

TRAINERMAKER

53 WAYS TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS!

Before we get started... This is NOT a marketing funnel where I cleverly lure you into purchasing a TrainerMaker course! Nor am I promising you a six-figure income. For two reasons – Reason One, I hate those funnels. Reason Two, it's not realistic that everyone reading this will ever get close to earning six figures! But, we can all do better. And that is what this is about. Doing better. You may learn one thing from reading this. Take it, use it, profit from it.

Some of you will have heard my 'business story'... How I came to be doing what I am doing today. Others of you have not.

My background is this:

I have worked for twenty years in the leisure sector. I tried my best to be an employee – with a fair degree of success and failure in equal measure. But being an employee never really worked for me. I always had my own ideas and they usually didn't have synergy with my manager's!

So I took a jump into self-employment. It was a hard decision to make – losing a guaranteed monthly income, having to find my own direction and ultimately, being responsible for my own success or failure. But after a little bit of coercion and a kick up the backside, I did it and I haven't looked back.

I have now successfully started three companies all in the fitness industry. I have steered them in the direction I have wanted to go and have had an amazing life and ride along the way! I have worked with governing bodies of sport (Olympic programmes), I have worked with the NHS, councils, universities, fire services, commercial business and of course, private PT clients. My clients have ranged from elite sports people, to multi millionaires, to those on socially funded programmes. Essentially, I have seen and done most things in this amazing industry of ours!

My first company was a partnership with two other business partners. We gradually cobbled a PT/coaching/corporate fitness and education business together from a very inexperienced and naïve start-point. Seven years on and with the business turning over half a million pounds per annum, I left to set up a business of my own.

That business was as a fitness industry training provider in a highly competitive sector. It is fair to say that we 'smashed it'. We caused a huge stir in the training world, stepped on a lot of more established training provider's toes and became a successful, but still small, business.

My current company is a progression of all of this. Refined in it's market and highly structured and organised. It's doing amazingly well - the best incarnation yet and still getting better!

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I have not arrived at this point easily. I can guarantee to you that I have made every mistake possible along the way! But I *have* learnt from each and every stress, and each and every negative experience. I have also made some great choices en-route. I have taken chances and opportunities that have changed my life.

I want you to benefit from my experience. So here's a list of 53 things that you can do to GROW YOUR BUSINESS!! They are in no particular order and some things may not be relevant to you. But read them and absorb them and try them out for yourself. I'd love to hear your feedback once you've done this, so that I can add your valuable lessons in too. You already know where you can leave feedback, as it's the same place you found this article 😊

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THE LIST

1. Unconverted leads...

Think of all of those people who have spoken to you, emailed you, messaged you – and for whatever reason you haven't got back to them. Get back to them! Even if you think they're ancient history, what have you got to lose?

2. Multiple follow-ups...

Rarely do people commit to buying something like PT in one easy, clean transaction. You will need to work hard to convince them that you are the perfect trainer for them! Find a reason to communicate via email, social media or even post. And every time you make a contact, try and finish that contact with another reason why you'll communicate with them in the future. You have to build a relationship over time, and to begin with, it may be you doing all of the hard work.

3. Referrals...

In PT, referrals are your best friend. Do a good job with one client and they will always put word out that you are a great trainer. Use this. Even reward clients for making a referral. Do marketing campaigns based on referral. Make it an option on your price plan. Word of mouth is still, despite the digital age, your very best friend.

4. Improve your own sales skills and confidence...

Sales are not something that comes naturally to everyone. If you recognise this as a weakness of yours, then work on that weakness. The reality is, you cannot do PT delivery, if you have not first sold your product to a client!

5. Overcome objections...

There are always going to be reasons, valid or not, for people to not take up your PT service. Overcome these objections – preferably before your client even points them out to you. Predict potential issues and find ways to move your potential client forward positively. Have the answers ready!

6. Don't waste time on 'slow no's'...

There are always going to be those annoying people who pester you for information about your PT, but who deep down you know will never buy from you. If you recognise someone like this, then be polite and constructive for them, but don't give them too much of your time – time that could be spent more productively elsewhere. Don't just abandon them, but make it clear that they need to move themselves to a place where they are genuinely committed (remember the Psychological Readiness for Change lesson you did on your PT course?!).

7. Ask for the sale...

It is ok to ask a potential client if they are ready to commit to a purchase. Decision-making can be difficult and sometimes a potential client will need that extra impetus

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in their decision-making process. After all, it's in both of your best interests to bring the transaction to a speedy conclusion!

8. Communicate more with existing and ex clients...

Sometimes this is called 'churning your client base'. Why go out looking for new customers, when you have lots of ex clients who have previously shown that they want your PT! Talking to them frequently shows that you care and reminds them that you are still there.

