

A GUIDE TO WORKING IN THE  
NEW ZEALAND  
**EXERCISE  
INDUSTRY**



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



VERSION SEPT 2019

# WHAT'S IN THIS GUIDE?

## Start the Journey to a Rewarding Career

The New Zealand exercise industry is fun, vibrant and continuously growing. A career in this industry is a hugely rewarding one.

For many it is being paid for doing what they love, and provides the rewarding opportunities to help people make positive changes in their lives. It is a growing and vibrant industry full of energetic individuals, and we are delighted you are considering joining us.

The guide is compiled by the New Zealand Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs), and supported by the Exercise Association of New Zealand (the industry association). From sales people, to personal trainers to group exercise instructors, this guide aims to provide information about a career in the exercise industry and to help with career choices.

We hope that you find this guide useful and look forward helping and supporting you further in the future.

### *“REPs is more than a qualification – it’s like an annual warrant of fitness”*

“REPs registration gives you immediate recognition as an exercise professional and provides your annual “licence to operate”. With over 70% of those working in the NZ industry REPs registered, registration is the expected standard.

Registration also clearly enables exercise professionals to differentiate themselves from the cowboys who can operate in our industry, and who have little or no training. If you are a professional working in any industry you should register with your professions registration body as it is the right thing to do. This ensures that the registration body can collectively promote the benefits of using professionals in that industry – which in this case is you!

REPs message to the public is very clear – use ONLY the services of REPs Registered Exercise Professionals and facilities.”

Stephen Gacsal, REPs Registrar,  
NZ Register of Exercise Professionals



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Please go to our website [www.reps.org.nz](http://www.reps.org.nz) to view the latest online edition of this guide.



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#NZREPs



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@ExerciseNZ



@ExerciseNZ



# PART 1



## SECTION 1A OVERVIEW OF THE NEW ZEALAND EXERCISE INDUSTRY

### **The New Zealand exercise industry is a vibrant, growing, and diverse industry.**

Career opportunities range from part time to full time and include group exercise, sales, personal training, facility management, small business ownership, or as is quite common, a bit of everything.

Over the last 10 years, the industry has consistently grown faster than the average of the New Zealand economy. This has been achieved through the expansion of exercise facilities and personal training studios, as well as new and emerging markets such as small group training (boot camps etc.) and an expansion of other products due to increased popularity (such as yoga and other mind-body activities).

This means the current exercise industry in New Zealand is well placed to provide diverse career opportunities in a vibrant and ever changing industry.

This guide outlines many options for those considering working in the exercise industry, including what training may be required, and how things such as the New Zealand Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) works and can help you gain employment or set up a business.

In addition to reading this guide, we recommend talking to existing exercise professionals and others that work in the exercise industry. Better yet, you could also attend a Personal Trainers Council of NZ meeting being held in your area (for more details on the PT Council, see page 37 of this guide).

For more information on the various organisations that can provide information, and support you through your career in the exercise industry, see page 25 'Working in the Industry'.

# SECTION 1B

## INTRODUCING INDUSTRY LEADERS

The New Zealand fitness and exercise industry leads the world in a number of ways, including having some of the most experienced exercise professionals on the planet! We wanted to introduce you to a 'who's who' of the New Zealand exercise industry as well as some of our leading experts on everything to do with 'fitness'. Their insights and perspectives should assist you to understand more fully what is involved or expected from working in the dynamic and vibrant fitness industry.

### A 'Who's Who' of the New Zealand Exercise Industry



- **Exercise Association of New Zealand** ([www.exercisenz.org.nz](http://www.exercisenz.org.nz))

A non profit representative organisation, who's mission is to proactively support a sustainable exercise and fitness industry in New Zealand by growing participation in structured exercise through advocacy, information and industry standards.

ExerciseNZ provides resources to support exercise business, advocacy on behalf of the industry, and runs educational events (such as the FitEx Conference). For more details visit [www.exercisenz.org.nz](http://www.exercisenz.org.nz)



- **NZ Register of Exercise Professionals – REPs** ([www.reps.org.nz](http://www.reps.org.nz))

Established in 2003 in response to a growing demand for greater professionalism in the exercise industry. Today REPs is recognised as the standard for exercise facilities and professionals in New Zealand. There are just on 3000 REPs Registered Exercise Professionals, and 200 plus exercise facilities in New Zealand. The register is a division of the Exercise Association of New Zealand.



