



ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 4th edition

Chapter 2: Principles of Adherence and Motivation

Learning Objectives

- Based on Chapter 2 of the *ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 4th ed.*, this session describes the factors that influence exercise adherence and methods for keeping clients involved in their exercise programs.
- After completing this session, you will have a better understanding of:
 - The factors influencing exercise adherence
 - The difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
 - Leadership qualities that affect exercise adherence
 - The personal trainer's role in building adherence
 - The importance of role clarity in establishing the client–trainer relationship
 - Properly worded and structured goals

Introduction

- Starting—and then sticking with—an exercise program is a significant challenge.
- There is a difference in motivation between starting and adhering to a program.
- This chapter focuses on increasing the likelihood that clients will adhere to a program once they have started.
- Personal trainers must learn to maximize the experiences of their current clients.

Exercise Adoption

- The most important factor in starting exercise program is the individual.
- A person cannot be coerced into starting to work out.
 - He or she must be ready to make a change.
- Applying the transtheoretical model of behavioral change principles will help increase the chances of success when adopting a new behavior.
- Factors that motivate individuals to start exercising may not be the same factors that keep them exercising.



Motivation and Adherence

- Motivation
 - The psychological drive that gives behavior direction and purpose
- Exercise adherence
 - The voluntary and active involvement in an exercise program
- Established exercisers have few problems with adherence.
- New exercisers may be intimidated by the recommended volume of physical activity.
 - The fitness professional must break recommendations down into a manageable and achievable program.
- Recommended activity guidelines should only guide a trainer in creating exercise programs.
 - Taking a “one size fits all” approach to program design is detrimental to long-term adherence.



Physical-activity Program Dropout

- More than 50% of people who start a new program will drop out within the first six months.
- Existing programming models may not be effective for exercise adherence.
- There is no exact formula for helping people continue with a program.
- Personal trainers must create:
 - Well-rounded programs that get people fit and healthy
 - An exercise experience that is positive and worthwhile



Factors Influencing Participation and Adherence

- Determinants for physical activity are the factors that influence a person's decision to engage in exercise.
- The potential determinants for physical activity can be broken down into three categories:
 - Personal attributes
 - Environmental factors
 - Physical-activity factors
- Understanding these factors can help prepare personal trainers for the various challenges that clients may face.

Personal Attributes: Demographic Variables

- Adherence to physical-activity programs has proven to be consistently related to education, income, age, and gender.
- Lower levels of activity are seen with:
 - Increasing age
 - Fewer years of education
 - Low income
- Age, however, may be unrelated to adherence levels in supervised exercise settings.
- Men demonstrate higher and more consistent activity adherence rates than women.



Personal Attributes: Biomedical Status

- Biomedical status refers to health conditions and is a weak predictor of exercise behavior.
- Obese individuals
 - Typically less active than normal-weight individuals
 - Less likely to adhere to supervised exercise programs
- No consistent relationship between cardiovascular disease and activity adherence has been seen.
- Biomedical variables and behavior change may be related to the characteristics of the exercise program and the fitness industry itself.

Personal Attributes: Activity History

- Activity history may be the most important and influential personal attribute variable.
- Supervised exercise programs
 - Past program participation is the most reliable predictor of current participation.
- Gathering activity history information from a client
 - Helps personal trainers in the development of the client's program
 - Gives the trainer an idea of the challenges that the client may face in adhering to a program

Personal Attributes: Psychological Traits

- Psychological traits
 - General tendencies that people have in their personality or psychological makeup
 - Account for individual differences among people and are often difficult to define and measure
- Self-motivation
 - Reflective of one's ability to set goals, monitor progress, and self-reinforce
 - Has a positive relationship with physical-activity adherence



Personal Attributes: Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs

- Those who perceive their health to be poor are unlikely to start or adhere to an activity program.
 - If they do participate, it will likely be at an extremely low intensity and frequency.
- Locus of control
 - A belief in personal control over health outcomes
 - A consistent predictor of unsupervised exercise activity among healthy adults
- Perceived barriers
 - Consistently demonstrate a negative relationship with physical-activity program adherence

Environmental Factors: Access to Facilities

- Access to facilities most frequently refers to facility location.
 - When fitness facilities are conveniently located near a person's home or work, he or she is more likely to adhere to the program.
- People with greater access are more likely to be physically active than people with less access.
- Personal trainers should understand how convenient or inconvenient it is for each client to reach the facility.

