

Why is everyone now learning how to become a personal trainer?

About twenty years ago, something weird happened: being a personal trainer became sexy. The switch was unexpected. These professionals went from glorified plimsoll-wearing PE teachers for adults to some of the most desirable people on Earth.

Part of the transition undoubtedly had something to do with the Hollywood elite's obsession with getting other people to keep them fit. Millionaire celebrities hired expensive motivational fitness gurus for \$1,000 an hour to tell them to walk on a treadmill faster.

But that wasn't the only thing we saw. Pop culture also played a role in personal trainers' collective transition from humdrum to cool. Movies and sitcoms constantly portrayed the handsome "jock" with rippling biceps and veins running down his neck as the epitome of trendiness, with computer scientists languishing in the background with nothing but a cheese toasty, if they were lucky.

Interestingly, though, the hype around personal trainers isn't an exclusively American affair. Even we British are jumping on the bandwagon in our unique way. No, we might not be sweating it out on Muscle Beach, but we are hiring people to keep us fit more than ever.

According to studies, there are over 23,000 personal training businesses in the UK, a significant rise from the pre-pandemic numbers. That translates to approximately 57,000 fitness instructors of one type or another giving marching orders to the nation's diligent gym-goers.

This demand isn't going unnoticed by the nation's fitness buffs. People who love exercising now see they can make a career from their hobby. Clients are willing to pay substantial sums of money for them to give them instructions.

It's not just about marching orders, either. There's ample new research enabling instructors to facilitate dramatic client progress based on various styles and approaches, based on sound exercise science. It's why we keep seeing outlandish before and after pictures on social media where people are unrecognisable in their new slimmer and fitter bodies. Instructors are gaining superpowers, fuelled by the latest analysis, allowing them to do things that were practically impossible just twenty years ago. Today's exercise techniques and nutrition plans are much better than yesteryear's boiled rice, chicken and broccoli.

So, with that said, why are so many of our brethren deciding to ditch corporate jobs to learn how to become a personal trainer? Let's explore some of the drivers in more detail. Heck, after reading this, you might want to sign up yourself!

It pays well if people notice you

Before social media, fitness trainers struggled financially. But the whole industry is turning upside down thanks to TikTok and Twitter (X). Celebrity trainers have the power to reach millions of people with their personal brands, allowing them to instruct with impunity! Many gyms are begging them to show up at their locations for publicity.

Trainers who embrace these new business models are seeing their success skyrocket. Instead of being limited to the number of clients they could fit in during a day, they can now sell various services to unlimited people, as long as they have an audience. TikTok and the other networks are a dream come true for business marketers.

Of course, the elephant in the room is obtaining said fans, but for many fitness instructors, it comes naturally. Social media acolytes are desperate to learn how they achieved such fantastic bodies!

It's scalable

Related to the last point is that fitness coaching is now also scalable. Before, instructors had to coach one client at a time (or in small groups). This setup stymied their capacity to grow their revenues. Clients might pay £30 per hour, but only the top trainers could earn £300 per hour – and that was the hard limit.

With online training platforms, that's no longer true. Instructor's earnings don't have an upper bound because thousands of people can pay and log into a training session online. If enough people know about you, you can make a couple thousand pounds in an afternoon.

Granted, it's not quite the same as being there in person, but many of today's tools are innovating to make it more helpful for clients. For example, some platforms implement AI to analyse exercisers' forms remotely, guiding how to improve them. Others provide tailored nutrition plans instructors can craft with a few simple prompts.

It's helping with preventative medicine

Another megatrend driving personal training as a career choice is the rise of wellness, lifestyle, and preventative medicine. This US culture is making its way across the pond to quaint old Blighty, with people whipping up green smoothies every morning and going to the gym to prevent diseases from starting.

Personal trainers are part of this phenomenon. People view them as the motivating force they need to get up off the couch and do the hard work involved in strenuous exercise.

Moreover, some trainers are specialising in this field, offering clients programmes that build disease resistance and longevity. This growing niche is fuelling interest in the sector as trainers realise they have more power over their clients' health than they thought.

It's flexible

But the main reason why everyone is now learning to become a personal trainer is the flexibility it offers. When you become a fitness instructor, you gain control over your life. There's no manager with coffee breath loitering behind you sinisterly, issuing ceaseless instructions on how to do your job. You have complete autonomy to do as you please, including setting your hours and deciding when you take time off.

This reality of escaping the nine-to-five is liberating for many trainers. Young people want to avoid the corporate office culture of their ancestors and focus on living the good life. And that means being able to make decisions about how to spend one's time.

Wrapping up

Having read this, you can now understand why becoming a personal trainer is becoming more popular. Gone are the days when society marginalised the fitness-obsessed. Things are turning around – and there's money to be made.

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