power output (last 4 weeks, low reps more weight reps 7 and below, sets 3 or more)

Variations can be made by changing exercises, repetitions, weight, number of sets, frequency of exercising a different muscle group, and resistance training systems.

Establish a routine for cardiovascular training

1) First 4 weeks-increased time, low intensity-30-45 minutes at 60-70% maximum heart rate (MaxHR)

2) Next 4 weeks-moderate time and intensity-60 minutes at 70-80% MaxHR

3) Next 4 weeks-decreased time and high intensity-60 minutes at 80-90% MaxHR

(4) Exercise Management

- The entry level PFT must have a clear understanding of all ten components of fitness: 1) Strength, 2) Speed, 3) Power, 4) Anaerobic Endurance, 5) Aerobic Endurance, 6) Agility, 7) Balance, 8) Coordination, 9) Flexibility, and 10) Body Composition
- The Entry-level PFT must have the requisite knowledge, skills & abilities (KSAs) to consult, assess & evaluate each client for each component of fitness in order to determine the safest, most effective method for guiding the client to achieve their health & fitness needs, wants, desires and goals
- Instruct client in resistance training (with or without weights) exercises, insuring proper breathing, timing, exercise technique (kinesiology & biomechanics), safety guidelines, and spotting, warm-up, workout, and cool-down
- Encourage client to reach level of exertion needed to achieve goals
- Instruct client on cardiovascular equipment for aerobic workout
- Move weights and set-up equipment
- Monitoring the client during exercise to insure proper breathing and exertion level
- Document exercises performed including type of exercise, amount of weight used, repetitions, sets, cardiovascular endurance (exercise log)
- Track changes-increases or decreases in performance
- Modify workout to better achieve client's goals
- Motivate clients to develop a consistent exercise lifestyle
- Knowledge of: anatomy, muscle physiology, cardiorespiratory physiology
- Knowledge of: basic kinesiology and biomechanics
- Knowledge of: primary exercises and muscle groups worked (example: squat for the quadriceps, bench press for pectoralis major, pectoralis minor)
- Knowledge of: variations of primary exercise and their implications for muscles worked (example: squat-sumo squat-emphasizes inner thighs, vastus medialis; narrow stance squat-emphasizes outer thighs, vastus lateralis)
- Knowledge of: resistance training systems, different methods of strength training to promote results (example: single set, multiple set, superset, light to heavy, stripping etc.)
- Knowledge of: safety and injury prevention practices (e.g., proper range of motion for exercise, proper spotting techniques, recognition of errors in form).
- Knowledge of: Nutritional considerations for the Personal Trainer
- Knowledge of: adaptations to exercise
- Knowledge of: energy metabolism
- Knowledge of: CPR and First Aid certification, emergency procedures
- Ability to: Create organized sequential workout plan for maximum results (periodization).
- Ability to: Apply exercise physiology principles (GPO, FITT, SAID, etc., obtained from certification and/or formal education).
- Ability to: Integrate knowledge to develop effective exercise programs
- Ability to: communicate clearly with clients
- Ability to: In order to stay safe & effective the entry-level personal trainer must continue his or her education and keep up to date on current health & fitness information and to obtain knowledge on working with special populations.

- Nutrition education: Experienced and knowledgeable CPFT's know that nutrition can be 80% of the battle in helping your clients achieve their goals. Knowledge in nutrition and the skill & ability to educate your clients on nutrition is essential to helping your clients achieve their health and fitness goals.

Machines and Equipment

Anaerobic

- Free weights
- Weight machines
 - Fixed resistance equipment
 - Variable resistance equipment
 - Isokinetic resistance equipment
- Nontraditional
 - Body weight
 - Elastic bands /rubber tubing
 - Stability balls
 - Medicine balls
 - Other resistance training equipment not mentioned

Aerobic

- Treadmill
- Stationary bicycle
- Stepper
- Elliptical machine

(Refer to "The Book on Personal Training", Dr. James Bell, Dr. Karl Dauphinais, 2006)

Special Populations: The entry-level PFT can safely & effectively train the generally healthy adult population (no medical restrictions to exercise). Many special populations require advanced education and training. The knowledge, skills and abilities that an entry level PFT possesses may not prepare them for dealing with the higher risks of special populations groups such as:

- Frail Elderly
- Pregnant Women
- Prepubescent Children
- Morbid Obesity
- Diabetes
- Cardiovascular Rehabilitation
- Stroke Patients
- Cancer Patients
- Osteoporosis
- Other Medical Conditions

Each of these special populations groups can benefit greatly from professional exercise prescription, program design and exercise management, but the PFT must have the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities to safely and effectively deal with the special needs of each special population group. This requisite knowledge, skills and abilities can be gained through the numerous advanced courses offered through the IFPA.