9. Communicate more with prospective clients...

Send more emails, texts or social media messages – don't be shy! Add useful information to every communication so that they do not feel that your contacts are spam. If they do feel that way, well, they can always ask you to not make contact, or unsubscribe from your email list. Just make sure that you are aware of GDPR rules and regulations and that you only contact people who have given you the relevant permissions!

10. Make your email subjects engaging...

Think about your own email inbox – Do you ever open an email with a boring subject title? Me neither! I'm not suggesting you do 'click bait' type emails. However, if you offer me something free – perhaps an interesting article or a special offer on something I really want, then I'm in!

11. Personalise your communications...

Depending on the size of your mailing list, you may be able to personalise each communication you make with your clients and potential clients. Everybody likes being made to feel a bit special or important – so give people what they want!

12. Send out packages with treats in them...

If you really value your clients or ex clients, then send them something nice in the post – or even just digitally that reminds them of you. It doesn't have to be expensive at all – personalised/branded power bands cost a couple of quid each! Useful digital downloads, cost you time, nothing more.

13. Testimonials...

Social proof is really important in the PT world. Your product is relatively intangible – you can't take it for a test drive like you can a new car. So show people examples of your previous work. Wherever possible, give links to your client's own websites or use videos, to show that these testimonials are genuine! Make agreeing to testimonials part of your client sign up process so that you have all the documentation you need to publish personal details.

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14. Do events...

Being proactive in organising events shows your clients and potential clients that you have energy, professionalism and passion. Three great traits to show to potential customers!

15. Get online...

Regular communication with your clients is essential. We live in a 'must have now' world, so getting back to people quickly is a definite. Use all your social media to do this in super-fast time!

16. Build a website...

This is not something that all PT's will want to do, but I would recommend it for 2 main reasons. Reason one, is validation. It gives you an element of credibility. Reason 2 is practicality; it is somewhere you can signpost people to get more information and also to make purchases. Website building tools are amazing these days. For just a few pounds a month you can use companies like Wix or Squarespace to produce professional, fully functioning websites. Your website will not need to perform amazingly on Google to begin with (that would be a bonus). As you go along building it however, and see it's worth, then of course, start to consider trying to move it up the search engine rankings – by PAID ADS. No amount of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is going to overhaul the big-spending competitors out there!

17. Facebook advertising...

These days, Facebook's algorithms that define your potential client's newsfeed are way too smart to let you blatantly advertise via posts. The idea that likes, shares, comments etc are going to get you in front of a huge audience is a myth. Nooooo, you have to pay for that privilege... so pay. It's not expensive and is a super-efficient way to get straight to your target audience.

18. Newspaper advertising...

This may seem out-of-date... but think about the average age of your client base and whether or not they still read their local newspaper. My money is on definitely on them reading newspapers over Instagram feeds!

19. Get smart with your adverts...

The smarter you get with them by recognising what works and what doesn't, the cheaper they effectively become as you get more clients for your same advertising spend! Analyse response rates and amend.

20. Keep your adverts simple...

Less is sometimes more! Especially when it comes to fancy arty stuff that takes up space and also leads your potential client's eye away from your key message.

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21. Make your font smaller...

Making your font smaller means that you can get more of your message into an advert. Don't worry, people will read it even though the text is smaller!

22. Always have a 'call to action'...

If your advert doesn't have a call to action, then people will leave your ad not having an instruction on what they should do next. With no instruction, people will not visit your website, social media or give you a call!

23. Pay per click adverts...

Google and other search engines make a lot of money through advertising. They would not make a lot of money through advertising if their advertising didn't work for their customers! It is inexpensive, super-targeted and will work for you too! Success breeds success with this type of advertising (especially Google), so get good at using the various analytics showing how well your ads are performing. Your 'click through' rate will make a big difference to the number of website hits or sales you make.

24. Create adverts that resonate with your target market...

Think about who you are targeting with all of the advertising you do. If your customer can relate to your message, they are more likely to prick their ears up and take notice!

25. Test your marketing success...

Getting feedback from new clients about how they found out about you will help steer your next marketing campaign. Keep records of everything you do so that you can evolve your strategy not just based on a whim, but on real data.

26. Combine online and offline marketing campaigns...

Tie everything together to create a coherent message and path for your potential clients to follow. Posters, flyers, Facebook and Google ads should all be sending the same message and directing people to a place where you can start to build a relationship with your potential client.

27. Be brand-smart...

By this, I mean that you should brand yourself according to your target market. Too flash and you'll frighten off the more reserved clients. Too reserved and you may not appeal to a more 'energetic' audience. Find a tone that works for you and the people that you want as your customers.