Environmental Factors: Time

- Perceived lack of time
 - The most common excuse for not exercising and for dropping out of an exercise program
- This perception is likely due to:
 - Not being interested in or enjoying the activity
 - Not being committed to the activity program
- Personal trainers must help clients change their perception through proper goal setting, time management, and prioritizing.

Environmental Factors: Social Support

- Social support from family and friends is an important predictor of physical-activity behavior.
- Support from a spouse is an important and reliable predictor of program adherence.
- Personal trainers must be proactive in creating and establishing a support network for the client.



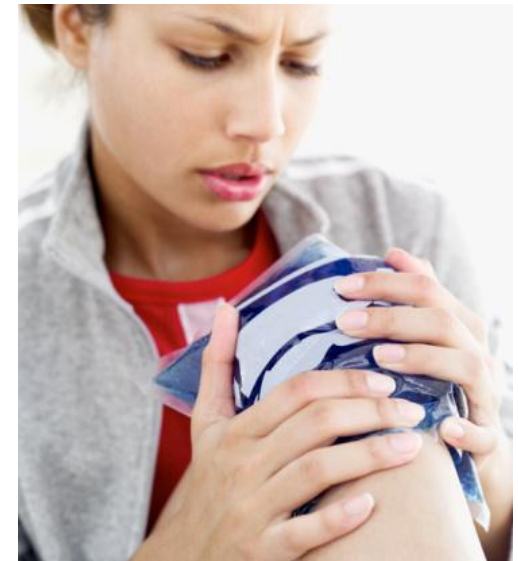
Physical-activity Factors: Intensity

- Vigorous-intensity exercise
 - The drop-out rate is almost twice as high as in moderate-intensity activity programs.
- Most people choose to start moderate-intensity programs rather than vigorous-intensity programs.
 - This is true regardless of whether intensity is measured physiologically or psychologically.



Physical-activity Factors: Injury

- Approximately half of all people who engage in high-intensity activities are injured each year.
- Injuries that occur as a result of program participation are directly related to program dropout.
- Injured exercisers
 - Are able to participate in modified exercise programs
 - Often report engaging in significantly more walking than non-injured exercisers



Understanding Motivation

- Motivation can come from:
 - Within a person and is sometimes described as a personality trait
 - Other people's encouragement, guidance, and support
 - Things, ideas, and events
- A person beginning an exercise program must buy into the process and into the motivators.
- Numerous constructs have been proposed to explain motivation and its relationship with performance and achievement.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

- Intrinsic motivation

- Being physically active because a person truly enjoys it
- Associated with positive attitudes and emotions, maximal effort, and persistence when faced with barriers
- Very few adults are completely intrinsically motivated.
- Personal trainers should maximize enjoyment and engagement, but not expect clients to always demonstrate intrinsic motivation.

- Extrinsic motivation

- The engagement in exercise for any benefit other than for the joy of participation
- Being physically active because of some external factor
- Associated with feelings of tension, guilt, or pressure related to participation

Situational Motivation

- Very few people are entirely intrinsically or extrinsically motivated.
- Personal trainers should strive to enhance the feelings of enjoyment and accomplishment through:
 - Creating mastery
 - Providing consistent and clear feedback
 - Including the client in aspects of program design
 - Creating a workout environment that is aesthetically pleasing
- These things will help increase motivation during the actual workout.
- Situational motivation
 - Motivation that occurs as people are actually exercising

