

Make a commitment to your group fitness team

Exclusive instructors come at a cost, but the payback is happier members.

imagine if your general manager managed for you and your competitor. No way! Imagine if your sales team sold for you and your competitor. That's crazy!

But when it comes to group fitness, it happens all the time. It's the norm. Let's get this straight—quickly! Your most valuable asset is *your* team, *your* people. Because at the end of the day, your competition can replicate your bricks and mortar, buy the same equipment and have identical pricing strategies.

Dr. James Annesi sites in his book, *Enhancing Exercise Motivation*, “While most new exercisers cite health and fitness gains as reasons for entering exercise programs, they usually cite social aspects as primary reasons for staying.” That all-important social aspect is what your people bring to the table; it is the soul of your club.

There is only one solution for

your group fitness team—as painful as this may sound to some—an exclusive team.

So how do you do that? It starts with the employment model. Typically, the instructor team has been comprised of very part-time staff, teaching 1 to 2 classes per week. You need a fusion model where some of the staff is part-time but exclusive to you and the remainder of the team is comprised of your current club staff.

Personal trainers who teach group fitness have a tremendous advertising advantage to build their PT client base when teaching a barbell strength program to 30, 40, 50 even 100 members.

Sales people who teach sell by experience and increase their closing effectiveness. They will even know how to answer perspective member questions.

Clubs have had great success training everyone from front desk staff to management staff to teach

group. There is no better way to connect and create relationships with your members.

The benefits of an exclusive team are endless: greater instructor commitment to club, greater teamwork, schedules that can easily be adjusted, easier teacher substitutes, greater work satisfaction due to variety and, importantly, willingness to invest in your people.

Begin on the path to strengthen your most valuable asset with a plan and system to support your team. Stop sharing your most valu-



able asset with your competitors!
 ♦ CATHY SPENCER-BROWNING

Cathy Spencer-Browning is the National Training and Program Director of Body Training Systems, a division of The STEP Company. She can be contacted at 800/729.7837 or by email at info@thestep.com.