28. Use phone calls to 'serve', not sell...

If you have people's phone numbers, make sure that when you call them you are offering them something that they feel has benefitted them and not just been a sales ploy. And always finish the call with a reason to make further contact in the future!

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29. Use deadlines...

People who struggle to make a decision on PT will postpone their decision making until the very last minute. Don't let the sale drag on and on. You need to strike while the iron is hot. So add a deadline to every offer you do. Otherwise, it's not really an offer is it!

30. Add value to your offer...

Adding value to your level of PT by including products or services that to you are inexpensive but to your prospective client have a high, perceived value, will help your them to justify their decision. Also, having a range of packages, one expensive, one cheap and one that seems incredible value in the middle, will always help to funnel your clients into buying what you want them to buy.

31. Joint ventures...

Working as a pair or a small team can offer many benefits to a growing company. Shared workloads, shared economies and a team ethos that is positive and pushes you forward. Of course, you need to choose the right partner/s and also need to have a common understanding, rules in place and regular, honest communication to keep things in order!

32. Use your time better...

Building your own company takes an awful lot of time. You are not being paid to do just one job role, you are being paid to do a plethora of roles – from product design to sales to accounting to health and safety... the list goes on! Expect to spend 50-70 hours a week of deliberate, constructive input into your business when you first start. Don't worry, in time, that workload will reduce! 50-70 hours sounds a lot, but in reality is fairly easy to find if you remove from your life the things that are true wastes of time! Phone use, unnecessary procrastination, time spent on bad projects etc all add up!

33. Use the AIDA Principle...

Your potential clients will need to go through the AIDA process if you are to be successful in selling to them - Attention, Interest, Desire and Action. Ensure that you plan your potential client's journey all the way through the process. It shouldn't be a hit and miss run through the dark woods for them!

34. Free Trials...

Please don't confuse this with 'big discounts'. A free trial is not the same. A free trial offers your potential client an opportunity to sample your otherwise 'intangible' product before they commit. It is also a way for you to show confidence in your product. The free trial could be anything from a 20 minute ad-hoc HIIT session, to a pre-planned PT session, delivered on the basis that if the client likes it, that they pay for it!

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35. Expand your target market...

Not just geographically (though this may be something to consider), but also in terms of what you can offer to clients. Consider taking courses and gaining experience in new areas such as sports massage therapy, pilates or yoga. This will not only open up your target market, but will also allow you to 'churn' your existing clients more.

36. Understand the 80:20 principle...

In business around 20% of clients will generate 80% of profits. In PT, the statistics can vary depending upon exactly the services you offer, but undoubtedly, you will have a hardcore few clients who repeat buy over and over and pay top rate. There will be many clients who come and go and potentially pay less overall. You need to refine your business so that ultimately, you get to the point where all of your clients are top performers!

37. You can't be all things to all people...

Remember, when you start your relationship with the client, it *is* a 2-way thing. If you are not sure about a person's commitment level, or whether you are right for them etc, then you do have the option to refuse a client. You really don't want to be spending lots of time and effort on someone who is not getting the results due to lack of commitment. It's bad for them and it's bad for your business. Signpost them to a PT more suited instead.

38. Networking/working with other fit-pro's...

Personal Training is a competitive environment – but that doesn't mean that you need to be precious over your clients and business. Working in collaboration with the other fitness pro's around you will always pay dividends long term. There are many different types and styles of PT out there. 12 weeks transformation proponents, long term behaviour change advocates, strength and conditioning experts etc etc. And to go alongside them, there are different types of client! Some clients are never going to want a particular style of PT. If you are not their style, then again, signpost them to someone who is. At some point, the favour will be reciprocated. Everyone wins!

39. Guarantee your product...

If you truly believe you can make a difference to someone – you are confident of your ability and of their commitment, then put a guarantee on it to seal the sales deal. What could be more reassuring when you're investing a lot of money into something that you are unsure about than your new PT giving you a money back offer or something similar. The decision to buy PT is a no-brainer from that point on.

40. Sell the benefits of PT, not the features of it...

To really appeal to a potential client's subconscious, you need to help them to understand the benefits of PT to them personally, ie, how their life will positively change by doing it. Explaining the types of training you will do with them is useful,

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but will not change their core outlook on what you are offering. Posting pictures and videos of cool looking exercises or your amazing muscles is a similar thing. You need to start your potential client on the road of behaviour change and that should include some visualisation techniques that vividly paint a picture of a better life!

41. Consider yourself your own Public Relations agent...

When you are a PT, you are always on show. Your clients and prospective clients will be watching you – sometimes for months, before they make a decision to approach you. So always be professional. Don't let your guard down! Bad news travels fast and can undo all of your hard work!

