



5 Top Group Exercise Frustrations and How You Can Avoid Them

Why Most Fitness Instructors are set up to fail....and 7 crucial steps you must implement to make sure that you are not one of them.

Hi, it's Linx here

I recently surveyed 100s of fitness instructors about their views on group exercise, including their aspirations and frustrations, and what they want from my web site at <http://fitnesstrainingdownloads.com> I then spent hours going through the responses and trying to make sense of them, together with the responses that I have received on my site.

I am really glad that I did it too, as I have really learnt a lot, and I must give a **MASSIVE THANKS** if you were one of the instructors that contributed to the survey, as the results were very enlightening.

It seems that there is some **good news and some not so good news**, and being the cheerful type of guy that I am I will start with the good news, talk about the not so good news and then discuss how I feel you can ensure that you are not one of the instructors who constantly come across these major frustrations

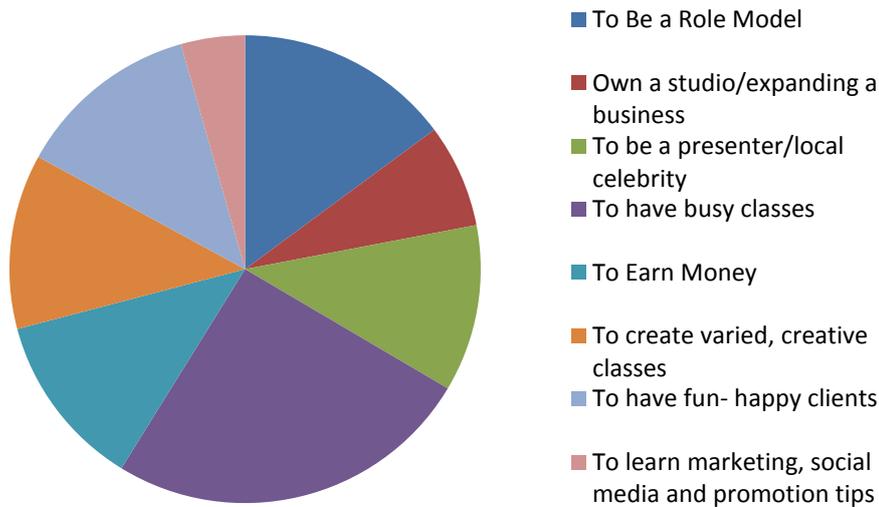
You see before I continue on with this report I need to ask a serious question,

“Are YOU where you want to be in your fitness career?”

I don't mean to be rude but this is really important for you to answer. The only way to really be successful in this industry is to **constantly review where you are at in terms of career development and constantly look to improve in ALL aspects of your fitness profession.**

The **good news** is that you seem to realise this to based on the responses to certain questions that I included in the survey. Here is just a selection of responses in terms of what instructors want in terms of their fitness instructing careers.

