



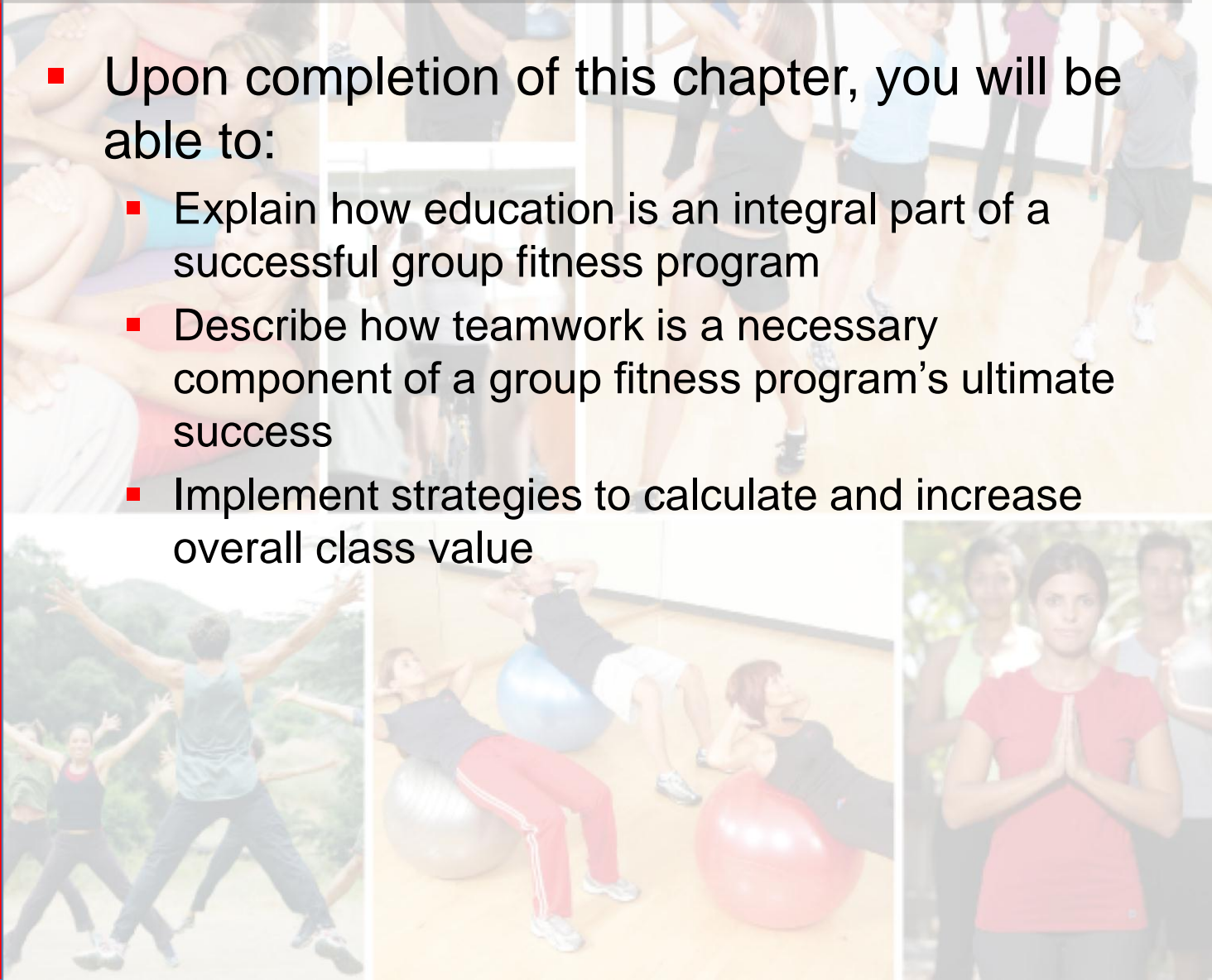
ACE Group Fitness Instructor University Curriculum

Chapter 10: The Business of Group Fitness



Learning Objectives

- Upon completion of this chapter, you will be able to:
 - Explain how education is an integral part of a successful group fitness program
 - Describe how teamwork is a necessary component of a group fitness program's ultimate success
 - Implement strategies to calculate and increase overall class value



Introduction

- The role of the GFI has changed over the past two decades to include having a potential impact on the bottom line of a fitness facility.
- GFIs are the ultimate ambassadors for a fitness facility as they:
 - Create relationships among members
 - Disseminate important club information
 - Bring in new members to try classes
 - Provide safe and effective exercise programming
 - Encourage and motivate members and non-members alike
- Group fitness trifecta
 - Education
 - Teamwork
 - Class value



