

## Vol 4, 2004 CEC ARTICLE

### Overview of Aquatic Personal Training

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There are several objectives in being a Personal Trainer. Some are related to the client's needs and wants, some are related to the trainer's obligation to consideration the client's well-being beyond the needs and wants of the client, and some are related to the legal system in our country.

#### Client-Based Objectives

- To identify the goals the client wishes to achieve.
- To design a program to meet the client's goals.
- To design a program that incorporates the client's lifestyle.
- To design a program that considers the client's personality.
- To track and record to the progress to those goals.

#### Trainer Objectives

- To improve the client's quality of life.
- To find a program the client can eventually maintain on their own.
- To keep total wellness and muscular balance in mind with the client's goals.
- To help the client define their goals based on knowledge.

#### Legal Objectives

- To assess the client's health and physical limitations.
- To maintain records and logs.
- To maintain confidentiality.
- To clearly state risks.
- To obtain waivers, releases, and background information.
- To only perform tasks you have the credentials/certifications to perform.

### Considerations of Becoming a Personal Trainer

There are several key differences between being a group fitness instructor and a personal trainer. Careful thought should be given to becoming a personal trainer. There are more risks associated with being a personal trainer. In addition, higher levels of commitment, higher levels of communication, higher level of educations, and an understanding of business skills are required.

#### Risks:

- You have to carry your own liability insurance.
- You are responsible for obtaining waivers, releases, and histories.
- You are responsible for maintaining confidentiality.
- You are responsible for maintaining accurate and complete records.

#### Communication:

Effective communications with clients  
Effective communications with facility personnel  
Effective communications with health professionals and other fitness professionals.

Effective communications with the families of clients  
Commitments:

- To do what is best for your client mentally, physically, and financially.
- To research what is best for the client.
- To maintain professional standards.
- To know your own limitations

Education:

- To continually broaden your knowledge base for special populations
- To stay up-to-date with the industry standards.

Business:

- To market yourself effectively.
- To understand self-employment and contractor tax laws.
- To properly track your costs and income.

It is very important to evaluate yourself, your skills, and your weaknesses before starting a personal training business.

## Knowing Your Limitations

The most important thing to remember in being a personal trainer is knowing your own limitations. Never assume that because you have a certification that you can work with any client. You have to know when the client's needs are outside your knowledge base and when to refer them to someone else. You also have to know when to end a program with a client if the client is not following your recommendations and is putting themselves at risk. This also puts you at risk if they injury themselves. You have to know when your personality types will cause conflict. You have to know when to seek advise from health care professionals. Never be afraid to ask other trainers, doctors, or organizations for information, help, or recommendations. It is a great way to learn.

## A Never-Ending Path of Learning

Education, certifications, knowledge, information, and research...it will never end. New forms of training, new medical research, and new equipment will require continual education. As you keep learning, more and more of the pieces will come together and similarities in methodologies and types of exercise will become more apparent. The reasons for recommendations and cautions will become clearer.

## Networking

Because of the nature of personal training, you need to have a network of doctors, nutritionists, other trainers, facility owners, instructors, etc. Having a network of industry related contacts will help you not only better care for you clients, but will generate clients as well. Remember you need to know when to refer clients to consult with other professionals. Also, if you are not a good match for a client and refer him to another trainer, other trainers could refer people to you thus broadening you ability to attract clients and have satisfied customers.

## What are the Client's Goals?

One of the first parts of an interview with a prospective client is determining their goals.

Determine the following information:

- A. What is the client primary goal? Weight loss, appearance improvement, flexibility improvement, functional strength, performance of activities of daily living, improving quality of life, finding a program they can stick to, training for a specific sport....
2. Is there a timetable? Do they want to achieve their goals in a reasonable amount of time? Someone who wants to drop 20 lb in 2 weeks for a wedding is not reasonable.
3. Why do they have this goal? Their own desire, a doctor's recommendation, a bet, a family member's insistence....
4. Are there any other secondary goals?

## What are the Client's Physical Limitations?

Determine with health and medical history forms, physician's releases, and current medical conditions (injuries, illnesses, diets, medications...) if the client can attain their goal or should the goal be modified. Look at as many factors that could affect their progress as possible. Record these items. Also determine the risk factors associated with the client to see if you need further releases and/or information from their physician, you should refer the client to someone else, or the client made need a fitness evaluation from doctor rather than from you.

## What are the Limitations of the Client's Lifestyle?

Determine the following information:

- What is the client's normal working/family schedule?
- What is the amount of money they are willing to spend on a trainer, equipment, day care or membership fees?
- How much time are they willing to commit per week?
- How much time per session?
- What times and days are the best for them to train?
- How far are they willing to travel?

Are there other family members schedules you need to consider?

Again evaluate if you can meet the clients goals given the limitations of the client's lifestyle.

## What are the Client's Likes and Dislikes?

Determine the following:

- Does the client like to workout with groups, on their own, or with a partner?
- Do they prefer to work out at home or in a facility?
- Do they like a set schedule or more freedom?
- Do they prefer more structure or more creativity?
- Will they do certain activities on their own or do you need to be there with them?
- Do they like to workout with or without music?

This information will help you design a program the client will enjoy and be more likely to incorporate permanently into their life.

## Do your Personalities Match?

Never believe that you can or should be able to work with anyone. The client should be willing to listen to your advice and feel confident that you are doing what is best for them. Never put yourself at risk working with a difficult client.

Determine the following:

- Do you feel the client will listen to you advice?
- Do you feel the client respects you and your training?
- Does the client have personality traits that make it difficult for you to work with them?
- Does the client undermine his own training?
- Does the client listen to his/her doctor's advice?
- Is the client confrontational or constantly questioning your methods?

Evaluate if you are a good match for the client, if the client could be a liability risk, and if you can communicate effectively with the client.

## Is the Client's Doctor Willing to be an Active Participant?

If the client's doctor is willing to be an active participant, this is the best case for the client. You have the background in the types of activities you are recommending for your client and how these actives use different muscle groups, use the cardiovascular system, use different energy systems, and use the joints. The doctor has more information on what the client should or should not be doing with a particular muscle group, joint, or use

of their cardiovascular system due to the client's medical condition. However, there are some issues that need to be considered when working with a doctor.

- A. Both of you need release of information forms from the client so you can exchange information freely without breaking the confidentiality oath.
2. Is the doctor willing to give you a consultation for free or will the client have to pay a fee each time you consult with the doctor.
3. How often is the doctor willing to give you a consultation?
4. Will the doctor want to have consultations with the client present?

### **CEC ARTICLE QUESTIONS VOL 4, 2004**

1. Identify which are client, trainer, and legal objectives.
  - Design a program that incorporates the client's lifestyle
  - Obtain waiver, releases, and background information
  - Keep total wellness and muscular balance in the program
  - Improve the quality of life
  - Track and record progress
2. List 4 risks of becoming a personal trainer
  
3. List 5 different people or groups you must communicate effectively with.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. T or F A good trainer can always find a way to work with any client.
5. T or F It is the client's responsibility to choose when the relationship will end.
6. T or F Networking can include other doctors, facility owners, trainers and instructors but rarely involves nutritionists.
7. List 4 points in determining the client's goals.

8. Should goals be modified based on physical limitations?

9. List 7 things to consider with the client's lifestyle.

10. Why is it important to determine the client's likes and dislikes?

11. Why is it important to determine if your personality matches that of the client?

12. List 4 important points in working with a doctor of a client.

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