



*HELPING FITPROS THRIVE*  
**12 STEPS TO BUILDING A FITNESS BUSINESS**



# BUILDING A FITNESS BUSINESS



## YOUR 12 STEPS

1. Your product
2. Your market
3. Your website
4. Your online marketing, social media and email campaigns
5. Your networking
6. Your off-line marketing
7. Your sales systems
8. Your management systems
9. Your wow
10. Your referral system
11. Your purpose
12. Your ongoing personal and business growth



WELCOME

**Darren Tebbenham**

*Enjoy this resource. Business can be fun and very very satisfying. And I would to help you build yours!*

*Darren Tebbenham*

## STEP 1. YOUR PRODUCT

**Getting qualified in only the start.** As you qualify you will need to work out WHAT it is you actually want to do and WHO you want to help. As we will explore later WHY you want to do this will fuel your success.

Think about what kind of products and services you could offer now. What are they in a nutshell? Speak about them out loud - do they sound exciting?

Or just talk about the sort of service you wish to provide. Imagine 5 people are listening to you right now and they are buying into what you do - what in essence do you do. Be clear.

Consider this -

What problems will buying your product solve? How are these different to the competition - be clear and be precise. And how will your product make people feel?

How have you packaged what you do - as discrete packages, as a monthly subscription or pay-as-you-go?

Why? Be clear and have good reason. How can people pay you? Make being paid as easy as possible. I reckon this is the first critical step. Make sure you have a GREAT product to begin with before thinking about

how to market it.

I usually start my teachings in business with establishing your "purpose", but I am ending with purpose in step 11. When you refine your purpose in step 11 run through all 12 steps again. But to kick these 12 steps off No 1 - have an absolutely outstanding product that you feel proud of and can't wait to get more people into it.

As you will have read above, this is not easy. Just rocking up to a health club hoping to get a job, get clients and be busy is both naive and not as rewarding as you might think. Taking the time to create something special - perhaps now, will help you THRIVE

Next up Your market!

## STEP 2. YOUR MARKET

Who are the people you serve? What do they most want to experience more of? What do they want less of? What have they tried before? What attitudes have they developed about what you do?

Start by answering these questions again out aloud. Listen to what you are saying – really start to tune in. Who else can they buy from? What prevents them from buying what they really need to fix their problems? What is their perception about what you do? What do they think of a “traditional” personal trainer? How do you need to position yourself to be more attractive to them - as a Fitness & Nutrition Coach, perhaps?

Let's keep asking questions but try and answer them as you go. Where can you best reach these people? What would they most want to hear? What would be their best possible scenario? How old are they? Where do they live? How much do they earn? Where do they shop? What brands do they buy? What do they do at the weekend? What is their occupation?

Just best guess - this is not an academic exercise to create a description for the sake of it but one to get inside their heads – like in the movie “What Women Want” with Mel Gibson.

What do they most WANT from a service like yours? What do they most NEED from a service like yours?

Big ones coming up - How do they feel right now? How do they want to feel instead?

The idea is to prepare for step 3 which is about your website and then 4 and 5, which are about your on and off line marketing.

Understanding the people your AMAZING product is designed for will aid this tremendously. Don't be average, be awesome!

## STEP 3. YOUR WEBSITE

Your 5 second check. Once built go to your website and check, is it clear what you do to whom and why?

Check, does it say hey (your market just reviewed in step 2) you are in the right place and I have something really exciting for you?

Is your website emotive enough? What is your actual attention grabber? Remember, emotion to grab attention, logic to close the deal. More on this in due course.

Check your images – are they well chosen. Are they needed? Or do they distract people's attention?

Is it crystal clear what to do next? What actually is your CTA (Call To Action)? Is it to phone you, click to download something? Is what to do clearly signposted?

Have you used a video – a great way for people to get to know, like and trust you - that words alone struggle to achieve? Is it 2 minutes long or less? Does it say in the first 15 seconds what they need to hear?

What are the key messages you wish to convey? Does the website do this? Simplify. Can you simplify? No matter how good you think it is, can you simplify? Now, have you got Google Analytics on

there to track what people do on your site, where they click from etc.? You just need to know if it is working. For most people the site is designed to create prospects to enter your sales system coming up in step 7.