NOTE: Due to the advanced knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to deal with special populations, the IFPA does NOT recommend entry level PFT's attempt to train individuals that fall into special populations without specific written consent from the client's doctor, exercise and activity limits prescribed by the doctor and full disclosure of the limits of your knowledge, skills and abilities to the patient and the patient's doctor. To do less puts the patient at risk, jeopardizes your career due to violation of both ethical & professional guidelines, and makes you susceptible to potential lawsuits. The IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Exam WILL NOT have any special population type questions.

(5) Nutrition Education

- Fitness professionals must have a functional understanding of the healthy principles and practices of sports nutrition sciences in order to educate their clients on a health and fitness lifestyle.
- Fitness professionals must have the ability to communicate and educate their clients on unhealthy and “faddish” nutrition trends.
- Fitness professionals must be able to educate their clients on supplementation.
- Experienced and knowledgeable CPFT’s know that nutrition can be 80% of the battle in helping your clients achieve their goals. Knowledge in nutrition and the skill & ability to educate your clients on nutrition is essential to helping your clients achieve their health and fitness goals.

(6) Exercise Physiology and Anatomy

Exercise physiology and anatomy, along with biomechanics and safety, provide the foundation of knowledge, skills and abilities needed by the personal fitness trainer to conduct the task of Exercise Management. (See Duties and Tasks: [5])

This is the most extensive, accurate, comprehensive and decisive job description devised, developed or published anywhere. Careful study will give great insight into the precise KSAs needed to become a highly successful personal fitness trainer. Do not continue reading further until you clearly understand what is required of you to achieve success. If you are to qualify to join the ranks of the best personal trainers in the fitness industry, you must both understand and prepare yourself for the KSAs described above that you must master.

The chapter and sections that follow are based on the job description described above, but be aware: the KSAs described above are directed to the JOB and do not entirely describe the CAREER. In order to have a successful career, a specific business building section was added to this manual and course.

Equally important, the panel of experts decided to modify certain phases in a chronological order. This step was necessary to make it easier for the student to learn the KSAs so critical for success. Therefore, the job description was modified into the following sections for ease of use:

Section One: Client Consultation & Goals Assessment

Section Two: Fitness Assessment: Testing & Evaluation

Section Three: Exercise Prescription

Section Four: Program Design

Section Five: Exercise Management

Section Six: Nutrition Education

Section Seven: The Business of Personal Training

These seven sections divide your personal fitness training manual. Each section contains the appropriate chapters. Each chapter contains the appropriate KSAs you must master to achieve your ultimate goal of becoming a world-class IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer.

How do you become a personal fitness trainer?

You put forth the time, effort and energy in dedicated study and practice to master the KSAs described in this manual. There are no shortcuts to success. There is no easy way out. There is no lazy man’s way to affluence. There is only one way to achievement and that is through dedicated hard work and perseverance. Do not look for shortcuts, or an easy way or lazy way. You should only seek out opportunity. You hold virtually unlimited opportunity in your hand. Opportunity to realize your own mental, emotional, physical, financial, and spiritual potential. Opportunity to be your own boss, set your own pay and be the best you can be. In order to help you appreciate your opportunity and all it conveys, you are provided this famous quote. Please read and take the time to understand the sentiments expressed by Dean Alfange below:

“I Do Not Choose To Be A Common Man

I do not choose to be a common man. It is my right to be uncommon...if I can. I seek opportunity to develop whatever talents God gave me — not security. I do not wish to be a kept citizen, humbled and dulled by having the state look after me. I want to take the calculated risk; to dream and to build, to fail and to succeed. I refuse to

barter incentive for a dole. I prefer the challenges of life to the guaranteed existence; the thrill of fulfillment to the stale calm of utopia. I will not trade freedom for beneficence nor my dignity for a handout. I will never cower before any earthly master nor bend to any threat. It is my heritage to stand erect, proud and unafraid; to think and act myself, enjoy the benefit of my creations and to face the world boldly and say — ‘This, with God’s help, I have done.’ All this is what it means to be an American.”

