

# WILD TRAINING

MONTHLY ARTICLE FROM JAMES GRIFFITHS

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS - EDUCATION - PERSONAL TRAINING



## THIS MONTH'S FEATURES

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**Reviewing the fitness industry services**

**Perception of value**

**Should we sell what our customers expect?**

**#LiveALifeWithoutLimits**

## IS THE FITNESS INDUSTRY OUT OF GAS?

I'm not talking gas, like energy. The Fitness industry isn't slowing down. We've seen a lot of changes in the last 5 years. The numbers in terms of % of population with a gym membership and money being made in fitness all look healthy, but what does that mean for gym members?

**Has the fitness industries service improved in the last 5 years with all the change?**

More online coaches, some with instructor qualifications. Lots without. All offering 6 pack abs, fat loss workouts and body building comp prep programmes at low cost. Cheaper personal training qualifications. Cheaper gym memberships.

## "BUYING CHEAP DOESN'T ALWAYS WORKOUT WITH CARS, IS IT SMART TO DO THE SAME WITH YOUR BODY?"

Options and more accessible fitness services is a good thing. Means that everyone in the game has to step up their service or drop prices to offer customers value based on competition. Prices going down is one way to give people value...but buying cheap doesn't always workout with cars, is it smart to do the same with your body?

As a gym if my selling point is my cheap membership, then I'll keep my members until a cheaper gym opens up. They are loyal to a price. Not your brand. We get people walking in to my gym and the first thing they say is "How much is your gym membership?" I tell them, but always add "Don't you want to know what you get with our membership?"

Often they look surprised, like they're thinking they know what a gym is, so why is he asking me about what I get with a membership?

All they expect is space and equipment. I don't think that is enough to create an efficient business with good customer retention.

For example one of the positive changes we've seen in gyms is the removal of some equipment in favour of creating areas that are based on more open, functional training spaces.

## "PEOPLE ARE BEING CONDITIONED TO VALUE VARIETY MORE THAN PROGRESSION, WHICH ISN'T WHERE THEY GET THE RESULTS"

Lead by the popularity of HIIT exercise classes, maybe even inspired by the popularity of Cross Fit style workouts. Gyms needed to rub some fun back into their facilities. Less straight-line rows of fixed path resistance machines and cardio equipment. More colour, variety, interactive areas. Interaction being the key word. That's between staff and members and member to member.

Quiet gyms freak me out, and the music doesn't count. When people are talking, shouting, laughing... they're having fun, and if they're having fun they're getting value. If it's not fun why would they pay for it, or more importantly keep paying for our services. If retention is key, then fun is a priority.

That fun must be driven by our staff, and that means our staff need training that can bring those open spaces to life for our members to enjoy. Do they get that training from the cheaper, mostly online based personal training qualifications? Not so much. There are organisations out there putting out good education for trainers but from what I've seen the competition for low cost PT courses is making it hard for good educators to convince people who are looking to qualify, that one level 3 certificate can be so different to another.

So is the industry using the new spaces effectively, and are members getting value from the changes to the facilities? Makes me think of three questions.

- 1- What do customer expect?
- 2 - What are gyms delivering?
- 3 - What delivers value for the customer?

If number 1 and 2 connect then you sell a membership, but without number 3 being part of the equation, the membership isn't going to last. Without value our customers perception of our service will demand cheaper and cheaper, and that can't help us deliver better value. More fun rarely comes from spending less money.

# "SOMETHING I'VE ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN IS WHAT CUSTOMERS PERCEPTION OF VALUE IS"

I wonder if the fitness industry has conditioned customers to see value where the industry is able to create scale/more money or has customer demand shaped the industry we have today?

A simple example of this is GAS.  
General adaptation syndrome.  
We all learn about it on our training courses.

- Alarm phase
- Resistance/adaptation phase
- Exhaustion/plateau phase

To put it in to fitness terms, we start a new training programme, go into an alarm phase for a short period 1-2 weeks. We don't see big results in the first two weeks. The body is just adjusting to the programme.

Getting ready to change. Then we hit the sweet spot. The adaptation phase. 4-6 weeks of big changes. The results we want. If we stick at the same programme for too long, then we hit a plateau and stop seeing our fitness progress.

Progression. After having a fun time, our customers progressing has to be a key objective, not just for the customer but for fitness businesses to deliver value. If our customers aren't consistently seeing results from the work they do, are we really able to say we are delivering value as an industry?

**“THIS IS WHY WILD TRAINING IS MORE THAN JUST A GYM FACILITY. IT'S A SYSTEM OF EXERCISE PROGRAMMING THAT EVERY MEMBER IS EDUCATED IN TO VALUING.”**

If we all know about GAS, basic programming and the importance of our customers having fun AND getting results, why don't we focus more on educating customers so they know how to use our facilities effectively to get value from their memberships.

**If we deliver more value, what we sell is worth more?**

- 1- What do customer expect? A variety of spaces, equipment and classes.
- 2 - What should gyms deliver to exceed customer expectations? A system of coaching to educate customers on how to interact effectively with their facility, services and staff.
- 3 - What delivers value for the customer? Delivering our service in a way that helps to maximise enjoyment and progression for the largest number of people.

People are being conditioned to value variety more than progression, which isn't where they get the results, so to bolt in a little bit of education to our service that can change that idea is a powerful way of improving results, retention and referral rates.

New workouts are designed every month for every class to challenge our members in new ways. Always backed up with a narrative that explains why the training relates to our customer demands.

Our staff train together as a team every week to make sure what is delivered is top class and they are given access to massive amounts of online training to back up the face to face training. We don't have to carry on selling what our customers expect.

Henry Ford said if he had of asked what his customer wanted they would of said a faster horse.

My happiest days are when potential customers come in and say "I need your help to get fit/fitter. What does this gym offer in supporting members". I smile because so far, we have never failed to help people see the value in good programming, delivered passionately every day, in an environment that is fun, social and interactive.