- **Personal Trainers Council of New Zealand** ([www.ptcouncil.co.nz](http://www.ptcouncil.co.nz))

This is a network of individual personal trainers committed to the enhancement of the industry in NZ. Regional meetings, Facebook and their website provide a vehicle for personal trainers to discuss common topics. The PT Council provides a valuable means of connection and networking with other trainers. Other services facilitated by the council include regular webinars, and business mentoring from leading industry experts and fellow PTs.



- **Skills Active Aotearoa** ([www.skillsactive.org.nz](http://www.skillsactive.org.nz))

Skills Active Aotearoa is New Zealand's Industry Training Organisation (ITO) for the exercise industry. They are a government-funded organisation and their role is to develop and facilitate world-class, nationally recognised qualifications that meet the needs of the exercise industry. Skills Active also provide leadership on behalf of our industry with regard to workforce development, industry standards and skill development.

## Industry Facts

- Estimated turnover in the industry is between **200 and \$250 million a year**.
- Percentage of population that are members of an exercise facility (eg gym) in NZ: 12% (or around 500,000 individuals). This represents almost 20% of the adult population.
- **55% of gym members in New Zealand have used a personal trainer in the last 12 months** (the highest rate in the Asia Pacific region). (source Ezy pay Exercise Industry Survey 2014).
- There are over **600 gyms/exercise facilities and around 400 yoga providers** ranging from studios to independent yoga teachers.
- The industry supports and **employs over 5000 individuals**. Around 3000 of these are exercise professionals.
- **Over 75% of exercise facilities are privately owned**, single-site operators, but the number of multi-site facilities are growing. This includes Les Mills, cityfitness, and Snap Fitness.
- The **Australian and New Zealand Fitness Survey** (Ezy pay), found that 53% of members join a gym and stay at it, because of the LOCATION.
- The same survey suggests that **most members leave a club** because of their TIME-WORK commitments.

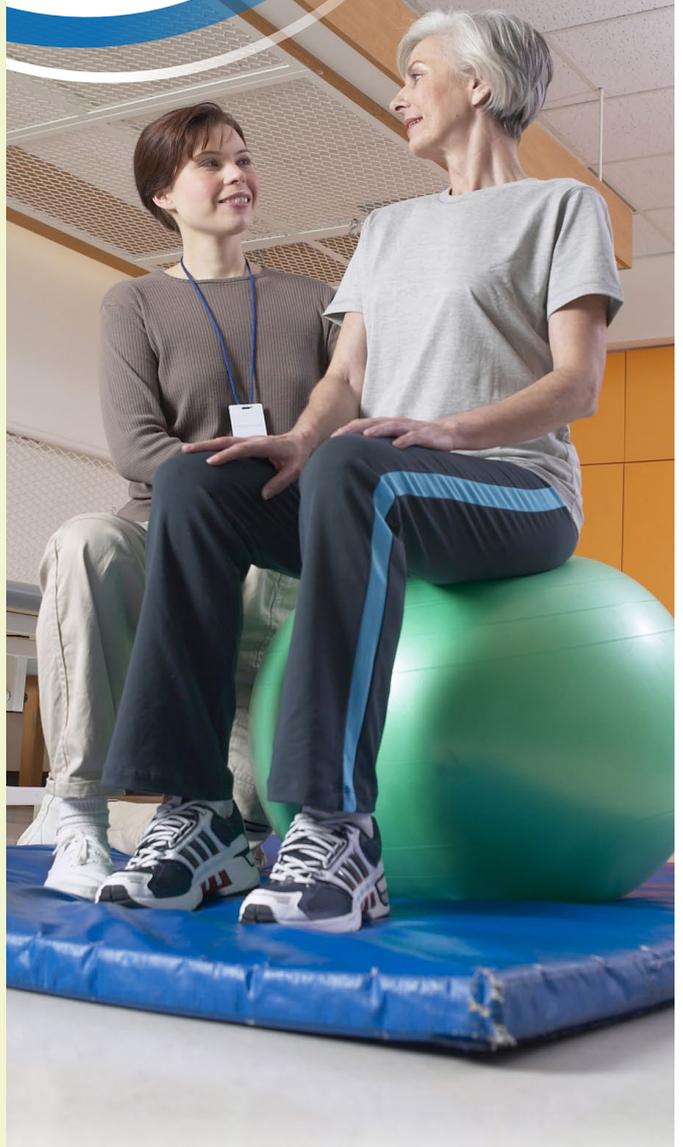
## The benefits of being 'REPs registered'

By becoming REPs registered, you clearly display to clients and the world at large that you:

- have gained recognised and industry approved qualifications
- can demonstrate competence in your working environment
- are committed to continuing professional development
- have appropriate public liability insurance
- are committed to the industry Code of Ethical Practice
- belong to an organisation which, through a common voice, represents the views of the industry to government and other bodies

## FACT:

Over 3000 exercise professionals are now **registered with REPs** with just over half of **Personal Trainers** operating their own business, either in their own facility or contracted to an exercise facility.