My father gave me a plaque with those words written on it when I graduated from U.S. Air Force Pilot Training. His constant encouragement was the driving motivation that took me from a poor coal mining town in southwestern Pennsylvania to become an expert in fitness, sports conditioning and nutrition. It is my duty and obligation to do for you what he, and so many others, did for me. So many times, critical times in my life, someone came along at just the right time, and said just the right thing, that raised my level of consciousness, enough for me to realize an opportunity right before my eyes, an opportunity that moments before, I had been too blind to see. You can call it what you like—luck, or Karma, or Divine intervention, but something opened my eyes and put me on the right path, a better path toward achieving my potential.

Despite any and all hardships and obstacles you have had in your life, you have tremendous potential. Regardless of where you are now, regardless of what you are doing, regardless of where you are going, it is in your power to take a different path, a path toward achieving your potential.

“No matter how far you have gone down the wrong path—TURN BACK!”

The IFPA has earned the reputation of being the most practical fitness, sports conditioning & nutrition, education & certification organization in the world. Not just because the curriculum contained in this personal fitness trainer certification manual is the most practical in the world, not just because the many other advanced fitness, sports conditioning and nutrition certifications and courses the IFPA offers are the most practical in the world, but because the educational and testing process the IFPA utilizes are also the most practical in the world.

In order to be practical, you must first start with honesty. In all honesty, you are about to find that this IFPA personal fitness trainer certification course, and this manual, are among the most user friendly you have ever encountered; but make no mistake about this, you are about to embark on a very demanding educational process. You are required to absorb a large volume of KSAs that you must learn, and learn well, in order to qualify you to join the ranks of the fitness industry’s finest personal fitness trainers—IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainers. At times, the task may seem daunting, but it is not. All that is required is time, effort, energy, dedication and perseverance. You may have to expend more effort than you have ever expended before, but the expenditure will be well worth it.

It may help you to understand that the effort you expend is not only for you, but for your family, friends, fellow citizens, your community and your country. The effort you expend is not just to give you a better life, but to lead others to a better life through the professional KSAs you will soon master. The effort you expend is not just about fulfilling your dreams, desires and goals, but about realizing your full potential by helping others achieve theirs.

Perhaps you will better understand your mission and how your valuable effort invested in this course will pay tremendous dividends, by taking the time to read and understand the eloquent quote provided below:

“This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being a force of Nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live.

I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no ‘brief candle’ to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got a hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.”
—George Bernard Shaw

Pretty tough evaluation, wouldn't you say? Before you rush on in your reading, it is important that you pause and reflect how critically important this exercise is to your future development. It can be a scary task to ask people to evaluate one job characteristic. It can be an absolute nightmare to ask someone to openly and honestly evaluate every single personality characteristic you possess, but pause and think for a moment. How they think and feel about you is already a *fact!* Nothing they put on your evaluation is going to change that *fact!* The only thing that will change is that you will learn what they think about you. This exercise may be an uncomfortable task for you, possibly *very* uncomfortable task for you, but it is an essential step in putting you on the right path toward achieving your destiny. Because the good news is that no matter how many low ratings you get on the inventory, you can change each and every characteristic for the better. There is an excellent system developed by Benjamin Franklin over 250 years ago for personal development that will help you become a "Force of Nature."

The Benjamin Franklin personal development system is detailed in his autobiography. The "Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin" & is one of the recommended reading books on Dr. Jim Bell's Recommended Reading List. The list can be found on the IFPA website: www.ifpa-fitness.com under the "Resources" button of the homepage (located under the IFPA banner at the top of the webpage). Move your cursor over Resources, go to the FitBits Archive on the drop-down menu and click. Scroll down to Recommended Reading for Personal Development 08/18/03 and click. All the books on this list are very valuable books that can fill you with incredible insights & guide you toward achievement. You owe it to yourself to read, study and learn every one of these great books. Start with Ben Franklin, since it is most important to your current exercise of self-awareness and improvement.

