

# Introduction

In my opinion, the fitness industry offers one of the most rewarding career paths anyone could ever have. It provides a platform from which you have the opportunity to give back to your community in amazing ways: whether it's providing a father with the ability to 'keep up' for the first time when playing with his children, coaching a young up-and-coming sportsperson for selection to their first representative level team or just teaching a stay-at-home mum how to fall in love with her body again. The fact is that it doesn't matter what the scenario is because as a personal trainer you have the opportunity to play a critical role in changing someone's life for the better. From my own perspective, being a personal trainer has given me a deep feeling of satisfaction that I'm doing my part to create a happier and healthier society.

Rapidly increasing obesity rates and the associated medical conditions of this self-inflicted problem has meant that there is a growing need for more fitness professionals. In particular, in Western countries (but certainly not limited to these) there is an ever increasing call for convenience in people's lives. This has made us the laziest generation in the history of mankind. When

we look at young kids today, we see it's only going to get worse before it gets better, as the child obesity rate in many countries is skyrocketing.

Many governments are aware of this disturbing trend and have acted accordingly. In recent years, minimum entry standards required to become a fitness professional have been lowered to entice more people to enter the industry. Australia has amongst the highest standard levels worldwide, yet you can still obtain a Certificate 3 or 4 in Fitness in a few weeks by completing a series of assessments online, attending a weekend workshop and shadowing a personal trainer for 20 hours.

Between these relaxed entry standards and the rosy outlook that advertising messages about personal training portray, many people are conscious of the advantages of becoming involved in this fast-growing industry. Whether as a group fitness instructor, fitness instructor, personal trainer or otherwise, lots of people are attracted to the idea of this career. Not that I blame anyone for rushing to enter into the fitness industry. After all, how many professions allow you to focus as much time as you like on your own fitness training, work with highly energetic people all day (rather than sitting at a desk) while being a role model for others? There isn't too much to dislike about that!

At last count, there were over 26,000 fitness industry professionals in Australia. A report published by Fitness Australia in 2012<sup>1</sup> estimated that, by 2014, registered training offices around Australia would pump out a staggering 14,000+ fitness graduates (I believe this is actually a fairly conservative number). Naturally, this statement begs the obvious question – what happens to all of these new fitness graduates and where do they end up working? The short answer is that they exit the industry as fast as they come into it. Why does this occur? In my experience, for the most part it's because their course fails them. They graduate from fitness training courses very under-skilled in two key areas: business

proficiencies and functional anatomy. As a result, they don't have adequate business skills to establish themselves as sole-trading operators. Likewise, they don't properly learn the impact of exercises on the muscular system and so underestimate the outcome that certain exercises and training methodologies will have on their clients' musculoskeletal systems.

To compound this matter, students also enter the industry with a false assumption that 'pots of gold' await them due to growing obesity rates and an over inflated idea of what they think they will be able to charge for personal training services. This scenario is often created by the colleges but is also an industry perception with the wider community. Consequently, the majority of these students are destined for failure before they even step foot into the gym.

In order to prevent this cycle of failure continuing, I was motivated to share my knowledge of the fitness industry so that new graduates can succeed as personal trainers. This book represents the missing link between the information presented in a typical Certificate 4 course and what you need to learn in order to survive in business. Based on my Five 'P's of Highly Successful Personal Trainers process, this book provides you with a framework for what you need to know to achieve a profitable outcome in the industry. As a result, you will be in a good position to create a business structure that works and adopt training principles that consistently deliver outstanding results with clients. Whether you have only been in the industry for two months and have no clue as to where to start, or you have survived the first two years of business and are now seeking answers to make your personal training business sustainable, this book is perfect for you.

Containing a combination of the past 15 years of mistakes, trips and traps that I have experienced myself as a personal trainer or witnessed as a personal training manager, lecturer and athlete, this book offers a straightforward guide for both new graduates

and well-established fitness professionals. All of my experiences and industry expertise has been compiled for you to learn from so you have the best opportunity to succeed in what is one of the most fulfilling yet competitive careers.

This book has been developed around my proven framework, the Five 'P's of Highly Successful Personal Trainers process and is based on the five key areas (or pillars) personal trainers need to excel in, together with step-by-step procedures, handy hints and exercises designed to help open your mind to various possibilities. These five 'P's – profit, pre-screening, prehabilitation, performance and programming – form the cornerstone of personal training success. If you conscientiously devote yourself to up-skilling in these five key areas, then I can assure you that you'll gain all the tools you need to go as far as you want in the fitness industry, whether that involves building an empire or having a comfortable part-time business that brings in a typical full-time wage so you can focus on other areas of your life. At the very least, you'll achieve consistently amazing results with your clients, improved industry credibility and a client retention rate that is second to none!