Contextual Motivation

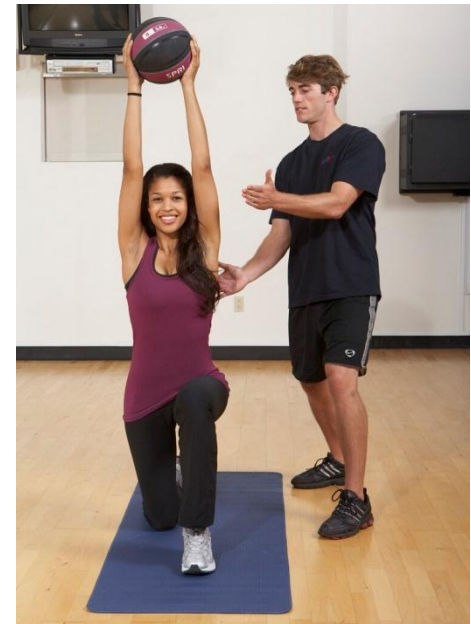
- Contextual motivation involves how the client generally views exercise.
- A personal trainer should empower the client with the perception of control over participation.
 - Personal trainers must teach, not manipulate a client to act.
- Teaching self-sufficiency and autonomy can help facilitate intrinsic motivation.
- Client independence
 - Failing to build client independence is related to less-motivated clients who may ultimately drop out.

Self-efficacy

- Self-efficacy is the belief in one's own capabilities to successfully engage in a behavior.
- Self-efficacy is positively related to motivation.
 - Self-efficacy leads to a positive attitude and more effort and persistence.
- Personal trainers can use the sources of self-efficacy to help influence efficacy levels.
 - This can be as simple as creating short-term success by designing a workout that the client can master.
 - Each workout should build on previous accomplishments.

Self-efficacy Awareness

- Clients require different amounts of verbal encouragement and statements of belief.
- Help clients re-evaluate appraisals of their physiological states to create more positive interpretations.
 - Trainers can help clients view the “feelings” of working out in a more positive light.
- Being aware of self-efficacy levels allows personal trainers to consistently motivate their clients and help them create positive self-belief.



Feedback

- Feedback can be either intrinsic or extrinsic.
- Extrinsic feedback
 - The reinforcement, error correction, and encouragement that personal trainers give to their clients
- Intrinsic feedback
 - Information that the clients provide themselves based on their own sensory systems
- Extrinsic feedback is always important in the exercise environment.
- Long-term program adherence is dependent on the client's ability to provide his or her own feedback.

The Role of Feedback in Motivation

- Feedback provides a guide to clients of how they are doing.
- Knowledge of results
 - Feedback that provides information on progress
 - Without it, persistence suffers and people give up
 - Motivational comments during a training session can help keep clients on track.
 - Feedback also helps in the re-evaluation and goal-setting process by contributing to knowledge of results.



Leadership Qualities

- An effective personal trainer is an effective leader.
- Professionalism is a straightforward component of being an effective leader.
 - Appearance should be clean, neat, and non-threatening.
 - Personal trainers should practice what they preach and exemplify what it means to live an active and healthy life.
 - Personal trainers should also be punctual and prepared.
 - Personal trainers should take every opportunity to demonstrate to their clients that they listen.
 - Clients appreciate personal trainers who demonstrate genuine concern for them and excitement for their craft.
 - An effective personal trainer includes the client in all aspects of the program.

Building Adherence Through Program Design

- A personal trainer must be able to:
 - Design a program with regard to each client's preferences, schedule, experience, apprehensions, and constraints
 - Create customized programs based on promoting long-term adherence to physical activity
 - Take the time and energy to hear and meet the needs of a client

Building Adherence Through Role Clarity

- A common cause of conflict is the lack of role clarity.
 - If expectations are not clearly defined, misinterpretations and assumptions may lead to problems.
- A personal trainer should clarify his or her role, as well as that of the client, as part of the written agreement.
 - The expectations of both parties should be written down and agreed upon.
- Any questions about expectations should be discussed and modified from the start.