You will use the same process used by Ben Franklin to become one of the most accomplished "Forces of Nature" in the history of mankind. Ben focused on 13 characteristics—these are described below in Ben's original words:

- 1) Temperance: "Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation."
- 2) Silence: "Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation."
- 3) Order: "Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time."
- 4) Resolution: "Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve."
- 5) Frugality: "Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing."
- 6) Industry: "Lose no time, be always employ'd in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions."
- 7) Sincerity: "Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and if you speak, speak accordingly."
- 8) Justice: "Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty."
- 9) Moderation: "Avoid extreams; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve."
- 10) Cleanliness: "Tolerate no uncleanness in body, cloaths, or habitation."
- 11) Tranquility: "Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable."
- 12) Chastity: "Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation."
- 13) Humility: "Imitate Jesus and Socrates."

Initially Ben worked on one characteristic per week. He made a chart titled 'Temperance'. On the chart he made a designation for each day of the week, Sunday through Saturday labeled across the top, with lines drawn vertically separating the chart for each of the seven days. He drew a horizontal line dividing the seven categories in half. Whenever he did something positive reflecting temperance he put a "+" above the line. Whenever he did something negative toward his goal of achieving perfect temperance, he put a "-" below the line. At the end of each day he would total the "+" and "-" symbols at the bottom of the chart and reflect on what he did right and what he did wrong. He would reflect on what he could do to get better and how he could avoid his wrongful mistakes. At the end of the week he would total the "+" and "-" for the week, reflect on his progress and begin a new chart for Silence and repeat the process until he had performed this exercise for all 13 characteristics. An example of this chart is depicted below:

Temperance							
Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.							
	Sun	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sat
Total +							
Total --							

After 13 weeks he modified the process to focus on one characteristic, but to track all 13 each day still using the “+” and “—” symbols. The new chart would look like this:

Temperance							
Eat not to dullness, Drink not to elevation.							
	Sun	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sat
T							
S							
O							
R							
F							
I							
S							
J							
M							
C							
T							
C							
H							

Though your focus this week will be on improving temperance, you will continue to monitor all 13 characteristics. Each week you will move a different characteristic to the top, but continue to monitor all 13.

By this time you should recognize both the value of Ben's system as well as the importance of getting as much critical feedback on your evaluation as you can get. The more opinions you get on your evaluations, the clearer you will see which characteristics you need to focus your attention. If you are wondering, "What does all this have to do with becoming an effective personal fitness trainer," then read ahead very carefully; IT HAS EVERYTHING TO DO WITH BECOMING AN EFFECTIVE PERSONAL TRAINER!

It is no accident that the title is: PERSONAL Fitness Trainer. Personal training is all about personality and personal relationships. In order to become a personal trainer, you are going to need a healthy personality and the ability to function within a healthy relationship. Therefore, you must complete this first exercise. Go back to the Personal Traits Evaluation Form, make copies of the form, ask your family, friends and associates to evaluate you, study the data you collect, evaluate your strengths and weaknesses and customize your own self-development chart just the way Ben did his, only customized to your personality weaknesses. You will be required to continue this Ben Franklin Self-Development System throughout this course. If you are wise you will work hard on this system. If you are very wise you will work hard on this system for the rest of your life. Don't work for perfection, work for improvement. Remember: Success is a journey, not a destination.

Professional Development

The previous section was designed to give you insight into personal development. You are about to receive insight into the structure of this manual and course & how this program is going to help your professional development. Study this section carefully.

This manual is divided into seven sections. These seven sections are slightly modified from the IFPA Job Description for Entry-Level Personal Fitness Trainers. These seven sections actually represent the distinct phases involved in the personal fitness training process.

Section One: Client Consultation & Goals Assessment

The personal fitness training process begins with a dialogue. This dialogue is a critical step in the personal fitness training process. If the personal fitness trainer cannot communicate or motivate the client to begin an exercise program, then the other 6 phases are immaterial. In order to acquire clients, the personal fitness trainer must learn to effectively communicate and motivate the client. This requires the personal fitness trainer to be highly articulate, charming, personable, understanding, professional, presentable, motivational, knowledgeable and more. The personal fitness trainer must be an effective listener as well as talker. The personal fitness trainer must have effective interviewing skills so they can uncover the potential client's true goals, desires, expectations and motivations. The effective personal fitness trainer must have a practical understanding of the psychology of human motivation and the related field sometimes referred to as "salesmanship!" Yes! You are going to have to master some sales techniques if you are going to be able to "motivate" someone to exercise. And most important, you will need clear, concise, articulate language and speech skills.