Main Group Exercise Aspirations

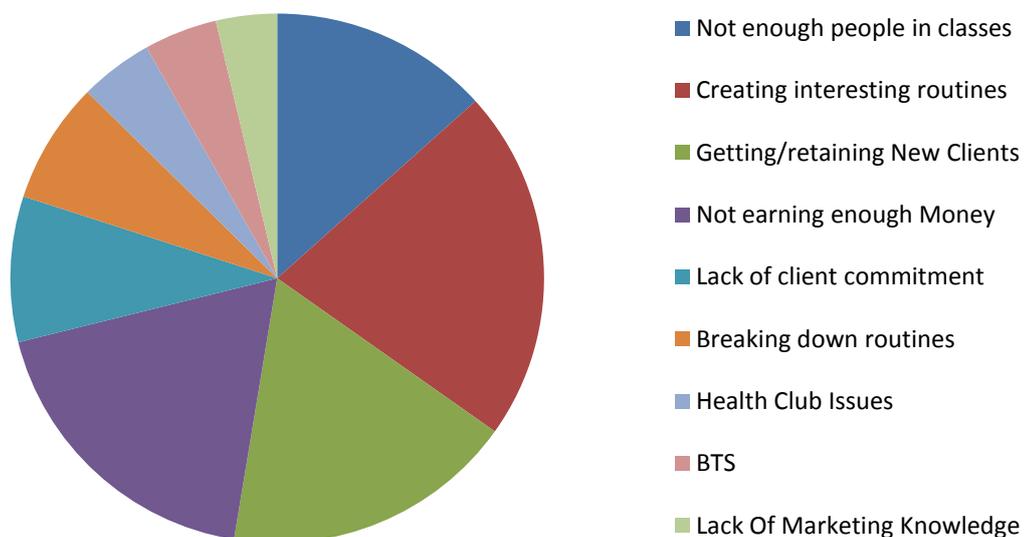


As you can see being a role model, earning money, having busy classes, creating effective and effective classes AND to have satisfied clients seem to top the order, which is no real surprise to me.

What does please me is that there is a large percentage of instructors that aspire to be their local celebrity, or be a presenter. This is good news as by being seen as the main "go to" person, it helps you position yourself as the expert, which then makes achieving the other aspirations a whole lot easier.

However their also seem to be many aspects about the industry that are frustrating instructors worldwide.

Main Frustrations Of Fitness Instructors



So we can see that the main frustrations of instructors seem to be;

1. Not earning enough money
2. Getting and retaining new clients
3. Creating interesting, and varied routines
4. Being able to breakdown choreography
5. Lack of client commitment, and maintaining client motivation

So it is clear that there is definitely a desire among some to improve skills, better themselves AND create a good service for class members, but certain frustrations seem to get in the way of them just doing their job to the best of their ability

So what can be done? How can instructors ensure success in an ever competitive market in which more and more people are becoming fitness instructors and group exercise leaders? Well again based on the responses to my survey, and my own experiences I feel that there are **7 main areas, where instructors are either hung up on, or need to develop to really have a successful and happy time in this industry.....**

7 Essential Tips for Group Exercise Instructors

As someone that is celebrating his 20th year teaching I really want to remove these barriers so that more and more of us who are passionate about the industry can succeed. So here are my **7 essential tips that all for group exercise instructors**

1. High Quality choreography teaching skills



Julie Cross commented this at my site when she observed, *“I do think there is a lack of skill in the industry. I encouraged someone to become an instructor and allowed her to ‘practice’ her warm-ups in my community classes. I must say how shocked I was at how poor her choreography and lack of understanding to beats/phrases was”*

Years ago more conventions regularly included hour and a half workshops on different aspects of improving teaching skills. This was welcomed by all of us as it provided relief from the masterclasses, but still gave plenty of opportunity to develop, or refine teaching skills. I definitely would not be the presenter that I am today if it were not from inspirational presenters such as Lexie Williams, Marcus Irwin, Karie Anderson, Jay Blahnick, Rebecca Small and Alex Rees to name a few. In fact I looked forward more to these workshop sessions than to the masterclasses, as I always felt that I could make up my own routines.

Now these workshops seem to be non existent at these same events as instructors seem more interested in the quick fix of finales and masterclasses rather than actually wanting to know the “how” and “why” behind the what. **But without knowing these critical elements instructors will find it difficult to know how to break down the latest blockbuster routine that they saw in Camber sands, which ends in frustration for clients, and ultimately them leaving your classes.**

Learning these skills takes time to practice and perfect, but the rewards are definitely worth it. I always say in my workshops that the, “fun is in the journey, not the destination” Some instructors I fear have forgotten this and are just focussing on the end result, and concentrating on the journey of the breakdown and making this as stress free as possible.

By taking this approach, as well as setting their students up for frustration they are setting themselves as instructors up for hours of stress and eventually dwindling numbers in their classes.