42. Hand out your 'Top Tips' for free...

Giving away your top tips will not give away your secrets of fitness success or your potential clients' requirement for your services. 99 times out of 100 offering free advice will lead to clients asking for *more* information, not requiring less! Use the opportunity to develop your PT-client relationship.

43. Jump on bandwagons...

Fitness is a rapidly evolving industry. It is 'faddy' and there are always 'latest sensations' to get involved with. Zumba, Clubbercise, Insanity etc are all examples (and not always a bad thing I should add!). Jumping on a bandwagon isn't necessarily selling out – it is being smart and using some of these mass participation vehicles to engage with more of your potential client's, and possibly even steering them back to your core product.

44. A little bit of reinvention...

Keep adapting and giving clients something new and exciting. If twelve months later you are still delivering the same packages with the same exercises to the same people, then 100% you need to change it up and re-stimulate your clients!

45. Pricing strategy...

'Stack 'em high, sell 'em cheap', or 'premium pricing' – the choice is yours. Carefully consider your own value and your existing and 'ideal' client's demographics and then calculate where you need to go with pricing. Less customers paying a higher rate may actually give you more profit for less time input!

46. Offer payment methods...

This is a simple one. Having to pay for a product every time you use it can be a painful reminder of how much you are paying! Whereas payments that use direct debit, tend to be 'lost' in a bank account somewhere - no painful weekly reminders of how much PT is costing! Painful reminders are not good for repeat business. Use an app like GoCardless to set up weekly or monthly direct debits for your clients. Encourage DD use by incorporating a small discount for those that do.

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47. Go big or go niche...

A long time ago I was told by a super-successful business person to either 'Go big' or 'Go niche'. Niche businesses allow you to become an expert at your trade. Experts very rarely struggle for business as their skills are highly prized. If you are highly prized, your prices and profit will go up and up. You will have full client lists and waiting times for new clients will 'create a demand' and add to your desirability. Going big is an entirely different proposition. By going big you are committing to take on board any and every client. You may never become an expert, but you will have a lot of variety in your job. By not being an 'expert' you may struggle to push your prices above a certain threshold, so to earn more money, you will have to sell to more people. I'm not saying either will be more successful for you – a case could be made for both!

48. Do some online videos...

Social media has moved on. Where once putting videos of yourself online felt weird and perhaps a little arrogant, now it is part of the very three-dimensional approach to our digital world. 'Flat' social media using just type and images is waning in preference to videos and other 'moving' media. Practice doing videos. Don't worry if your first few don't go perfectly – nobody expects flawless videography and narration. Do your best and commit to making improvements over time.

49. Do product bundles...

As a PT (depending upon qualifications and experience) you will no doubt have a variety of offerings – HIIT classes, mobility classes, kettlebells classes, nutritional advice, 1:1 PT, Small group PT, specialist sessions such as lower back pain etc etc. Putting together bundles could 'add value' to your product and help you attain a better overall rate for your services. To do this successfully you must calculate the extra profit:extra cost ratio (extra profit being what you will make from your more appealing package, extra cost being the additional cost to you, including time and other financial outlay). Be smart – utilise classes that you would deliver anyway for other paying clients as your added value offerings. Or things that are perceived to be of great value – nutritional feedback etc etc.

50. Allow your business to evolve...

I don't know many businesses that use the same business model even twelve months after their inception! A wise person once said 'Change is the only certainty in life'. Self-reflect every day to analyse what has gone well and what can be improved – formulate new ideas, action plan and make positive changes. This really is a task to do daily. So make time for it!

51. Get things done...

So many PT's I know have a 'laissez faire' attitude towards business. Maybe it's the nature of fit pro's to be driven by passion for fitness rather than by business values and financial gain. However passion will only get you so far – and if you want a long and prosperous career doing what you love, you really do need a great work ethic

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too. Work ethic isn't always natural. I admit that on occasion I myself will do the bare minimum workload. BUT, when the chips are down (like during business start up) you must be strict with yourself and hold yourself accountable. If you can't hold yourself to account, then pay for the services of a business advisor! To you, a business advisor is a bit like your PT services are to a client, and you know how much your services are worth right? So take the plunge and commit. (And by the way, I don't mean a Facebook guru promising you the world! Use someone you know and trust and whom you can see has actually done it for themselves!).

52. Go out of your comfort zone...

Nobody ever developed anything without going outside of their comfort zones! Outside of that zone is a whole new world – scary at first, but nothing you cannot handle if you think logically and tread with careful steps! If you do what you have always done, you will get the same results.

53. Truly understand the business you are in...

I mean truly understand it. Expand your horizons and experience as much as is possible. A comprehensive understanding of the industry will help you to see and explore avenues you may never have seen or perhaps thought possible!

I hope these have been useful. As always, if you want to chat about anything you have read, then feel free to contact me via all of the usual methods!

Paul