Section Two: Fitness Assessment: Testing and Evaluation

"If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there."

Actually, fitness assessment is even more basic than that! Without fitness assessment, the personal fitness trainer will not even know where they are starting from!

There are 10 Components of Fitness:

- 1) Strength
- 2) Speed
- 3) Power
- 4) Anaerobic Endurance
- 5) Aerobic Endurance
- 6) Agility
- 7) Balance
- 8) Coordination
- 9) Flexibility
- 10) Body Composition

Each and every one of your clients will need to attain some level of function in each to be “fully functional.”

If you decide to work with competitive athletes in your career, you may encounter an athlete who is very strong, fast and powerful, has great anaerobic and aerobic endurance, has terrific agility, balance, coordination and 8% body fat. Yet the athlete comes to you for help because they constantly experience serious muscle tears and don't know why. During your fitness assessment you discover that the athlete has excellent evaluations in each of the 10 components of fitness listed above, but you discover they are hypertonic in virtually all their muscle groups. Your fitness assessment has discovered that your athlete is super tight in virtually all muscle groups and that is the probable cause of all their muscle tears. Your exercise prescription (Section three) will be to assign specific flexibility exercises for each of the muscle groups that prevent your athlete's “full functionality.”

The other end of the spectrum is the inactive senior citizen. During your Client Consultation and Goals Assessment, you discover that your client is very concerned about their losing their ability to balance. It seems they have been losing their balance and have been relying on a cane to prevent them from falling. While it may be intuitively obvious that the client may be losing their agility, balance and coordination, it is not until you conduct a fitness assessment and determine that the client is far below average in strength. You will learn in Section five: Exercise Management that a functional level of strength, speed and power must be maintained to keep agility, balance and coordination at a functional level. You, your client and every other human being on the planet needs the fast, strong and powerful, Type II B muscle fibers to catch themselves when they slip or about to fall. It is the powerful Type II B fibers that rapidly contract to make them regain their balance. Without a functional level of strength, speed and power they cannot have agility, balance or coordination.

Once your fitness assessment determines the client's underlying cause of loss of balance, that being lack of strength, your exercise prescription will be resistance training.

Section three: Exercise Prescription

The 10 Components of Fitness form links in a chain of functionality. You and your client's functionality are limited by the weak link or links in the chain. The exercise prescription is to “fix” the weak link. Typical exercise prescriptions are listed below, but these are only a few examples and are by no means meant to be an all-inclusive list. You will find as you progress in your career that there is often overlap in these components.

Component of Fitness	Exercise Prescription
1) Strength	Resistance & Strength Training
2) Speed	Speed Work, Sprinting, Plyometrics
3) Power	Plyometrics, Medicine Ball Work
4) Anaerobic Endurance	Sprinting, Muscular Endurance Work
5) Aerobic Endurance	Aerobic Exercise
6) Agility	Core Training
7) Balance	Static & Dynamic Balance Training
8) Coordination	Core Training
9) Flexibility	Flexibility: PNF, Static, Ballistic Training
10) Body Composition	Strength & Aerobic Training Combined

Section 4: Program Design

Program Design is the detailed plan of your exercise prescription. For example, once you determine to begin a strength training program for a new client who is beginning an exercise program for the first time, you may begin with a program design that looks like the following:

Muscle Group	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Load
1) Chest	Bench Press	1	15	100 pounds
2) Back	Seated Row	1	15	80 pounds
3) Quadriceps	Squats	1	15	100 pounds
4) Hamstrings	Leg Curls	1	15	50 pounds
5) Biceps	Arm Curls	1	15	50 pounds
6) Triceps	Arm Extensions	1	15	60 pounds
7) Shoulders	Side Lateral Raise	1	15	30 pounds
8) Trapezius	Shrugs	1	15	100 pounds
9) Abdominals	Crunch	1	15	0 pounds
10) Calf	Heel Raise	1	15	100 pounds
11) Low Back	Back Extension	1	15	100 pounds
12) Forearms	Wrist Curl	1	15	50 pounds