Re-evaluate. Your logo should be small, your headline big. The content should be mostly about your clients not you, but the bit about how you help fix their problems should be big and bold and certain.

The objective is either for people to buy now or click so that you can further communicate with them? Does your website achieve this?

Next up – online marketing.

## STEP 4.

### YOUR ONLINE MARKETING

OK, website built, it's time to consider your online marketing including social media and email campaigns.

Well this is a minefield so I'll cut to the chase and hopefully make you think.

Do or no do, there is no try (Yoda). I think do this well or limit yourself to just doing what you can manage rather than trying to do too much poorly. Facebook and LinkedIn are probably the most obvious choices along with Instagram.

Social people will do this well just be careful to not confuse your personal "stuff" with your "business" focus.

Make sure you have a business page for your business - tell your "friends" too, what you are doing so they don't post inappropriately especially those who post things that might not sit well with prospective clients.

The idea is to create a social group for people to become a member where they receive genuine value as members (the value of a private group as a trial or support network for paying clients). This is normally via getting regular and consistent ideas, knowledge, help or even exchange with similar minded people (your other clients) for free.

For some, social media is definitely a good way to go, but it isn't for everyone and your strategy has to fit your personality, strength and purpose.

Of course there are many businesses throughout history and today that don't use social media as their primary marketing tool. So think first, plan and implement your personal plan, not just a copy of someone else's - would be my advice.

You can widen online marketing beyond social media. You may need to piggy back off other peoples' websites. I recommend NRPT (the National Register of Personal Trainers) and local businesses you can partner with. You, of course, can pay per click on Facebook (a great way to gain prospects without the time required to "be more social"), and Google Adwords to direct traffic to your site - but first make sure your website converts well (step 3).

Once someone does click, you need to communicate with them. Most people have 1-3 auto-responders (automatically sending emails) so that once someone shows an interest in what you do they will receive a few emails to reinforce your brand, your message and your attempt to be liked and trusted by your prospect.

Thereafter you can create a regular system of weekly emails and eNewsletters (more help here coming shortly) to help them feel part of your business.

Again I think unless you have an automated business offer i.e. say a DVD to sell or a fitness course made up of pre-recorded videos that once subscribed to someone has access to, YOU are probably mostly delivering your product, enjoying being a PT.

So with regards social media and online marketing I think the simpler the better, otherwise you could spend half your life posting.

That said you could do this perhaps 1 hour a week and enjoy just writing during this time, scheduling your content thereafter. And maybe just write what you think (be you) based on your growing experience.

You can also create online webinars or Google hangouts to create an education-based marketing approach. Especially if you feel your market needs to better understand how they can find the solutions they need to fix their problems to

stop them simply picking a cheaper option than what you provide – giving your prospects good quality info will help.

You can achieve this via a video series too. This also builds authority. Note Robert Cialdini's 6 pillars of influence: reciprocity, authority, scarcity, likability, consistency and social proof. Authority is really important - you must stand out.

So far we have for the online part of our strategy - websites, social media, links from other websites, pay per click FB and Google adwords, online webinars and videos to teach prospects about fitness and nutrition and motivation.

Oh and of course a blog too builds such authority, helping offer free good quality info so that when prospects are ready to buy, they choose you as their preferred provider in which they already have confidence based on your messaging.

Next step your networking.

## STEP 5. YOUR NETWORKING

Who can you be in regular contact with that would serve your business? What business network groups could you join? Who would be worth getting to know? How can you get yourself in front of the right people? What seminars could you offer to attract others to your business?

The reality is people buy from people. Therefore, there is tremendous logic behind the notion get off-line and in front of people.

Use online activity to increase awareness about what you do, but create face-to-face seminars, trial taster weeks, complimentary sessions, strategy sessions, community events, open days, anything really.

You could conduct fitness testing in shopping precincts or businesses or indeed wherever your prospects hang out (remember step 2). This could be at sports events, wedding fares, who knows what else. But the more people who have contact with you the better, especially if you have something to say.