Education

- Earning the ACE Group Fitness Instructor Certification is only the first step.
- Other considerations for continuing education include:
 - Group fitness specialization
 - Cardio
 - Strength training
 - Mind/body
 - Personal training and small-group training
 - Moving beyond group fitness into other areas
 - Management
 - Community involvement
 - Educator for other fitness professionals

Teamwork

- GFIs should have an understanding of a facility's mission and vision.
- A team-centric attitude positively affects an organization.
- Teamwork in the group fitness environment can:
 - Increase professionalism
 - Increase class participation
 - Enhance member retention and new business
 - Improve cohesiveness and sense of community
 - Lead to a more engaged employee
 - Result in a more enjoyable place to work

Increased Professionalism

- There are two ways that teamwork can help increase professionalism:
 - When GFIs speak from the same playbook
 - When GFIs support one another
- GFIs should be able to both educate and entertain during class.
- Professionalism is also increased when GFIs:
 - Know how to answer questions regarding policy or schedule changes
 - Feel empowered to answer questions on behalf of the group fitness program and facility

Increased Class Participation and Success

- A GFI is often judged based on the number of participants in a class.
 - Therefore, GFIs are expected to create a positive experience in order to drive the numbers up and keep costs down.
- When GFIs interact and form relationships with other members of the team, the potential for numbers to increase across the board exists regardless of class time or format.



Member Retention and New Business

- Special events increase perceived value for a member and can be used by the membership/sales department to court new business.
 - The more bonds that are created in the club setting, the more likely a member will stay at the facility.
 - Special events provide more opportunities for these bonds to be formed.
- Communication among staff is also key.
 - Club-wide initiatives, as well as those programs running in specific departments, can gain greater traction if GFIs are all properly informed.

Cohesiveness and Community

- Community is created through connections.
- When people feel connected to a facility, they show up more frequently.
 - When people show up, they utilize more services and become further connected inside of a club.
- The sense of community is a unique selling point that cannot be trumped by new equipment or cheaper pricing from a club down the street.
- Teamwork in a group fitness staff begins the process.

Teamwork and Progressive Class Design

- A team that plays together succeeds together.
 - When GFIs frequent one another's classes, the perception of the staff is elevated.
- A “training variety plan” helps GFIs work as a team.
 - Managers can help coordinate instructors to allow members optimal cross-training and effective training programs.
 - Managers can also talk to the instructors and make sure their weekly class designs are varied enough to ensure a full-body workout that is consistent for the participants.

Class Value

- The group fitness area is expensive real estate.
- GFIs should develop a firm understanding of the metrics by which class value is judged.
- Group fitness class value is calculated in three ways.
 - Class counts
 - Cost per head
 - Penetration
- Developing a clear understanding of the three measurements will help a GFI stay on track.



Class Counts

- GFIs are typically responsible for recording the number of participants in each class.
- It is important to take note of the difference between the starting numbers of a class and the final numbers of the class.
- Class numbers alone may not tell the whole story.
 - Specialty classes or classes in less desirable time slots will not look successful when measured using raw class counts.
 - Basing all opinions regarding the success of the class on raw numbers may lead a GFI astray.

Cost Per Head

- Cost per head (CPH) takes class numbers and GFIs' salaries into consideration to determine the value of the class.
- Divide the instructor's rate by the number of participants in a class to reveal the cost per head.
 - Reveals how much money it is taking to serve each participant
 - For example, if a 60-minute class has 20 attendees and the GFI's salary is \$25/hour, the CPH would be \$1.25.
 - $\$25 \text{ divided by } 20 \text{ attendees} = \1.25



Penetration

- Takes into account facility usage and class counts to determine if a class is serving an appropriate percentage of the members
- Divide the number of participants in group fitness classes by the number of people that access the club during a specified time period
- An average number for daily penetration is 15%.
 - 15% of the members that use the club on any given day are participating in a group fitness class
- For example:
 - A GFI makes \$50 for a 10-person specialty class.
 - The usage during that time is 50 people, which makes the penetration 20% (above average).

Strategies for Increasing Class Value

- Global strategies
 - Teamwork
 - Education
- Specific strategies
 - Music
 - Choreography/exercise selection
 - Equipment
 - Member interaction
- Ongoing evaluation
 - Formal reviews
 - Informal reviews
 - Self-review



Summary

- This chapter covered:
 - Education as part of a successful group fitness program
 - Teamwork as a necessary component of a group fitness program's ultimate success
 - Implementing strategies to calculate and increase overall class value