The exercise prescription is to develop strength within all major muscle groups. The twelve major muscle groups are listed above with a standard exercise prescribed to develop strength within that muscle group. One set of 15 reps (repetitions) is also standard for a beginner strength training routine. The “Load” is hypothetical. You will determine the actual load based on the precise capabilities of each individual client. A typical exercise prescription for a load for a beginner strength trainer is 15RM (Repetition Maximum). RM is the maximum amount of load the trainee can handle with perfect form for a set number of repetitions. Therefore, 15RM means the trainee will have sufficient strength to handle a specific load (determined by the trainee’s strength) for 15 reps. A 15RM set means they will do precisely 15 reps; not 16, not 14, but 15 reps if you, the personal fitness trainer, have set the correct load on the bar.

There are reasons within the exercise prescription for determining the RM Range, i.e.: each RM Range will elicit specific adaptations. You will be taught the specific adaptations in the chapters in Section five: Exercise Management.

It should be obvious that without an accurate Client Consultation & Goals Assessment and an equally accurate Fitness Assessment: Testing & Evaluation, you will not have the facts and information essential for you to develop a safe and effective exercise prescription. Without an accurate Exercise Prescription, you cannot develop a safe and effective Program Design. Each phase of the personal fitness training process builds on the previous phases and each phase relies on your KSAs in all 7 phases. You must study and learn each phase separately, but you must also study and learn the synergistic relationship of all 7 phases.

The next phase you will study is:

Section Five: Exercise Management

This is the phase most people visualize when they envision a personal training session. They see and hear the personal fitness trainer standing over the trainee, giving instructions and words of encouragement as the trainee struggles with an exercise. Exercise management requires a great deal of KSAs in: exercise physiology, anatomy, kinesiology, biomechanics, safety, teaching ability, motivating ability and tracking the client’s progress. Before you start to panic over the referenced “ologies”, remember, the IFPA is the leader in **practical** education and certification. The IFPA goal is not to focus on the “ologies”, but to provide you the essential KSAs you need to be a safe and effective personal fitness trainer. This can be accomplished without an entire year of study devoted to each “ology”. You will learn, from the chapters in Section 5: Exercise Management all the KSAs an entry level personal fitness trainer should know to conduct safe and effective personal fitness training sessions. Advanced study will always be available to you later in the over 100 courses and certifications offered by the IFPA and our Education partner, the Fitness Institute of Technology.

The KSAs you learn in this section will enhance your ability to maximize your performance in the other phases of personal fitness training. In all practicality, it will be impossible for you to adequately address any of the previous 4 phases of personal fitness training without a high level of mastery of all the KSAs contained in this section.

Section Six: Nutrition Education

This is the next section in the manual and this course. Educating your clients on nutrition, specifically Sports Nutrition, is an absolutely essential step in helping your clients achieve their health and fitness goals. A famous trainer once told one of his clients: “I can’t be taking you through a world-class workout and have you go home and eat a half-gallon of Häagen-Dazs ice cream!”

The fact is that the vast majority of your clients do not have a clue on how to eat healthy and will have even less of a clue on how to eat correctly to maximize their potential in your fitness program. You will discover that nutrition will be 80% of the battle in helping your clients achieve their goals. And it will be a **battle**! Many of your clients will have long established eating habits. Some of those habits will be completely contrary to achieving their goals. It is going to require you to have extensive knowledge on nutrition to accurately articulate what will help them toward their goals vs. what will hurt them from achieving their goals.

Not only will you be required to educate them on the basic nutrition concepts listed in the job description, but you must educate them on how to read labels. Manufacturers have found very creative ways to hide the amount of fat, sugar, calories and salt in their products. Your client’s cursory glance at a 20-ounce bottle of soda reveals 100 calories and 25 grams of sugar per serving. What they fail to realize is that when they consume the whole bottle, they are consuming 250 calories and 63 grams of sugar because the bottle is not one serving, it is 2 ½ servings! Most of your clients will have no idea how many calories they consume a day and how many they expend. Recent research shows that the majority of people consume 40% more calories per day than they think they do, and expend 40% less calories than they think they do. This “self-delusion” is a major cause of the obesity epidemic plaguing our great nation!