Read what some of our leading industry experts have to say:

## On Personal Training:



“I believe that it is very important that Personal Trainers develop the standards of professionalism necessary to give the public and our partners in other health professions confidence in our ability to do the job”.

[Mish McCormack](#)



“More than ever before, the New Zealand fitness industry needs ‘champions of behaviour change’. With NZ heading the World Health Organisation (WHO) list of countries having the highest incidence of lifestyle related diseases such as obesity and Type 2 diabetes, those working in the health and fitness industry are perhaps best placed to become some of the country’s most effective and knowledgeable motivators and moderators of health behaviour-change. Working in the fitness industry is a great way to support clients to change health habits for life. I welcome you into our industry.”

[Wendy Sweet \(30 yr Veteran of the NZ fitness industry\)](#)



“It doesn’t matter what qualification you hold or what path you took to get into the fitness industry. Now you’re here, give us your best. Always upskill and stay relevant, don’t just follow trends. Work hard and invest time in people. Build strong relationships with those around you and be a role model for fitness.”

[Ish Cheyne, Head of Fitness, Les Mills](#)



“My role as a PTC Ambassador is to enhance the lives of the trainers I come into contact with. I help them to recognise opportunity, and empower them to believe in their potential.”

[Jean Scott, \(Industry leading and recognised group-exercise instructor & personal trainer, Christchurch\)](#)

## On being a REPs Registered Exercise Professional:



**Linda Miratana, Selwyn District Council Group Fitness Coordinator**  
Winner of two Exercise Industry Awards 2016

*“Your smile, your personality and how you leave others feeling after an experience with you is your business card and trademark”*

I saw this quote the other day and it really connected with me – It serves as a reminder that when we walk into our classes we need to be professional, helpful, educational and happy!!

I always appreciate the fact that my participants have chosen to train with me, so then it is up to me to give them a great workout/experience. On the odd day where I could possibly think I’m not in the mood, I have to remember that all these people in my class are here for me. They make time in their busy hectic lives to dedicate to their fitness goals...with me!

Keeping this in mind we all need to be the best instructors we can be every time every class.

This in turn will build larger class numbers and see instructors popularity soar to new heights – win win.

Promotion of Les Mills New Zealand



## On working in the exercise industry:



### Associate Professor Nigel Harris

Associate Dean Postgraduate Research - Exercise Science -  
AUT University, Auckland

“The most successful students in the exercise industry graduating from our exercise courses invariably demonstrate several key attributes.

It’s important to note that it is not all about academic ability. Successful graduates have a genuine desire to help people achieve health and wellness through well structured, evidence-based exercise and nutrition. They have an intrinsic curiosity that motivates them to understand how exercise and nutrition affect the body and mind.

They are motivated to work independently on their study. Importantly, they also ‘walk the talk’ by participating actively in their own health and wellbeing through regular exercise and healthy nutrition.”

Promotion of Les Mills New Zealand



# SUPERCHARGE YOUR CAREER WITH SKILLS ACTIVE



Active Careers through  
On-Job Qualifications

Skills Active is the industry training organisation for exercise in New Zealand. We promote exercise careers and workforce development, create world-class, nationally-recognised qualifications, and support managers to train staff.

Our qualifications are designed to be completed while you work. They range from shorter programmes of less than one year, through to full three-year apprenticeships. Study is composed of:

- On-job learning - where your supervisor or senior staff teach and guide you
- Self-directed learning - using Skills Active resources, materials from your workplace, and your own study and research
- Workplace and external training sessions - formal learning conducted at work or run by outside organisations.

We offer a range of programmes covering the key skillsets needed to succeed in the exercise industry, including personal training, group fitness, and exercise consulting.

You can also enrol in programmes that will help you broaden your career and set yourself up for further success, in areas like people management, running a business, and adult education. All done while you work!

Skills Active qualifications are recognised by REPs.

**For more information on qualifications and prices, visit our website or contact your local learning support advisor today.**

**[www.skillsactive.org.nz](http://www.skillsactive.org.nz)**

**0508 4 SKILLS (475 4557)**

# SECTION 1C COMMON JOB ROLES IN THE INDUSTRY

Is a career in the exercise industry for you? These days there are endless career possibilities to a career in the industry. Whether you are motivated by sales and customer service, or have a desire to work as an exercise professional one-on-one with clients, the exercise industry can have the role for you. If you are thinking about 'starting out' in this industry, the following diagram presents the common roles that are typical of any exercise or recreation centre. Any one of these roles might suit you.



