

MAX

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Intense Training with the Kings



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What to Look for When Hiring a Personal Trainer

By John Platero

Do you need a trainer? If the answer is a good one, most definitely yes. A good trainer can maximize your results in a shorter period of time. They can take the guess work out of which exercises, how much, how long and how often. Most importantly, they can increase your energy and stamina, improve the integrity of your joints and the tissue surrounding them, protect you from injury, decrease the possibility of disease and increase your self-esteem. However, a bad trainer can slowly help you destroy your body. Here's six points to think about when looking for a Personal Trainer.

1. Education:

Make sure your trainer has some kind of degree in the fitness field or a certificate from a nationally recognized organization. ACE (American Council on Exercise), ACSM (American College of Sports Medicine), AFAA (American Federation of Aerobic Association), NASM (National Academy of Sports Medicine), and NSCA (National Strength and Conditioning Association) are just some of the certifications available. However, just because someone has a piece of paper doesn't necessarily mean they are a good trainer. Make sure that along with their degree or certification, there has been some kind of practical "hands on" training in the gym. Very important, ask when was the last seminar, workshop or lecture they have attended?

2. Documentation:

Are they a legitimate business? Do they have a business license? Do they have proof of liability insurance? Do they have a copy of their diploma or certification? Do they have references? If they do, chances are they make their living as a trainer. Usually, this means they're a little more serious about their professional. If they are working for, or through a fitness facility, what is the criteria a trainer has to meet? How long have they been a trainer? How long have they been working for that facility?

3. Professionalism:

Is your trainer prompt? Is he or she always well groomed? Can they track and communicate well? Are they systematic? Was any fitness testing performed? Were you asked to fill out any kind of profile sheet? If not, were you asked about your lifestyle and eating habits? Were your answers written down somewhere? Was your trainer at least listening to your answers? Was a postural assessment done? Does your trainer even know what a postural assessment is? Do they remember your name?

If your trainer hasn't done any of these things, run the other way. Or refer them to someone you hire.

4. Customer Service:

What kind of cancellation policy do they have? If the trainer is late or misses, what happens then? Do they make up the lost time or session? This should be in writing.

A 24-hour cancellation policy is minimal. However, a 12-hour cancellation notice is sometimes sufficient without being charged for the session. Is there a free trial session? Usually there is, if not, ask for a discounted or shorter session. Does your trainer ever call you to see how you feel after a workout? Does he or she show a sincere interest in your well being? Will the trainer come to your home, your office or school?

5. Personality and Appearance:

Is your trainer in shape? If not, was he or she ever physically fit, or around anyone physically fit? Beware, some people are genetically very gifted and look great in spite of how they workout. How many people do you know that can eat anything they want and not gain weight?

Is this person you're thinking of hiring fun to be around? Do you like this person? I hope so. I'd hate to pay someone I didn't like to teach me how to speak Spanish, when that person can't speak Spanish, has never been to a Spanish speaking country and doesn't even know anyone who can speak Spanish. Common sense is essential. Remember, most coaches aren't a great shape. However, at one time they were in great shape themselves, or spent a lot of time conditioning athletes that were.

6. Pricing:

When it comes to price, remember we live in America. Capitalism is King. The average session price can range from \$25-\$45. Remember, I said average.

Depending on the circumstances I personally have charged \$120 per session. It's normal for a trainer to discount for multiple sessions as opposed to buying one at a time. Remember, they're not selling VCR's. The more time they spend with you, the greater the possibility for you to reach your fitness goal. This in return makes you a walking advertisement for the trainer.

I hope these items will help you in your quest for fitness. Most trainers are good-hearted and generally have a sincere interest in helping people. That's why they are trainers. Not unlike any other health care professional, there are a wide variety of styles and experiences. Don't be afraid to ask questions and shop around.

John Platero is the Fitness Coordinator for a large chain of sports clubs in southern California, where he currently oversees more than 120 personal trainers. He was largely responsible for a system that grossed over a \$1,000,000 in personal training sales in one year. His own company, FUTURE FIT, has fitness videos, workshops and a personal training school. He is a provider for ACE, AFAA, ISSA, NASM and NSCA and conducts seminars all over the US. For more information concerning videos, seminars or workshops you can call 1-800-778-6069.



Even experienced lifters like Mehri Anthony utilize trainers to help them with their full potential.



Good trainers can increase your energy and stamina, protect you from injury and increase your self-esteem.



Top fitness star, Cynthia Hill seeks the advice of a trainer when preparing for upcoming fitness shows.