Fortunately, Section Six: Nutrition Education is designed to help you, help your clients. This section will answer your basic questions, the same questions your clients will be asking you about nutrition. For more in-depth knowledge on nutrition, the IFPA offers several courses, including the IFPA Sports Nutrition Certification, the IFPA Advanced Sports Nutrition Certification, and the IFPA Weight Management Instructor Certification.

Section Seven: The Business of Personal Fitness Training

This is the last, but certainly not the least section of this manual and course. The IFPA promised you a practical manual, course and program, and having business KSAs is a requirement for your success as a personal fitness trainer. You can become a world-class personal fitness trainer, but if you don’t know how to sell or market yourself and your programs, you are never going to make any money at it. The IFPA would be doing you a great disservice if we did not include the KSAs you need to build a successful business. You will not be tested on the material in this section because the KSAs in Section 7 are not critical to the safety and effectiveness of conducting personal fitness training sessions, but you must learn these KSAs in order to be successful as a personal fitness trainer.

The IFPA is often ridiculed by our competitors for adding this section, and they have called us “mercenary” and accused us of being “all about sales.” You should not confuse jealous accusations of being **mercenary**, with career success & **practicality**! The IFPA decided to add this section after seeing our highly trained, educated and dedicated IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainers losing business to the highly questionable, often incompetent and unethical, so-called “trainers” who were highly skilled salesmen. Despite a high degree of skill in sales, they lacked skill in personal fitness training. This section was added to prepare and train IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainers to compete with and win over the incompetent “sales” trainer.

The seven sections in this manual are designed with one purpose in mind; to make you a world-class personal fitness trainer, a true “master of your craft.” In the work that is to come, you will learn the KSAs required to become a leader in the fitness industry. You may be feeling a bit daunted by the work before you. Perhaps you are feeling overwhelmed. You may have had

a great deal of success as an athlete and feel confident about your physical abilities, but feel less confident about your academic abilities to succeed in this course. It might help you to know that research states that only 8% of the people who buy a book get through the first chapter! The 92% of the people who fail to read the book lack the discipline to follow through. It might help you to know that estimates are that less than 1% of the people who set a goal for themselves actually achieve that goal. The 99% who fail to achieve their goals lack the discipline to follow through.

“Research in Motivational Psychology” provides insight into the techniques on how achievers develop the perseverance to achieve their goals. It has absolutely nothing to do with their intelligence, wealth, status, looks, neighborhood or any other “luck factors”. Smart or dumb, beautiful or ugly, skinny or fat, rich or poor, none of those qualities have anything to do with achieving a goal. Achieving a goal has everything to do with discipline and commitment. If you have achieved an athletic or physical goal, you can become an IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer. Even if you have not ever achieved anything in your life before, you can become an IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer. Follow the steps below and you will achieve.

Step One: Think! What do you really, truly want out of life? Focus! Do you want money and financial independence? Why? Concentrate! What does financial independence mean to you? What will it bring? What does it look like? . . . feel like? Do you want to make a difference in your life? Do you want to help others? . . . save others? Think long and hard about what you want and why.

Step Two: Write it down and keep writing till you get all your goals, wants, and desires on paper.

Step Three: Summarize your thoughts into a clear, concise **Goal Statement**. You want it clear and concise, but make sure it conveys your heartfelt feelings towards your goals. You will carry this goal statement with you and review it a minimum of 6 times per day. At the bottom of the goal statement you will have the phrase: I will achieve this goal by: _____. Next to the date you select, you will sign your signature as your commitment to achieving your goal by the date you set. Make sure you set a realistic date for your goal. Example: I will complete preparation for & pass the IFPA Certification Exam by 12/22/2007. Dr James T. Bell

Step Four: Set short term, medium term and long term goals. You can even get more specific by setting different and specific goals for different aspects of your life; i.e.: professional, physical, mental, emotional, artistic, academic, social and/or spiritual.

Step Five: Start a Goal Board. Begin to clip pictures, articles, phrases, quotes, etc. that depict in your mind, your goals and you achieving your goals. For example, you want to get yourself in top-top shape, you might look for fitness models whose shape and physique you want to achieve. Find the model, cut out the picture and glue it to your goal board. You can also post the pictures in other places you will view often throughout the day. The refrigerator, bathroom mirror, office board, etc.