These roles are not mutually exclusive. Many people working in the industry may have one or more roles, such as part-time receptionist and part-time gym instructor, or group-exercise instructor and personal trainer. As you explore which role or roles might suit your skill-set and your passion, keep in mind that with further training, you too could perform a variety of roles within a facility or begin your career as a practitioner and move into management or gym ownership. Let's have a look at these more common roles in more depth.

## Types of Exercise Facilities

There are many types of exercise facilities in New Zealand where you might work. Based on the Australian and New Zealand Fitness Industry Survey (2014):

- 40% are franchised clubs
- 24% are privately owned clubs
- 14% are privately owned with multiple sites
- 5% are council owned & managed
- 4% are university clubs
- 4% are council owned but not council managed

## Exercise Facility Management

Management and Team Leadership roles offer plenty of opportunity and full-time employment depending on the size of the company. In New Zealand a growing number of club chains, franchises, associations and equipment companies in the industry have emerged over the past two decades, so there are many opportunities to work on-site at a club or within a corporate division. As your skills develop, you may even advance from a regional or national position to a global position. To progress in facility management, you will need the following general skills, although these may differ according to the specific company: 1. The skills and experience to oversee and manage a business and its people, who believe in delivering the 'exercise and wellness' experience to members; 2. People skills, i.e. the ability to lead, motivate and manage your team to enhance the goals of the business; 3. Sales and marketing expertise; 4. Financial management and integrity; 5. Knowledge of exercise and/or recreation operations.

## Team Leaders/ Programme Directors

The role of Team Leader or Programme Director typically aligns closely with management and provides a link between them and staff. In this role you will manage a particular department, such as gym floor operations, group exercise or personal training, overseeing the people, processes and products specific to that department. In most instances as a Team Leader/ Programme Director, you will need great 'people-management' skills as well as in-depth knowledge specific to your area of expertise. A number of programme directors must demonstrate their ability to juggle a wide array of tasks, responsibilities and skills from marketing to rostering staff, covering group exercise classes, to marketing and organising special events. Training and assessing new and existing staff is also a critical role of most Team Leaders/ Programme Directors. For those interested in Gym Floor Operations, you must also understand the processes that are involved in ensuring a safe, professionally run exercise or recreation centre. This will require knowledge specific to health and safety, REPs and registration requirements, equipment maintenance as well as customer service and client-care.

## Membership Sales/Consultant

Every exercise facility typically has designated membership sales consultants. However in smaller centres, selling memberships and touring prospects may also be included in the role of a receptionist or a gym instructor. Membership sales people do just that – they sell memberships and programmes. With many larger facilities having commission-based salaries for membership sales people, you need to have a passion for not only selling 'exercise, health and wellbeing' but also focussing on customer retention strategies. The role will also involve helping to retain current members. It goes without saying that in order to shine as a membership sales consultant, you also need to be highly self-motivated to perform to sales targets.



**ARE YOU READY TO HELP SHAPE THE EXERCISE INDUSTRY AND CHANGE THE LIVES OF ITS MEMBERS?**

For more information contact your local REPS-registered EXERCISE facility.

# Exercise Professional

An 'exercise professional' in New Zealand can mean any one or more of three professions:

1. Someone who works in their main role as a **GYM-FLOOR INSTRUCTOR/ EXERCISE CONSULTANT**
2. Someone who works in their main role as a **PERSONAL TRAINER**
3. Someone who works in their main role as a **GROUP-EXERCISE INSTRUCTOR.**

As the entry-level for most exercise employees is through any one of these roles, let's now take a look at what each role entails.

## Gym Floor Instructor/ Exercise Consultant

Have you ever been a member of an exercise facility? If so, then you will know that one of the first people you engage with is often the **gym instructor**. Today we also know this person as an **exercise consultant**. They typically start out into the industry with foundation-level qualifications, so they can begin work on the gym-floor in a customer-service role. The role of an exercise consultant is to make each and every member who visits the gym area feel welcomed and motivated to exercise and participate in the facilities provides. An exercise consultant is usually a full or part-time employee working shifts. The pay range is typically in the range of at least \$15.75 to \$17.00 per hour. In some facilities the exercise consultant role is performed by personal trainers.