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2. Keeping up to date with the latest research



Studio coordinator Paul Thorne observes, *“Instructors really do need to take more ownership of their own education as well”* Which is the real key. I have witnessed a lot of instructors complaining that their classes are being cut, or that their numbers are dwindling, without being honest with themselves and self assessing how much they know about the latest research in the health and fitness field. **Without being up to date as an instructor you cannot give your clients true value for their investment in you.**

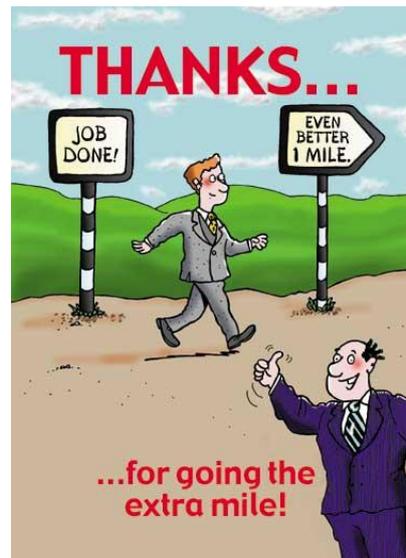
You should be trying to be aware of the latest pieces of exercise equipment so that if your members ask your opinion as a “fitness expert” you would feel confident to answer. Again I have seen too many instructors take the easy option, and try to just get loads and loads of choreography, without taking the time to take part in lectures and workshops to further their knowledge.

To have any longevity in the industry this needs to change. Unless you have hours and hours to spend online the easiest way to do this is to go to conferences. Fit Pro still has quality lectures and workshops, as does the International Fitness Showcase.

I know that these can be a bit pricey, but if you are self employed you can claim the cost back as a taxable expense. Also if you are still put of by the cost then you can work as a steward, where you “work” for half the event, but then can go to the rest of the convention for free. This was actually how I started and really did help me stay abreast of current research and also I got to find out at close hand what the top fitness professionals did to stay at the top of their game.

I understand that family commitments can be another reason that it is difficult to devote a whole weekend to furthering your training. But there are one day events and even online events where you can get up to date without leaving your home.

3. Going that extra mile –



One of the biggest mistakes instructors make is that they feel that they are “just” instructors; coming in, doing their class and then putting their music away to move onto to the next session.

The most successful instructors and presenters go that extra mile. They are the ones that provide class handouts to their members, giving them extra information that can help them achieve their fitness goals. They are the ones that organise trips to fitness events so that the members can be motivated and see group fitness in a completely different light. They are the ones that organise charity events so that they are seen as an industry leader in their local area. They are the ones that take their class participant’s details so that they can contact them away from the class to keep them informed of any events, news or anything to maintain and build a relationship with them.

For example wouldn’t it be great if instead of just teaching a conditioning class you provided a handout with a list of exercises, what muscles they work and how to perform them, so that if the class members could not come to class they could do them at home (I have included something that you can take away and use at the end of this report)

All of these things puts those instructors way ahead of others, and establishes them as an industry leader, and the go to person. It also builds and creates customer loyalty in a way that a mere 3 x 32 count routine can’t.

I know resources to do this can take a long time to prepare and deliver and they can be costly. But I do have a way to solve this problem for you. But more of that later.....

4. Learning from the best



Paul Thorne commented that, *“Rebecca Small did a fantastic session at the Multitrax convention a few years ago – 2X90min sessions, Part 1 on day one and Part 2 on day two... This meant that instructors could get some education and also still have plenty of time to attend masterclasses throughout the rest of the day”*

It is a well known fact that If you want to start a business the best thing to do is ask someone in business how they did it. **If you want to be successful follow the advice of successful people. Get around successful people.** This principle applies in the world of fitness instructing. I personally have always wanted to learn from the best, and observe how they taught and especially how they conducted their business. As I taught different classes, I had a different influence for step, aerobics, dance and business. This enabled me to develop each area of my fitness presenting career in a way that suited me and allowed me to be fortunate enough to achieve what I wanted to in presenting.

For group exercise instructors this is no different. Identify who you would feel is successful, and try to find out what they do, how they teach and how they conduct their business.