Step Six: Review your goal statement a minimum of 6 times a day and review all your goals at least once a day, preferably first thing in the morning and before you go to sleep at night.

Step Seven: Begin to Journal. Keep a journal of what you do or don't do to help keep you moving toward your goals. Or what you do or don't do to move you away from achieving your goals. Resolve each night to improve your performance toward your goals and reduce the distractions.

The achievement process outlined above is for your use now, but in the future, you will find it highly effective in helping your clients to achieve their goals. The better you get at using the process, the better prepared you will be to teach it to your clients.

Everything you learn in the course of this IFPA personal fitness trainer program is designed to make you a world-class personal fitness trainer, but you will learn that many of the lessons you learn here can be applied to numerous aspects of your life. The personal characteristics you need to be “Number One” as a personal fitness trainer are the same personal characteristics you need to be “Number One” as a parent, child, sibling, employee, employer, spouse, friend, professional, entrepreneur or virtually any other goal you wish to attain. There is a great speech made by Vince Lombardi, who some argue was the greatest football coach of all time. Though the speech was made concerning the sport of football, the title, “What It Takes to Be Number One” can be said about every endeavor you embark upon, including becoming an IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer.

“What It Takes To Be Number One”

“Winning is not a sometime thing; it’s an all time thing. You don’t win once in a while; you don’t do things right once in a while; you do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing. I have finished second twice in my time at Green Bay, and I don’t ever want to finish second again. There is a second place bowl game, but it is a game for losers played by losers. It is and always has been an American zeal to be first in anything we do, and to win, and to win, and to win. Every time a football player goes to ply his trade he’s got to play from the ground up - from the soles of his feet right up to his head. Every inch of him has to play. Some guys play with their heads. That’s O.K. you’ve got to be smart to be number one in any business. But more importantly, you’ve got to play with your heart, with every fiber of your body. If you’re lucky enough to find a guy with a lot of head and a lot of heart, he’s never going to come off the field second. Running a football team is no different than running any other kind of organization - an army, a political party or a business. The principles are the same. The object is to win - to beat the other guy. Maybe that sounds hard or cruel. I don’t think it is.

It is a reality of life that men are competitive and the most competitive games draw the most competitive men. That’s why they are there - to compete. To know the rules and objectives when they get in the game. The object is to win fairly, squarely, “by the rules - but to win.

And in truth, I’ve never known a man worth his salt who in the long run, deep down in his heart, didn’t appreciate the grind, the discipline. There is something in good men that really yearns for discipline and the harsh reality of head to head combat.

I don’t say these things because I believe in the “brute” nature of man or that men must be brutalized to be combative. I believe in God, and I believe in human decency. But I firmly believe that any man’s finest hour - his greatest fulfillment to all he holds dear - is that moment when he has to work his heart out in a good cause and he’s exhausted on the field of battle - victorious.”

Coach Lombardi so eloquently describes precisely what it takes to be number one in any career or endeavor. Those same seeds of greatness that were within the football players he coached are within you now. And while you may never have the opportunity to look into a camera with millions of fans watching you walk off the field following a Super Bowl victory and tell them, “I’m going to Disney Land,” you may have an opportunity for something much, much richer. You cannot imagine the thrill you will receive each time one of your clients walks up to you and tells you, sometimes with tears in their eyes, “Thank you so much, you saved my life.”

You may never get a Super Bowl ring or your picture on a box of Wheaties, but you will never forget the look of gratitude in a client’s face when they tell you how much you did for them. Most people can’t tell you who made the winning play during a Super Bowl ten years ago, but your clients will never forget the trainer that took 60 pounds of fat off their body and saved them from a early death due to heart disease.

If you admire the time, effort, energy, discipline, courage and perseverance an athlete puts in to become number one, then how much more should you admire the time, effort, energy, discipline, courage and perseverance you are to put in to become number one?

Which is more valuable—an individual, such as yourself, who dedicates themselves to a profession to improve people’s lives, perhaps SAVE people’s lives, or a football player? Which is more valuable to the person whose life has been saved by the dedicated personal fitness trainer? Which is more valuable to the person’s children, spouse, family and friends whose life has been saved by the dedicated personal fitness trainer? Complete this manual! Complete this course! Become an IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer and you will find out the answers to those questions—firsthand!