

Attention Fitness trend watchers!!! There's a groundbreaking and creative new business model sweeping the personal trainer market, and it's called *Encore Personal Training*. Traditionally personal training used to mean working with only one client at a time. In contrast to the old, worn out method, partner and small-group training constitutes a viable business model and revenue stream. With Encore's unique circuit training program elite trainers can offer effective results for 1-3 partners in just 30 minutes, 3 times a week.

Encore introduced partner workouts first, and that soon evolved into small groups and outdoor group training sessions. These two services now make up over 95% of Encore business owners. Trainers and clients alike are reaping outstanding rewards from circuit partner training and outdoor boot camp training.

Trainers who attempt partner training on their own often find that program design and putting their plans into action can be challenging. Encore Personal Training is a licensing program that shows you how to qualify new clients, organize workouts, and use the scheduling and marketing secrets that Encore has developed to overcome potential challenges allowing you to build your business goals to astounding heights.

Discover the Encore 30 minute circuit model and the outdoor boot camp revolution. By becoming a licensed Encore Personal Trainer you will be able to use all of the teaching curriculum, forms, branding and collateral marketing pieces such as your own Encore website, brochures, business cards, before and after photos, personalized menus and education books for your clients. This business in a box is only available to trainers who have proven themselves with an 8 day workshop and exam in Las Vegas Nevada.

Benefits for ALL

Encore trainers who offer partner and small-group training say extend the benefits to everyone involved: the businesses themselves, the trainers and the clients they serve.

How Businesses Benefit

An Additional Revenue Stream: Trainers may think that partner and group training could take away from the exclusivity of private training revenues. It is a different client profile who likes the partner or small group sessions. Clients are interested in specific time slots and attracted to the high quality coaching and team accountability.

More Money: Solo independent business owners can significantly increase their hourly income and make work days shorter with more concentrated schedules. Monthly billing fosters accountability and ensures that the client pays for their investment similar to tuition, further motivating them to achieve their goals

More People Served: Many middle-aged and older adult clients think they need one-on-one training. However, they are usually willing to work towards doing a small-group session. When they qualify or graduate to partner training or boot camp, this allows them to achieve social reinforcement.

Increased Retention: Encore trainers are able to build member relationships faster and create lasting bonds with their clients. Volume training with monthly memberships has less of an impact on annual income. Losing money from session cancellations or taking a hit to your revenue from losing a one-on-one client is unfortunate yet these are common circumstances all one-on-one trainers experience. Encore trainers are less affected by attrition and turnover and can effectively obtain new clients at affordable prices.

How Trainers Benefit

Extra Money: Whether an individual trainer owns his own business or works for someone else, he can earn additional money through partner or small group training. Trainers definitely earn more per hour working with multiple clients, and it's important for them to do so. If trainers have 30 minutes with a group of 3, they earn 400% more than if they were to train one client for 1 hour who may cancel.

Time Efficiency: If you train multiple clients in a single home visit or gym there's definitely a cost savings in travel time. When the time and expenses related to travel are calculated, it's been proven to be more profitable to offer partner training & boot camps. Training groups of clients at home another growing trend.

More Potential Clients: At first partner or small group training may be a graduation or stepping stone from one-on-one style training for an individual. Some clients feel safer in private sessions than in small groups. Once the trainer builds up their confidence and coordination and the client is introduced to the same circuit style of training, they soon recognize the benefits of partner training. Clients appreciate the flexibility Encore training offers for rescheduling, availability and affordability. Transitioning traditional one-on-one clients into 30 minute sessions is a learned process that Encore helps trainers achieve.

Elite Trainers:

Encore creates an environment where trainers can maintain coach-client professionalism. A great teacher is priceless. Setting up a business model that teaches independence and social reinforcement is important to being an excellent performance coach and not just a paid friend, as an example of what tends to happen in some one-on-one training relationships.

How Clients Benefit

Less Money: Multiple-client training can provide a more cost-effective service for the clients, as it costs less per person than one-one-one training. Encore offers partner and small-group training in an attempt to assist a greater number of clients without the barrier of cost.

More Support: Some clients are quite competitive, and working out with like-minded partners pushes them that much harder. For others, it works the opposite way. Some ladies feel isolated and are harder on themselves. When they exercise with friends, they realize that everyone has different strengths and weaknesses. All clients like the idea of getting to know others in the community and making friendships, encouraging team camaraderie and accountability.

Business Structure

Many people who network after sessions become friends as well as business associates. How do trainers establish client partnerships or small groups? Here are some of the methods used:

Defining Set Times and Structure: Circuit sessions run 30 minutes, 3 days a week with a 3 day per week body part split for 1 month centered on choreographed routines. The timing, tempo and schedule design changes so that the client continues to be challenged. Boot Camps are 60 minutes, 5 days a week for 6 week increments with 1-2 weeks off between evolutions.