Building Adherence Through Goal Setting

- Goal setting is relatively simple to employ and extremely effective.
- SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) guidelines are useful for effective goal setting.
- The following are a few issues to keep in mind during the goal-setting process:
 - Avoid setting too many goals
 - Avoid setting negative goals
 - Set short- and long-term goals, as well as outcome and performance goals
 - Revisit the goals on a regular basis

Building Adherence Through Contracts/Agreements

- An effective way to create clarity is through the use of behavioral contracts and written agreements.
- When used effectively, these documents can give the entire training process clarity by defining:
 - What the client should expect
 - What the program entails
 - The rationale for the program design
- The agreement-writing process:
 - Enhances the communication between the client and the trainer
 - Gives the client an accurate perception of the program

Maintaining Motivation Through Relapse Prevention

- Relapse from regular physical-activity participation is common and should be expected.
- Countless things can trigger a relapse.
- The most important tool in dealing with a relapse is planning ahead and being prepared.
- Personal trainers should:
 - Educate clients about the potential occurrence of a relapse
 - Prepare clients in advance for relapses and resuming exercise
- Preparation allows clients to get back on track with their activity programs soon after experiencing a relapse.

Maintaining Client Motivation Through Social Support

- Personal trainers must work to increase their clients' support systems at home.
- Trainers should also create a support system within the exercise environment by:
 - Maximizing opportunities for group involvement and social interaction
 - Making clients feel as though they belong in the program and are part of a team of people who have common interests and goals

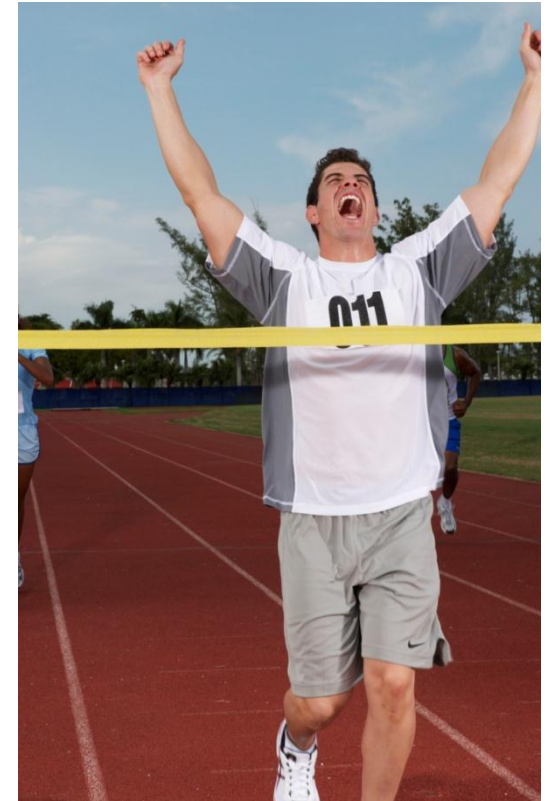


Maintaining Client Motivation Through Assertiveness

- Personal trainers can help clients prevent program relapse by teaching them to be assertive.
- Assertiveness
 - The honest and straightforward expression of one's thoughts, feelings, and beliefs
- A lack of assertiveness may mean a lack of self-confidence or feelings of vulnerability.
- Clients should be assertive with regard to their:
 - Progress
 - Concerns
 - Accomplishments
 - Struggles
- More assertiveness equates to more long-term success.

Maintaining Client Motivation Through Self-regulation

- Personal trainers have a tendency to want to regulate clients' behavior for them.
 - Instead, clients must be taught to self-monitor and to make behavior changes that will maximize their success.
- Perceived control
 - Once clients perceive control over their behavior, they are more able to deal with barriers and challenges as they arise.



Maintaining Motivation Through High-risk Situations

- Identifying high-risk situations helps clients deal with program barriers and relapses.
- Personal trainers should also identify clients who appear to be most at risk for program relapse, including those who have:
 - Poor time-management skills
 - A lack of social support
 - Busy schedules
- Trainers should work on:
 - Developing a plan for adherence
 - Being supportive, understanding, and empathetic



Summary

- Effective personal trainers have motivated clients who enjoy experiences that keep them coming back for more.
- This session covered:
 - Factors influencing exercise participation and adherence
 - Understanding motivation
 - Feedback
 - Leadership qualities
 - The personal trainer's role in building adherence
 - Strategies to maintain client motivation