Practical Tips For Getting Loads Of People Into Your Group Exercise Classes
Bit of background about me

- Presenter for 15 years, instructor for 20
- As well as presenting, I had regular weekly classes
- My Monday night aerobic class rose from 6 people to 120
- My Thursday night step rose from 4 to 80 people
- I regularly started classes with no numbers and gradually increased them wherever I went.
- I also ran a successful Ceroc Modern Jive Franchise where every Monday, 150 people paid me £7 to dance the night away (you do the maths!)
So how did I do it?

- Although there were some challenging moments in building my businesses, I realised that there were 3 main areas that allowed me to get loads of people into my classes using PPE:
  
  - **P** = Being a good Professional
  - **P** = Promoting myself
  - **E** = Becoming the Local Expert

It was the combination of all 3 and not just focussing on one particular area that allowed me to have full classes, get spotted to present a guest class in Brighton, then get asked to teach somewhere and start presenting!
Being a Good Professional

- There are many aspects to being a good professional, but I will tackle the main elements here, which I feel are;

1. Deciding who you are and your target market.
2. Being good at what you do
3. Creating your “elevator pitch” that allows you to confidently talk about your services in a clear professional manner
Deciding who you are and your target market

- Although we as instructors tend to get asked to teach classes in gyms and clubs that are supposed to cater for all levels and shapes and sizes, we can still have our “niche” that we specialise in.

- For example although I taught a wide variety of classes, I became known for my dance style sessions; whether they were aerobics or step.

- The key thing here is that although some people did not like my style, thankfully many more did, and came to me because of that. This then helped me market myself easily and people knew what they were going to get. Also as I initially wanted to make dance style classes more accessible to people that felt intimidated, and based my teaching for that purpose, it was easy for clubs and myself to target those markets.
To find out who you are, answer the following questions:

• Which is your favourite type of person to train?
• What is your exercise experience? Dance, athletic, triathlons
• What are your teaching strengths; you explain stuff well, you have fun, you’re enthusiastic etc
• What “problems” would you love to solve; weightloss, fitness, self empowerment etc
Quick Task – complete the grid to identify possible target markets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Target market</th>
<th>Their potential problems</th>
<th>Your key benifits</th>
<th>Where to find this group</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Women 25-45 who want to improve their fitness in a fun way</td>
<td>Intimidated to take part in traditional classes, want something different</td>
<td>Making classes fun, Add a bit of dancy fun moves to classes to take their minds off exercising</td>
<td>Gym newsletters, questionnaires</td>
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<td>Men over 50 who are overweight</td>
<td>Scared of heart attack, want no frills exercise</td>
<td>Bootcamps – no choreography just functional effective exercises</td>
<td>Gp referrals, gym newsletters, gym floor</td>
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Creating your Elevator Pitch

• Once you have worked out what your teaching strengths are and who your ideal market is you can now create your elevator pitch.

• This is you telling someone what you do in the time it takes to ride an elevator.

• The good thing about this is that it helps you to describe what you do with confidence and ease, AND it helps other people spread the word about you.
Your Elevator Pitch (cont..)

• So….what do (or will) you do and for whom?
• Use this formula: I help X with Y
• Eg for my website: I help group exercise instructors with choreography ideas, business strategies and tools to help them succeed.
• For my classes: I help people inimitated to exercise with losing weight with fun dance inspired exercise.
• For my Ceroc Classes: I help non dancers learn modern Jive moves in a fun relaxed atmosphere.
• Doing this exercise helps you focus on what your passion is but also your future training and education
Your turn!!!

• Enter your elevator pitch here
A very important point

• It is important for me to reiterate that although I am suggesting that you have a specific target market it does not mean that you exclude everyone else. You have to earn a living! But you will be surprised that being known for a certain skill or target group seems to attract a lot more people, and also people that are curious to see what you have to offer.

• Also it is just a lot easier for you to market yourself and get publicity for your classes in the media.
Be good at what you do

- Another important point in getting people into your classes is being good at what you do.

- This may seem obvious but as they say, "cream always rises to the top," so if you know your stuff, are a good teacher and educator, who can break down routines in a fun creative way, then eventually you will succeed.
Be good at what you do (cont..)

You can get your training from;

- Conventions
- Masterclass Days
- Internet/Websites
- Online workshops and masterclasses
- Other presenters (role models)

Alwyn Cosgrove observed that if you read for an hour a day on a specific topic then within 2 years you will be an expert in that topic!
Be good at what you do (cont..)

So ask yourself honestly….

- How many conventions/workshops/masterclasses have you been to this year?

- What are you going to do between now and the end of the year to improve your learning?
Becoming the local expert

• If you are known as the expert in your local area then more people are going to know about you and your business. This is even more important if you mainly work within leisure centres and gyms.

• People like to associate themselves with the “expert”. Word of mouth advertising is the best form of advertising there is as it is free and people are more likely to listen to other peoples’ recommendations that you telling the world how great you are!
Ways to become the local expert

• Write a book very easy to do and immediately lifts you to “expert” status

• Position yourself with 2-3 other local experts to make a newsletter, eg chiropractor, and nutritionist

• Website – information based not advert class gift certificate on site

• Free seminar, in your gym/club or local businesses to get people’s contact details to follow up with
Ways to become an expert (cont…)

• Write articles to give to your clients

• Get other non competing businesses eg massage therapists, chiropractors, nutritionists to refer people to your seminars. In return you will refer your people to them if they need more specialised help.

• Run competitions in the local media. Invite someone from the local press to come along to your class for 6 weeks and report the results

• Offer to do a weekly/ monthly column eg Health questions and answers
Your Expert To Do List…..

Write here what strategies YOU will put in place to become YOUR local expert
Whether you run your own classes or work for a gym/leisure centre you need to promote YOUR classes, so that people know that YOU are the go to person if they want to get into shape, lose weight, feel better about themselves or whatever you identified as your “elevator pitch”

You need to try and do something every month, on a regular basis, so that you are always in people’s minds, and there are lots of things that you can try
Ways to Promote Yourself

• Ask current class members

• Class t shirts – eg if they complete a certain type of class, reward them with the t shirt which has your details on it, which is especially good for bootcamps

• Charity events, great for media exposure and for getting external people into your classes

• Specialised workouts: little black dress program, buff brides program, get fit for summer, ski fit program, just for men, baggy t shirt programs, weight management classes

• Class gift certificate

• Direct mail, public speaking, joint ventures,
Ways to Promote Yourself
Continued

• **Website** – information based, with an incentive on there for people to give you their name and email in exchange for a free gift eg class voucher, exercise download videos, ebooks

• **Facebook Fan Page.** Get your class members to interact on your fan page, ask you questions away from your class. Also you can get them to post comments about your classes on the page so if anyone else sees it they will be more likely to try your class.

• **Write press releases** to send out regularly to the local press. To increase the chance of your press release being picked up, link it in with a national promotion eg for Race For Life you could talk a bit about it and then say that you are doing a special “pink” aerobic class to raise money, OR that you are doing a special class to get women fit for their race
Your Promotion To Do List…

Use the following grid to note down 12 months worth of promotion

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Conclusion

• As you can see this is a pretty in depth process, and it does not happen overnight. Eg my ceroc class operated for a year with just 25 people before I built it up to over 250 people at its peak. My regular classes built up over a 3 year period.

• But the results are definitely worthwhile and if you are serious about getting loads of people into your classes, then you need to focus on these steps
I hope you enjoyed this report, and activities. But if you have any more questions, or comments then please contact me using either

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