## Personal Trainer

A Personal Trainer is an exercise professional who trains and motivates clients either individually or in small-groups. They are knowledgeable in exercise prescription, exercise testing/ assessment and exercise psychology. Not only does a Personal Trainer set individualised goals but they provides feedback, accountability and motivation to clients in order for the client to reach the results they desire. Whilst a Personal Trainer does not typically have nutrition qualifications, they may also educate clients in many other aspects of health, wellbeing and lifestyle behaviour-change including general nutrition guidelines.

**Qualified Personal Trainers recognise their own areas of expertise and scope.** If a trainer through pre-screening determines that a client has a medical condition that could prevent the client from safe participation in an exercise programme, they must refer the client to the appropriate health professional for prior clearance. In New Zealand there are two types of Personal Trainers:

### 1. Personal Trainer Contractor Self Employed (Facility Based):

This category of personal trainers run their own business within an exercise facility (so not independent contractor). This might be within a larger exercise facility (usually under a licensed contract arrangement) or in a private studio. Typically a contract arrangement with an exercise facility requires the Trainer to pay a weekly rental fee to the facility, or a percentage of their client session charges. Most personal training qualifications offer knowledge to Trainers about how they can set up a successful personal training business. For further information about this role see the section on 'Operating as a self-employed trainer'.

### 2. Personal Trainer Contractor (Independent):

This category of trainer most often runs their business in a mobile or small studio/home based setting. They won't usually have rent costs for gym space but have to provide all their own equipment, do all of their own marketing, and compliance (health and safety etc).

Like a contracted trainer an independent trainer is self employed.

For further information about this role see the section on 'Operating as a self-employed trainer'.



World expert on the role of the gym instructor and author of 'the interactive instructor', Kris Tynan, says:

"Interacting on a daily basis with customers to guide them down the path to regular exercise and better health is enormously rewarding. You get back a huge amount in terms of personal fulfilment and satisfaction."

### 3. Personal Trainer Employee:

This category of Trainer works as an employee for an exercise facility. They may also have duties as an Exercise Consultant, providing customer service duties to regular gym members. The personal training services are provided to clients outside of the regular gym shift working hours. Exercise facilities offering this business model, typically have the client pay extra for personal training services, and the employee is compensated on top of their hourly Exercise Consultant wages.

*Note: Small Group Trainers fall into one of the three personal trainer categories as they provide personal training type services in a group format.*

## Group Exercise Instructor

Group exercise instructors used to be known as exercise-to-music or aerobic instructors. They typically lead a group of participants through a series of movements and exercises using music as the basis of rhythmic exercise. Group exercise instructors can lead many forms of exercise activities from high-impact to low-impact exercise-to-music classes including, dance classes, resistance-type strength classes, cardio kick-boxing, yoga, pilates, indoor cycling, aquatic exercise classes and many more. Generally, classes are structured with a warm-up, work section, and cool down. Other classes marketed today may also include a strength element using barbells, dumb-bells or resistance bands.



Group exercise workouts are accomplished with the instructor leading the class by doing the workout along with the participants who follow (mirror) their lead. Typically, new instructors may need to audition then will be paired with an experienced instructor to gain practical skills and planned experiences in leading a class before being assigned their own class. Group Exercise Instructors don't always work within gyms or exercise facilities. They may work on their own in community settings such as in a local community centre, workplace or church setting. In New Zealand, there are three categories of group exercise instructor. These are:

- 1. Free-style Instructor/Own choreography** – this type of instructor sources their own music and creates their own choreography and routines depending on the type of class being taught. Community based instructors most often fall within this group.
- 2. Pre-choreographed Instructor** –this type of instructor teaches their class in line with music and choreography that have been developed by an external source. Instructors either attend workshops to learn the routines, and/or purchase music and the choreography from the creators of the choreography. In New Zealand, Les Mills for example are established as world leaders in pre-choreographed group-exercise classes.
- 3. Mind/Body Instructor** –Mind /body instructors often fall within the categories above but also include Yoga, Pilates and Meditation practitioners.

Whether a group exercise instructor uses a pre-choreographed or freestyle (own choreography) model of teaching, they must also acquire skills which enable them to become competent teaching movement patterns in front of class participants. They must be able to move rhythmically to the beat of music and incorporate instructional and motivational use of cueing, tempo and safe transitional movements. They must also make the session enjoyable so class members return week after week. Group exercise instructors generally operate as self-employed contractors so are operating their own businesses. This means that they are responsible for paying their own business expenses, upskilling and education, and taxes etc.

# Yoga Teacher

REPs also registers yoga teachers.