You don't always have to sell, you have to become the person people think of when they think fitness (or whatever your niche is) and want to buy. Combine off and on line marketing. When you do meet people

at business networking events exchange business cards. Talk about your business passionately, get to know them better and what they do.

Build relationships. But then follow up via email. Send them your latest newsletter. Make sure they are in your prospecting system somewhere.

If you visit hairdressers and alike stay and chat, get your hair cut....don't just leave flyers or business cards.

Get to know people and build such relationships. Social media can still kick in. When a "friend" of the hairdressers or business contact you meet gets asked do you know a good PT in their social media - you will be the first and maybe only name they think of. So they post your web address, Facebook address and so the word spreads.

Next-up – off-line marketing (traditional advertising).



## STEP 6. YOUR OFF-LINE MARKETING

What headlines and messages would you have in posters or flyers? What news do you have for a press release? What journalist could you target? What local radio stations could be interested in your news or set of messages for their listeners?

What messages could you release over 12 months? What is your version of a Christmas promotion, a get fit for summer campaign, an Easter special, a mother's day promotion, a father's day equivalent...you get the idea.

What business cards? What job title? Are you a Personal Trainer? Are you a new mum's fitness coach? Are you a weight loss specialist? Are you a functional fitness expert?

Car branding? Well it works. It means everywhere you go you are a moving billboard.

What about testimonials. Written testimonials, video testimonials and even audio testimonials describing their experience. Try and gain reference to how they were feeling before they started. This will resonate with others currently feeling the same. Of course, include how they found the program and how they feel now as a consequence. You may like to also encourage them to explain why they chose you over your com-

petition.

You can also include featured success stories in your advertising. These are interesting to read. You could put them in a folder and present them formally at a complimentary sessions as part of your sales system coming up next.

Don't jump into flyers and posters - consider your messages, headlines and CTAs first but don't dismiss them either. Focus them on a specific promotion or event rather than your business generally.

Have a newsletter. Present wherever you can - get out from behind your desk and meet people as much as you can. Create a run/walk club, free if needs be, to put yourself in front of the right people, now use posters or flyers to promote this....

Next up - your sales.

## STEP 7. YOUR SALES

What should prospects do to enquire? Then what happens? Then what happens? Then what happens?

Have a system!

How do you present your pricing? On your site, in a strategy (complimentary) session? Using presentation materials, verbally, over the phone?

Do you use a strategy call at all? Do you offer a complimentary PT session to sell? Do you have a free trial? A week, a fortnight? Do you offer a guarantee?

What is your close? What questions do you ask? What comebacks do you use when someone says it's too expensive or not at the moment? How do you follow up on old enquiries?

When you do make a sale what happens next? Then what? Then what?

Have a system.

Of course you also need to track your income, pay your taxes and make good profit after expenses – have a client management system that assists you.

We will teach ALL this on course.

### RED BRIAN / GREEN BRAIN SALES

Green brain sales relates to emotion. People buy emotionally. So avoid asking fact-gathering, logical, sensible questions to begin with. Save these for later.

Rather, ask about how they feel, what most frustrates them and how they would like to experience life instead.

Amplify these emotions asking just how good would this be, not only for them, but perhaps for significant others in their lives. Ask about the detail as to what has stopped them before. Ask what if they just can't find a solution, how bad does it get?

We need to fuel change. Pain and Pleasure are our tools. When we associate pain with not taking action and pleasure with taking action (rather than the opposite), we are in green brain sales. And our clients makes an unconscious emotional decision to buy from us. You now just need red brain agreement.

Now for the detail. How many sessions they get, or what exercises they will do, or how you will email them to keep them on track or how much it costs or what discount you have or what days you can book them in, are all red brain questions – logical non-emotive and not good until the end. But now the sale

has been emotionally made, sure close with closed questions and red brain questioning. Talk about the detail together, involve them....and ask for the sale.

Try some yes-sets first. Yes question one – From what we have discussed today do you think you are ready to begin to make some changes in your life? [easy yes].

Yes question two - OK and again based on what we have been talking through together would you like me to help you to make sure you achieve what you want this time and prevent you from falling short as you told me has happened in the past? [a yes here is good and leads to yes question three].