Creating Small Groups, Depending on Need: Clients want to work out at specific times; being available and having a client that knows two or three other people interested in the program is great only if you can accommodate the requested time slot. The Encore system can accommodate new business at the most desired times. Traditional one-on-one training leaves limited time to reschedule clients or focus on fitness evaluations and meeting new clients.

No Session Contacts: Encore offers clients a flexible arrangement as far as purchasing reservations. Clients buy monthly personal training, partner circuit training reservations, or 6 week boot camp evolutions. Each time they have a session, we don't sign off. 1-3 clients buy the same contract at the same price for each partner who is training, and we offer drop-in sessions. If only one person shows up for the session, they are charged the same amount, similar to paying rent or tuition. This means clients make the sessions, reschedule in advance, or forfeit the payment. When clients are able to more easily reschedule or decide to miss workout, this puts pressure on the trainer to accommodate these changes. With the Encore program the client knows that they have committed to the sessions in advance, and will try harder to meet the expectations of the trainer, partners or Boot Camp team members.

Working Structures

How do trainers arrange exercises for partner or small-group training sessions? Here are some protocols that are utilized and taught by Encore.

Partner Exercises: Two clients work together, setting up timed drills or cardio goals that require participation and encouragement of each other to finish the required drill and exercise combo. Even after the session accountability is encouraged for specific homework assignments tailored to each clients current fitness level.

Supersets: In partner training, the clients “superset” between two different exercises throughout the routine. (e.g. perform a back exercise and a chest exercise). Or they alternate cardio interval and strength supersets. For examples, one client does a walk or a run, while the other 2 clients are on two exercises, performing 3-4 sets of 12-20 reps for each exercise. Then clients rotate between 3-4 stations.

- Groups perform two to ten exercises or stations that form giant supersets, depending on the size of the group or family.

Circuit Training: Person #1 does exercise A, then exercise B. Person #2 starts with exercise B, then goes on C , and would finish with exercise A.

Group Training: The format depends on the theme of the small group, plyometric training, sports conditioning, etc. One example is to do a 10-minute warm-up with 10 stations (2 minutes at each station twice).

All styles require a higher-level trainer because of the need to teach the client how to do the exercises correctly and trust the clients to follow the game plan. The trainer provides encouragement while cueing, checking weights, seat adjustment, form, spotting and timing. This style of teaching a template is preferred because the client can learn how to substitute an exercise if another member sits on the desired machine. It becomes the trainer’s job to vary the choreography, exercise, patterns, tempo, total time under tension, cardio and ab intervals that are integrated into every workout.

Exercise and Safety Concerns

While trainers cite the myriad benefits of partner or small-group sessions, they also note some of the challenges that must be overcome to ensure safe, successful training. People have to qualify for partner or boot camp training with an intense application, cardio test and proper form evaluation.

Dealing with equipment challenges: Depending on what type of exercises you use with your group, you need to consider the amount of equipment you have at your site. This can be a factor no matter where you train. Encore trainers should be creative with even limited equipment. Having a wide variety of equipment is not necessary. Encore independent trainers must follow the rules of the gym and always share machines with every trainer and member that requests to work in. Encore studios should have short leases on equipment and Encore Boot Camp instructors should make sure that the client brings their own equipment to the park or school.

Keeping Different Levels of Ability Motivated: Different Levels are an inherent issue with groups. That is one of the reasons you need to be an experienced trainer to work with small groups.

Careful exercise selection and quick modifications allow clients to compete with themselves rather than against the group. We also explain to clients how to make exercise harder, and urge them to proceed at their own pace.

Handling Differing Physical Limitations: What if one client has bad knees and can't squat or lunge and the second has disk problems in her back? First things first, partners will be matched according to skill, coordination and current level of fitness and minor variations of current conditioning are not a problem if everyone can follow directions and cueing. One-on-one training may be required in a situation like this however it's possible to work them together using three variations of a similar base routine. #1 water aerobics on leg day or trainer assisted cardio conditioning on machines. Option #2 regular squat sled machine with very light weight or ball against the wall for support with modified range of motion or static wall sits. The client with bad knees could even perform a squat lying supine on the ball and practices uses a trainer assisted chair style squat. No axial loading or plyometrics for this crew but leg extensions, leg curls, corrective exercises, stretches, abs and low back are all appropriate for circuit training These situations require advanced planning, quick changes to program design in case it's a last minute problem and sharp coaching skills that are taught to certified Encore trainers. At a certain level of training these challenges are interesting, not a burden and problem solving while multi-tasking is welcomed by elite trainers.

Keeping an Eye on the Clients: When working with two or more clients you may not be able to monitor each individual as closely as you would if you were working with a single client. Therefore, it is vital that you don't cut any corners when it comes to screening. Make sure clients fill out all necessary forms *before* they come to their first session. Encore trainers may find it necessary to spend extra time with some clients or work with clients one-on-one until they the client gets the confidence to join partner training.

In a one-on-one teaching environment always teach correct posture and stretches. Scheduling the partner client temporarily as a one-on-one makes good business sense and retention affordability sense to the client so that you can eventually fill up the time slot or move the client to a different timeslot when they qualify.