## What is yoga?

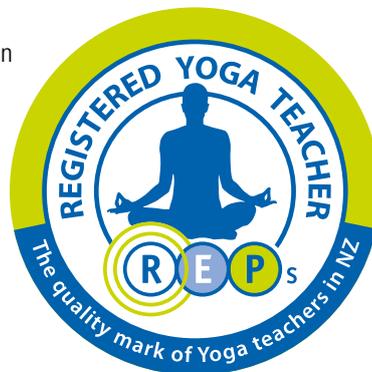
There are many different ideas related to yoga, in fact as many and varied as there are styles of practice or sequences of postures. A common definition arises from the word itself, with the root of yoga (yuj) translated as to yoke or bind together, uniting body, breath and mind. The practice of sensing into the body and breath via yoga provides a space to calm the mind. Beyond the physical practice, yoga is a philosophical approach to life promoting health, wellbeing, and self-awareness. A yoga practice may include a range of techniques, including held postures and movement, breath awareness and breathing exercises, endurance and restoration, self-inquiry and meditation.

## What is the role of a yoga teacher?

A yoga teacher is trained to correctly teach the poses (asana) and breath work (pranayama) used in a yoga practice, and in the philosophy of yoga. Their role may extend beyond the physical practice towards the mental, emotional and spiritual elements of the discipline in the context of modern life. A yoga teacher's approach to instruction is partly the result of their training and their own yoga practice.

## Educational opportunity for yoga teachers

The Hauora Yoga Conference is a 3 day educational event where the professional yoga community in Aotearoa NZ connect, discuss, learn, innovate and practice together. The event upholds yoga principles and values, with reverence for the many aspects and expressions of yoga within our unique cultural landscape. Educate yourself, practice yoga and be part of national discussions with a selection of clinics, masterclasses, workshops, discussion panels, keynote speakers and more!



## Other Roles

While the majority of people working in the industry perform the roles outlined above, as the industry continues to grow and evolve, so do the range of occupations and roles performed by those working in exercise and related fields.

Some other roles already performed in the industry include:

- Green prescription co-ordinator
- Community and public health initiative delivery
- Skills Active assessors
- TV presenters
- School physical education teacher
- Corrections Department and Department of Defence physical education instructor
- Marae and whanau based programme leaders



**FACT:**  
THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND FITNESS INDUSTRY SURVEY (EZYPAY, 2013)

indicates that in New Zealand, the most common class rates for both Group Fitness (Freestyle) Instructors and Group Fitness (Pre-Choreographed) Instructors was \$35. The most common class rates for Yoga Instructors was \$50, and for Pilates Instructors ranged between \$30 and \$50.

# Operating as a Self Employed Personal Trainer

## Facility Based or Out On My Own. Which is best?

There have been lots of changes in the roles and business opportunities available in the exercise industry over the past decade or so. The biggest increase in opportunity is in the area of self-employed trainers and exercise professionals.

If you are interested in establishing your own personal training business, either now, or in the future, then this section is for you.

This section offers some insight into the pros and cons of working as a personal trainer for an existing facility (as a contractor to that facility) or establishing yourself in your own studio or mobile/ home-based environment.

Personal Trainers work in a range of diverse environments including:

**Exercise facilities/ clubs**

**Personal training studios**

**Mobile/ home-based PT set ups or similar**

### Exercise Facilities/Clubs

This is often the best choice for new personal trainers starting out.

Working as an independent or licensed trainer in a facility means that you will be able to use equipment within the facility, and source new clients from existing members who have already committed to exercise.

Larger facilities are able to offer leads to personal trainers, and these are generally new members or those who have requested information on personal training services. These leads give you an opportunity to make a connection with a potential client, which makes building a client base easier. It's important to remember that leads do not automatically turn into clients, so a personal trainer must still showcase their services.

Another way successful way personal trainers get clients in exercise facilities is by 'walking the floor'. Put simply, this means walking the facility floor and talking with members, offering advice, and making a connection that could lead to the member taking up your services.

In a facility you are working with other personal trainers and team members, and you are surrounded by other exercise professionals. This means sharing knowledge, tools, and for a new trainer the chance to see successful personal trainers in action.

Some larger facilities 'license' their trainers to the facility. This means that you work under the branding of the facility and you have a contract with the facility to provide personal training services and pay a weekly rental for running your business. In other situations, you may work independently in a facility with your own business name, paying rent or a percentage of your client session rate to the facility.

### Thinking of working as a self-employed personal trainer in a facility? Questions to ask.

- How many other trainers currently work in the facility?  
How many are still looking for new clients?
- What are the startup and ongoing costs to be a personal trainer at the facility?
- Are leads directed to you from new and existing members?  
Are these provided just when you start or ongoing?
- Are there other ways you can increase your income through the facility? (eg: taking small group training sessions, bringing in new members)
- Are you able to train clients outside of the facility?