Now with two yes answers already in the bag, yes three is easier. Yes question three – Fantastic, well shall we get you book in now for your first session so that we have a definite start date for you? We can then sort out payment and look forward to working together to make sure you succeed? [yes]. You get the idea.

Next up management.

## STEP 8.

### YOUR MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

What KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) do you track each week/month? If none really, then tracking a few key measures could help, like how many new clients are from referral or how many new enquiries from your social media campaigns do you create. Or what is your monthly total number of 1-on-1 versus small group PT hours or ½hr versus 1hr sessions. Or indeed what income are you generating and how is it improving, or not?

Enquiry management – what is your system for managing older enquiries (follow-up)? What do they get and how often? Do you have a newsletter to send out? Could you benefit from creating one?

Financials – are you on top of your numbers? Do you have planned price increases? Do you have a cancellation policy? Do you enforce it? Do you remind people of it? Is it displayed?

How would you rate your overall client management? If you used a scale from 1-100 where would you put it? If not 100% what would you have to do to increase it by a few points? If 100 then you need to take a lie detection test!

How do you / could you keep better client notes? Could you improve things a little?

What about client feedback? How often do you get formal feedback?

Scheduling – how do you schedule, could you improve it?

Have you read *The e-Myth* recently? Is it worth a read or re-read? [a great book for new business owners like ourselves]

When you can systemise and even automate what you can, you are freer to do what you love most, can grow and enjoy owning a business that works.

Next up - your wow!

## STEP 9. YOUR WOW

How to make sure your clients say wow, every time! This is the name of the game.

How do you constantly make your product better? What do you want people to say about your business? What priority in terms of time do you give wow management?

Remember, wow exists in the gap between what a client expects and what they receive. So if you promise a lot, give more.

Check in with some of these - do you have an amazing welcome pack when someone signs up? Do you from time to time send a thank you card to longer standing clients just acknowledging their continued business? Could you create formal gift certificates to offer special efforts? Could you feature clients in your newsletter or maybe create an achievement board or award in your studio.

If you are a mobile PT can you give away a home-use Swiss Ball or a holiday workout for when they are away?

Could you skim my e-book 101 ways to enhance your PT business (free download contact me if not got a copy) and pick up a few ideas to implement.

The point is think about what your current

clients and prospects expect given the marketing you do. Consider any assumptions they may have and write them down. Now on a separate sheet of paper write down ways in which you can offer wow - going beyond what they expect.

Remember, if you deliver an excellent service and great training and you think your clients are expecting an excellent service and great training, this is customer satisfaction. I am talking wow.

It is what you will do over and above this to make then actually say wow that counts!

Then you need to think how can you or do you offer this wow relatively easily. That is find easy to replicate ways to offer this wow so you can systemise this in your business.

Again it can be as simple as adding a box on your health appraisal what is your favourite music then in session 1 download it and play it is their session.

Hope this helps.

Next up - your referral, your purpose and personal growth.

## STEP 10. YOUR REFERRAL

Of course there is natural referral. And this is your first focus. This comes hand in hand with step 9 your wow.

The more people who have a great experience with you the better, to spread the word. Therefore, find ways to constantly improve this component.

But then there is pro-active referral. What can you do to prompt and reinforce referral?

Well you can reward it. You can create a system whereby those who refer directly to you get a discount, a voucher or public acclaim (mention in your newsletter) or similar.

Maybe refer one and get X but refer 5 and get Y and even refer 10 and get Z.

You can include referral slips in your welcome pack, spare business cards in the pack too to encourage new clients to hand out and spread the word.

You can ask at point of sale for new clients to suggest others who might like to train with you. You can call new clients after one month to see how they are doing and then ask them about referral. You could email old clients periodically about referral You could

include your referral system in your monthly or weekly newsletter.

You could display your referral system on a white board in your studio or celebrate referral as it happens - thanking referring clients on Facebook publicly..

There are lots of things you could do. But what do you do or will you do?

Keep it simple. Be comfortable with it and be confident YOU created a great product and, of course, that your clients love you and WILL want to refer if given even the slightest encouragement to do so.

Next up PURPOSE [important]!

## STEP 10. YOUR PURPOSE

Now we started back in steps 1 and 2 talking about your product and your market.