I appreciate that many of the presenters at the top of their field can seem difficult to get hold of and speak to because they are busy. Even at conventions presenters are usually going from one class to another, and so time is limited there as well.

Luckily for me many of the top presenters internationally are friends of mine, and I have, teamed up with many of them for my Fitness Training Academy to provide expert training in their chosen fields. But more of that later.....

5. Having an Online presence



Whether you like it or not, you need to have an online presence. The key thing in business is leveraging your time. The main idea behind this is that if you only teach 20 classes a week, then you are only allowing yourself 20 hours of income. However if you have an online website, where you offered:

- online coaching,
- sold fitness videos,
- fitness supplements
- allowed your class members to access your latest reports etc,

You are then making additional income on top of the classes that you teach.

I appreciate that this can be daunting to start, and traditionally websites have cost over £2000. **But would you be surprised to know that my site <http://fitnesstrainingdownloads.com> cost me less than £100?**

Also now that I am not presenting as much, I am earning as much, if not more from my online service, without travelling around the country, which is allowing me more time with my family. Happy days indeed!

You can arrange this too, and I am focussed in providing you with the tools to make this happen with the minimal amount of stress for you.

6. Looking at fitness instructing as a business NOT just teaching classes in a gym/health club!



So why have I got a picture of the Macdonald's slogan? Well think about the last time you went in there and ordered a quarter pounder with cheese meal. What were you asked? "do you want to go large with that" or, if you ordered just a burger, you are asked, "do you want fries with that?"

You see the point here is that these are ways of **getting more from your customers**, apart from the initial sale. I learnt this when I started presenting. I thought that my main role was to provide a great masterclass, get paid and then fly back home. Then I saw good friend and International presenter Claudio Melamed, earn MORE than his fee from the sales of music cds after his classes!

I bought this concept into the UK and started making my own choreography videos and DVDs, which was a way of getting more from the fitness conventions.

I feel that instructors HAVE to think of themselves as a business, even if you are part time, if you are to be successful and have full classes. For example **Julie Cross observes,** "Rarely do we see freestyle classes emblazoned down every wall in the reception area through the gyms and to the studio's" and **Rachel Maund continues** "The BTS machine is bloody good at marketing, with its global launches and the hype that goes with them, and that's been key to its world domination....."

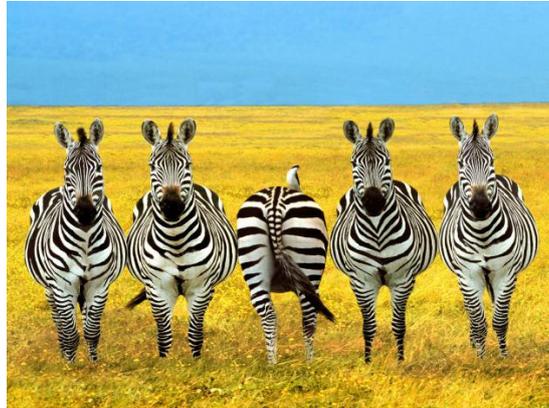
Now you may just be into local domination, but the key here is that if your local club is not promoting your classes, then you must take responsibility and promote them yourselves.

Also you should actively be trying to get your members details so that you can promote whatever promotion that you maybe trying to run. For example, **Kent Local instructor Michael Horton, purchased my Weight Management Bundle, set up his own weight management group, and earnt over £800 from his first course, AND from this acquired 3 new personal training clients.** If he had just stuck to his fitness instructing shifts he would not have taken this opportunity.

Again I know that this may seem daunting, but **I share a lot of business building tips in the Fitness Training Academy, as well as resources that you can take away and use for your businesses straight away.** On top of that I have case

studies of people that are doing great things in their community that can hopefully give you ideas of how you can develop your business locally for you.