The best people to talk to about the pros and cons of working as a contractor in a facility are trainers working in facilities. Ask personal trainers you know about their experiences.

If you don't have any personal trainer connections already check in with your local PT Council Ambassador as they will know of local trainers who would be happy to share with you.



## Personal Training Studio

There are two ways of operating within a personal training studio, either being a contractor within another trainer's studio, or setting up your own.

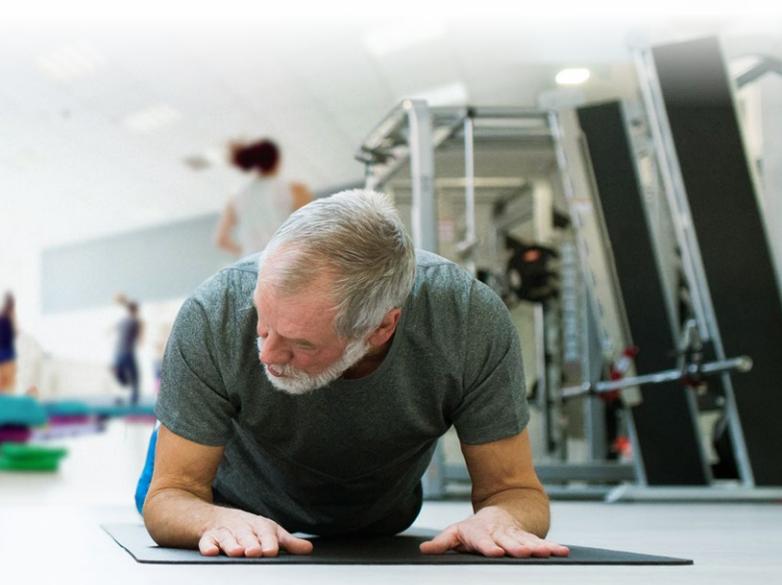
Working within another business involves less set up cost and can be similar to working in a facility. In this circumstance the biggest difference is usually in sales, as a studio may not have a membership base like a facility, so getting clients may require more work.

If you are considering setting up your own studio space this will require extensive business planning and some investment of time and finances. This path is not recommended for a personal trainer new to the industry but can be a good progression for an experienced trainer who wishes to be independent. In operating your own personal training studio you will have two roles; as a personal trainer (seeing clients and client based admin and obligations) and as a business owner (taking care of the physical space and business admin and obligations). Having a business partner has advantages and disadvantages but is worth investigating.

A model sometimes used is establishing a personal training studio using a space attached to, or on the property of your home such as a converted building or garage. This assists with ongoing rental costs but will still require meeting business and health and safety obligations similar to a commercially leased space.

A studio space can be set up for just yourself or you can bring in other trainers to share the space (and costs). If you are thinking of bringing in other trainers you will need to look at how they pay you (either a set rent or % of their rate) and what obligations you need to meet to have them work with you.

*Note: For those considering a studio space set up in their own home, we discuss this in section three 'mobile and home based trainers'.*



### Thinking of Setting Up a PT Studio? Think about these questions.

- Do I have time to look after my client base (income) as well as the added responsibilities of owning a studio?
- What are the set up and ongoing costs of running a PT Studio (eg: getting the space ready to open, buying equipment, paying rent, insurances)?
- Where will you get your clients from? If you are currently based at a facility does your contract allow you to take clients with you when you leave?
- What legal and health and safety requirements will you need to meet?
- Will you provide shower facilities?

## Mobile/ Home-based PTs

Being a mobile or home based trainer means that you will not have a dedicated studio but rather train clients in their homes, in public spaces or in a space dedicated to training within your own home.

Getting and maintaining clients in a mobile business is similar to a studio set up in that you will not have members to draw from.

The main advantage of this set up is that you are not paying rent for your space, however your advertising costs and time spent traveling if mobile are likely to increase.

Working as a mobile/ home based PT requires the ability to work well without support and be disciplined with time and resources due to the more relaxed surroundings.

### Thinking of Setting Up a Home Based or Mobile Business? Think about these questions.

- Where will you get your clients from? If you are currently based at a facility does your contract allow you to take clients with you when you leave?
- What legal and health and safety requirements will you need to meet?
- How will you separate your home space from your studio space?
- How far are you willing to travel for a PT client?
- Will you charge for travel?

## Planning for Personal Training Business Success

Whatever setting you choose to work in, it is essential that you prepare for all aspects of running your business, including financial planning and management, and sales. The decision to set up your own personal training business is a serious commitment and it is worth making the time to investigate it thoroughly.