Require clients to complete a comprehensive fitness evaluation with you on their own before they do any partner training. That way, your expertise can sort out any issues with the program, determine the appropriate schedule and start to know each client while you review their application. These individual sessions also familiarize the client with the circuit style, so they can start working independently with the other partner.

Business Challenges

When two or more clients train together, it is important to devise strategies for handling the following business-related concerns:

Dealing with No Shows: On this point, it is crucial to have a well-defined policy and to communicate it to the clients.

Cancellation by one or both clients is not the issue, because we make our policy clear in writing and during our initial meeting. If one client cannot make the sessions, we reschedule for a date that suits each of them. After the one month partner evolution or 6 week boot camp there is no rollover or credit.

Always charge small-group clients the full amount. It's advisable not to be flexible on this issue at any time unless the client notifies you in writing with a 2 week notice and requests that the time be put on hold for \$50.

Require that a partner and small group pay for their 4 to 6 week sessions *up front*. If partners miss a session, they don't get their money back. However, if clients need to miss a session and inform you in advance, be accommodating. The program weekly split is designed to allow someone to get all body parts in whether they come on any of the following weekly combinations: M,W,F; T,W,R; T,R,F; or M, R, F. It always works out where there is room to accommodate everyone. Some clients can even come 5 days a week.

Addressing Clients Who Talk Too Much: Some clients may chat more in a one-on-one setting and not pay enough attention to their workouts. Circuit training brings them back to focus on what you're trying to accomplish.

Meeting Unrealistic Client Expectations: Tell clients they have the option of going private if they want more attention or need personalized programming. In some cases the trainer can schedule a client with special needs at a time when it is not as busy for the partner rate, but it could restrict the schedule to those who eventually want the time slot.

It's a Win-Win Situation

If you can overcome the challenges associated with partner or small group training, this business model can provide valuable revenue streams for you and your business.

The combination of more professional coaching attention and a lower fee than they would pay for one-on-one training appeals to many people. The camaraderie for your clients – and for you as a trainer – can be extremely enjoyable. Couples and friends who practice this type of workout are very successful in meeting their goals. They cheer when one partner finally balances on one leg for 1 minute, clap when the other reaches a target of 20 perfect pushups, and high-five each other and the trainer at the end of each challenging workout.

Partners and Small Groups Training

How do you apply partner or small-group training in an exercise setting? Encore Personal Training & Boot Camps offer clients affordable options. Partner or group training has become quite popular because of this variable alone. It is important to offer more results tracking customer service and professional representation to keep the Encore brand elite. Nothing about the program should give the impression of being discounted or money oriented. Taking clients and forcing partner or boot camp options on them is not what Encore is about.

Why it's Beneficial for Business: Encore workouts have become so popular that it can be challenging to find enough qualified staff to meet the demand for group Encore sessions, but the increased pay with fewer hours and more steady clients at lower price points makes up the gap. Trainers desire a smarter not harder way of doing business.

Why it's Beneficial for Clients: Saving money is a prime reason clients like partner and group training, but it's not the only one. Clients get the benefit of being accountable, not only to themselves and to the trainer, but to the group. The camaraderie increases compliance and makes it more enjoyable in each training session. We believe that learning in a small group helps each client improve. We teach a basic foundation workout as part of the new client orientation. When a person works in a group they improve at a faster rate. They become more responsible for themselves.

Handling Space Constraints: There is enough space to train up to three clients at once without inconveniencing others who may be working out on their own. Never leave water or towels on machines. Teach the client the proper etiquette for working out and options to quickly change the structure of the workout if another trainer or member wants to use a machine in a gym environment

Workout Structure: In an Encore partner session, 1-3 participants do a different exercise at the same time. However, if they are at different levels, or one person has an injury or is not feeling up to par, he or she will use a different piece of equipment during some sections of the workout. As often as possible, clients are put into groups or in small-group sessions, the same exercises are taught to the group as a whole as well as modifications given to any participants who require modifications.

Differences in abilities: If trainers don't screen for skill levels, varying abilities can present a challenge during group sessions. Encore solves this potential problem by offering a unique test during the 1st session. Defined by skill, participants may be at a beginning, intermediate or advanced level of conditioning and strength when they start.

It isn't for everyone: Encore is more effectively taught in a one-on-one environment to new trainers. As trainers develop experience teaching and cueing they will be able to work with more than one client at a time. Training multiple people can be difficult unless the participants are at the intermediate level and a new person is watched carefully. Severe arthritis or prior stroke clients will definitely need one-on-one lessons. A good example of someone who should not be in group training is someone who lacks coordination skills while performing basic movements.

The Wave of the Future: Even with strong feelings that Encore partner or group sessions are not for everyone, we are definitely optimistic about its growth. We see this as the future of the Personal Training business – to be able to make Encore accessible to more people as it becomes more affordable. However, some individuals will always prefer the exclusivity of personal sessions and be able to afford them. Encore is about offering a higher level of convenience, efficiency and value to the client while improving the total quality and time management of the trainer.

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