7. Being different



I have left this one last, but it is definitely not least. I feel to be successful and to have any longevity in any business, let alone the fitness industry you need to aim to be different. This is what **Rachael** had to say about this

“A great class is all about the instructor and their ability to motivate. A poor instructor can even turn a BTS class into a poor experience”

I have always led my presenting career by trying to offer something different, or teach in a way that is different to a Rebecca Small, Steve Watson or whoever else. In that way I am not being compared to them, because as well as me not being able to be them, I am confident that they can't be me.

Unfortunately I saw a disappointing trend of new presenters coming into the industry, trying to be the next Karl Frew, Steve Watson or Ceri Hannan. The problem is that we already have 1 of those, so why would we need another? If you are comfortable in your own teaching ability, and the way that you interact with your group, then it is easy just being yourself, and you can be satisfied that no-one will be able to offer the services that you do in the way that you do it.

Try to be original so that people remember you for the services and customer care that you offer. The very first gym that I worked for made us call class members who had not shown up for a class for 2 weeks. We were the only gym that did that which made us stand out from the rest.

We also made a point of have a club night on a Friday, where we basically took over the local wine bar to mix with our members. There is no reason why you can't do the same with your classes. You can start out with a coffee after your classes, progress onto a night out, then a fitness weekend.

Trust me if you combine this with you being yourself you will so different from other local instructors that you will easily become the go to instructor.

At this point I want to go back to the original question.....

“Are YOU where you want to be in your fitness career?”



Are you a quick fix instructor that just teaches class after class, getting frustrated at low pay per hour, not getting enough people in their classes, getting bogged down with creating effective, enjoyable classes, and not being able to teach the routines that you create, **OR** are you going to strive to be a **Millennium instructor** that sees themselves as someone who;

1. Wants to be different
2. Sees themselves as a business
3. Wants to have an online presence
4. Wants to learn from the best
5. Wants to go that extra mile
6. Keeps up to date with the latest research AND
7. Continually attempts to improve their teaching skills?

Now I know that option 2 seems lot harder work (nothing in life comes easy), but it is FAR more rewarding, knowing that you are looking to improve all of these areas of your business.

Judging from my survey there are plenty of you out there that want to be a Millenium instructor, but may not feel that you have the time, money or know how to devote to doing this.

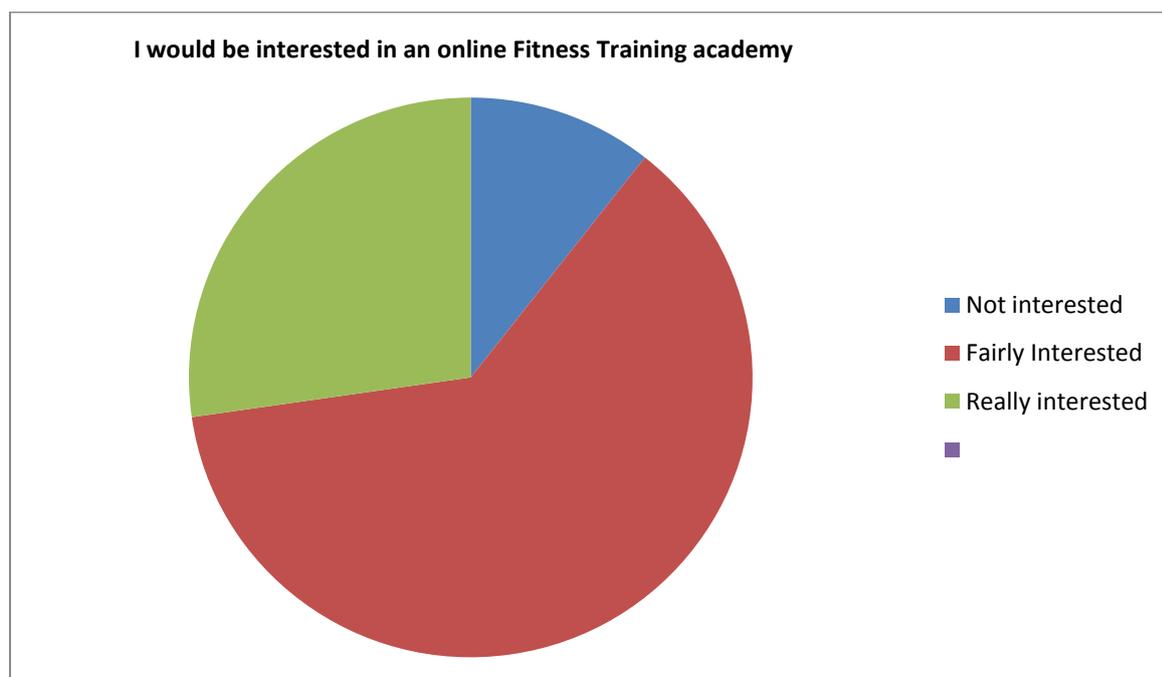
However what there is an easier way!