We have walked through websites, online and off line marketing, referral and management, but by far the key to success is your purpose - why you do what you do!

So, why do you do what you do? What really drives you? What is the essence of your business?

Just want a gym job? Not enough I am afraid. Purpose is more than just not liking your current job or just wanting to work in fitness. We must fire things up a little. We need you firing on all cylinders as a leader in your community. You can have fears and apprehensions, baggage and your own challenges in life. You can and should be real, or authentically you. But, we need to channel your passion into a sense of purpose.

So, what is your vision for your business? How does your business serve you? Try answering these questions now. Your sense of purpose beyond what you do day to day will help you make key decisions. Your sense of purpose keeps you going and your sense of purpose communicates with others you are serious and intend to be around for the long term (very important in an industry that is, let's say transient).

This is deep stuff. And if you have this nailed, good on you! But if not this is the most serious work to do yet. This work will release you and stop you trying to find cheap marketing fixes to get more clients. Our industry is becoming over-marketed i.e. far too many marketing "gurus" and under-led, and without meaningful purpose, I doubt we can ever be truly happy; and yet with purpose it is the journey not the destination that creates happiness. Now there's something to think about.

To really make something of your career, you already know, takes great commitment.

Finding or refining your purpose also helps gain clarity about sacrifice. I often say - with success comes sacrifice. Knowing what sacrifice and being prepared to make sacrifices should be well aligned with your purpose.

By purpose I refer more about WHY you do what you do than what you do.

To finish this section - purpose is everything. It provides meaning to your life and therefore happiness and contentment about what you do because you know and align with why you do it. It takes out the urgency out of doing everything here and now and grounds you.

Clients are attracted to "centred" trainers who know why they do what they do and are passionate about it. Incidentally Positive Psychologist Professor Martin Seligman talks about how living with a sense of purpose creates authentic happiness.

Ask yourself the question, not what do your clients want or even who is your avatar, but what do you want, how do you want your life and business to be? Now make it that way :)

OK just one more step to go - Personal Growth & Development



## STEP 12.

### PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

So here we go the final step. First up. How are you developing your mind-set, your skill-set and your knowledge? How much time do you spend working IN your business? How much time do you spend working ON your business? Actually answer these questions out aloud right now.

But the thing is your mind is not set and your skills aren't set either. Far from it, these are variables in the equation.

When we dare to dream beyond our current capability, we are creating something special – and why settle for less. But with such dreams comes the responsibility of ongoing personal and professional development, of course.

Indeed, this is so for your clients too. Isn't it our role to expand and grow our clients' mind and skill set round health and fitness? Even in the case of a client who wants "to lose weight" isn't it true we try and help them expand their mind and skills around changing their Identity not just their body, helping them become that healthy and fit person who also loses the weight they wanted to lose AND became the person they wanted to become?

This step is, however, about YOU not them. It is about your commitment to personal de-

velopment and identifying ways to grow the person who is the personal trainer - you.

In an industry where the basic entry requirements are too low and where the requirements for success are very high, there is a mis-match.

Getting Level 3 registered is over-rated; growing You Ltd is not!

Have you thought recently who you could become? I mean really sat down and thought what are you really about?

Who are you, what do you want and how are you developing and growing as a wonderful human being?

Do you know your own strengths and are you building upon them? Have you read Marcus Buckingham's Go Put Your Strengths to Work?

Personal development isn't just about "going on courses" but can include reading, professional exchanges with other fit pros, self-reflection, keeping a personal journal, mentoring, coaching and so on.

As a business owner myself I don't believe you can take someone else's "blue-print for success" and then just install their blue-

print into your business.

The trick is to work with someone who will grow You Ltd and enable you to take control and become that successful entrepreneur. But please this is no different to the way you work with your clients. As their "coach" not just "trainer" you help them on a journey. This journey helps them become more aware of what they really want for their life. They grow with the program and weight loss occurs almost as a by-product, for the real work was in helping them become more accountable and deal with "stuff" that otherwise gets in the way of them achieving the results they desire.

I hope you find Live-Life resources helpful and enable you to free up your time to grow You Ltd some more...

Good luck.

