

Finding a Personal Trainer in Chicago

One of the fastest growing trends in health and fitness today is the use of personal trainers. According to the American Council on Exercise (ACE), for the first time, the number of students studying for ACE's Personal Trainer Certification Exam has surpassed that of those studying to be aerobics instructors. Even icons of American culture like Oprah have joined the trend with tremendous results. In 2005 she was selected by CBI (Club Business International) as January's fitness role model of the month. Bob Greene, Oprah's personal trainer in Chicago, was credited with helping her lose 90 pounds and, best of all, with keeping it off.

What is a Personal Trainer

A personal trainer acts as a partner who can help you set up a fitness program that meets your personal wellness goals. He or she informs you on the best exercises for your needs, keeps you motivated and tracks your progress. Many people fail to see results from their workouts because, without guidance, they are staying in their comfort level, using the same equipment and exercises over and over. A personal trainer will push you to try new things and tailor your work out to fit your personal goals.

Exercise

A good personal trainer will assess your physical abilities and discuss your goals before creating an exercise program. Once created, he or she will train you on each exercise and piece of equipment, ensuring that you are using proper form and technique, thus ensuring faster and better results from your efforts.

Motivation

Sticking with an exercise program can be difficult. There are always excuses not to go to the gym, so having someone else vested in your success is a great source of motivation. You know that your time will be well spent because you will be correctly performing your exercises. You may be financially motivated not to miss appointments and thereby lose the cost of a session. Accountability to your trainer will also inspire you to succeed, as a good trainer will monitor your progress and share in your setbacks and your triumphs.

What to Look for in a Personal Trainer

Finding a personal trainer in Chicago can seem like a daunting task. In such a large area it might seem impossible to locate the right person for you; but it does not need to be. Start locally by asking your friends, coworkers or doctor for referrals. Call area gyms and health clubs and set up interviews. You can also use online services such as Personal Trainer Finder or American Council on Exercise. When you have a list of possible choices, sit down with them and ask a few important questions.

Certification and Education

It is very important that your trainer be certified by a reputable fitness organization such as ACE, ACSM or NASM. Check the website or ask for information about the certifying organization. According to American Sports Data, (ASD), 5 million Americans used personal trainer services in 2001. At that time there were only 66,000 personal trainers practicing in the country. With such a gap between supply and demand a number of less than reputable web sites have sprung up offering quick certification. Your trainer should also be certified in CPR, first aid and possibly even Automated External Defibrillation if you have any issues with heart disease.

Experience

In addition to education it is wise to choose someone with experience, particularly if you have specific goals or health issues you wish to address. Find someone who has dealt often with your particular needs. Be it Pre-Natal exercise, heart problems or even just the particular type of exercise you prefer, you want someone knowledgeable in that area.

Personality

Personality is a very subjective factor in who you will select; but it is one of the most important. You are looking for someone who will inspire you and motivate you to continue with your fitness program. It is vital that this person is not someone who is intimidating or even irritating. If you do not like your trainer you will not develop the give and take needed to form a productive team. Your trainer should be a good listener and give you their full attention while during your sessions. He or she should be focused on you, not answering phone calls or chatting with others. Your trainer should be aware of your personal style, some people respond to a drill sergeant approach, but many others prefer firm but patient guidance.

Warning signs

As you begin working with your trainer keep in mind that you are the client. You should be concerned if your trainer ignores or dismisses your questions or neglects any part of a complete program. He or she should not work you too hard. A little muscle soreness is expected but you should not be in real pain or fatigue. A personal trainer should never diagnose injuries or illness, but should refer you to a doctor.

Taking action

Finding a personal trainer in Chicago should not be as daunting as it may seem. Start locally, ask questions, educate yourself on the proper credentials and find a partner who will motivate you and inspire you to your best health and wellness.

About the Author

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