What if there was a place where ALL of the above 7 Essential tips were catered for. You could have access to;

1. **Online choreography skills video tutorials** to improve your teaching skills
2. **Articles and interviews with industry experts** on the latest fads and research
3. Case studies and articles from people who are going that extra mile.

4. **Business advice** as well as **online coaching** for setting up and developing an online presence
5. Video tutorials with some of the world's **BEST** International Presenters
6. **FREE** access to one day fitness days

Well that is what you will get with my **Fitness Training Academy**. Again judging from my survey there definitely seems an interest and a need for this. Check out the chart below



But for those of you who are under a certain age and have not done one of my classes before, you may be thinking, “**why should you listen to me?**” This would be a reasonable question, and apart from as I have said being in the industry for 20 years and presenting Internationally for 15, some people have been very kind enough to offer these testimonials of me (and I didn’t pay them!)

“*Three words to sum up Linx, Infectious, inspiring and edgy!*” **Ivor Nightingale**

“*The choreography skills day at JJB Gloucester was brilliant, the ETM course just doesn’t even touch on the mechanics of putting together a good routine.*” **Helen Whitfield**

“*I have found the tutorials on building 32 ct choreography invaluable. It’s great to finally have a clear and concise explanation of how the experts do it. Once you have the basic principles the sky’s the limit! Thanks*” **Marina Menides**

“*Lincolns on-line choreography, breakdowns and E.Books are priceless! They are packed with great material to help any instructor whether you are a complete beginner or fitness presenter. I learn something new every time I watch them, his work would inspire any fitness enthusiast. Lincoln’s on-line downloads etc have been*

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a great stepping stone for my break into fitness teaching from a professional dance background. Keep it flowing Linx!!" Wendy Hollands

"Linx is one of the most amazing instructors I have ever meet on a personal and professional level, no matter what he teaches its flawless and anyone can aspire to be as good as one of the best in the industry." James Brown

So as the old saying goes....



Well for now anyway. I didn't want to take up too much of your time, but out of respect for the fact that people have taken time to comment on my website and complete my survey, I felt that it was in everyone's interest to know the results and the frustrations that instructors were having.

Please watch your inbox as there will be another email from me shortly which will carry on where this little report has left off. I think you will like it.

Thanks for taking the time to read this. If you have any questions then you can contact me at lincoln@fitnesstrainingdownloads.com

Take Care



Lincoln

About the Author



Lincoln has his own business, Total Fitness, and has a BSc degree in Recreation Management and Sports Science. He has been involved in the fitness industry for 20 years and has presented fitness and aerobic sessions all over the world, including Italy, Spain, Holland, Germany France, Hong Kong, and Mexico. He is one of the Firectors of Chrysalis Promotions who organise the International Fitness Showcase, one of Europe's largest Fitness Events

Linx has toured the UK presenting his unique stylised sessions, and is the creator of 20 fitness videos. In between organising his own fitness and dance days, he had his own TV Slot on the popular Big Breakfast TV Show, teaching streetdance fitness.

He currently works as a lecturer at London Leisure College, and was the first instructor in the UK to gain the CYQ Level 3 Advanced Studio instructor award. He wrote the original Streetdance for Kids Course and Dance Aerobic Course for YMCAfit