A business plan can be the difference between a struggling personal training business and a highly successful one.

A business plan is an outline of your business's current situation, your business goals, and plans for reaching them. There will be short and long term elements to your plan.

There are a range of resources and online tools to help you set up your business plan.

### Some key issues to think about are below.

- Financial considerations including the cost of a facility rent, capital outlay, cost of record-keeping and accounting services, debt management, financial advice, insurance.
- Personal financial requirements; how much money you need to receive each week to cover personal expenses.
- Operational requirements including the policies and procedures if you own your own mobile business or PT studio, payment options, equipment and facility supply and maintenance.
- How you will comply with legislation, and codes of ethics, and insurance requirements.
- Sales and marketing plans and budgets.
- Marketing requirements such as lead generation
- Consideration of how you may exit the business in terms of trading history, good will, assets and liabilities.
- Knowledge of the relevant government legislation acts, provisions & updates.

## Making sales and marketing your business

As a personal trainer a good portion of your business time will be spent on growing your client base, so you will need to have a steady stream of clients.

A common error is to think that if your service is excellent people will naturally choose you. While this is in part true, in order for a potential client to choose you they need to know you - that's where sales and marketing comes in.

There are a range of ways you can market your business including social media, face to face, referrals and community outreach. Don't forget as a REPs registered personal trainer you have access to have a free profile page on the REPs website.

It is important to keep records of potential clients so you can understand what marketing works and so that you can successfully move a potential client to a paying client. There are a range of sales and marketing tools and mentoring available.

### Some key sales terms you should know and use:

**Client lead:** A person who has expressed interest in personal training but has not been 'locked into' any form of payment or agreement with you. Leads are generated from marketing or from membership-point-of-sale. It is up to the personal trainer to convert this lead into a regular paying client.

**Conversion rate:** The number of client leads that have been converted into full-paying sessions. To work out your conversion rate take the number of clients taking up paid-for PT sessions and divide this by the total number of leads, multiplied by 100.

EG: 20 customers divided by 40 leads multiplied by 100 equals a 50% conversion rate.

**Customer or client:** Any person who is training with a personal trainer and paying in some way for that service.

**Average spend:** The amount of income divided by the number of customers in a given period.

E.g: \$3000 monthly income divided by 20 customers results in an average spend of \$150.00 per customer.

**Frequency of Spend:** This is the number of times in a given period the customer completes a transaction with the personal trainer.

E.g: 50 transactions in a month by 20 customers equates to 2.5 transactions per customer.

### Important Business Links

Consumer Guarantees Act (1993) <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1993/0091/latest/DLM311053.html>

Health and Safety at Work Act (2015) <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2015/0070/latest/DLM5976660.html>

Fair Trading Act (1986) <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1986/0121/latest/DLM96439.html>

ACC - Injury Prevention, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act (2001) <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2001/0049/22.0/versions.aspx>

The Privacy Act and subsequent amendments (1993) <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1993/0028/latest/DLM296639.html>

# SECTION 1D

## PERCEPTION VERSE REALITY

### VALUABLE INFORMATION FOR CONTRACTORS RUNNING THEIR OWN BUSINESS

Working in the exercise industry can be very fulfilling, rewarding and very satisfying. But like every industry, there are misconceptions about what it involves. As 'forewarned is forearmed', we spoke to personal trainers around New Zealand and asked them to tell us some of the areas in which perceptions can often clash with reality.

### You are in sales

Be under no illusion – if you don't know how to sell and promote yourself as an exercise professional, it would be extremely difficult to be successful. This is one of the biggest factors that trips up new exercise professionals. This is especially true for those operating their own businesses such as many personal trainers, yoga teachers and some group exercise instructors. Putting a poster and business cards on display will not be enough to make sure that clients will roll up in a steady stream. You need to interact, talk to gym users (if you are based in a gym), network and outreach to promote yourself. A successful exercise professional is likely to have a high level of confidence, a good foundation knowledge and a commitment to ongoing education. They will be able to prove and demonstrate to potential and existing clients that they care, and are not afraid of telling the truth.

This is an area where having a mentor support group is incredibly powerful.

The PT Council provides a mentoring service and can put you in touch with mentors. (visit [www.ptcouncil.co.nz](http://www.ptcouncil.co.nz)).

### The money won't roll in on day one

You may not be earning the money you envisage straight away. As you can see from the career pathways model, a gym instructor may initially command close to the minimum wage. This is probably not too much of an issue if you are relatively young without responsibilities, but if you have a family and a mortgage, this is something to consider. Be prepared to start on a minimum wage and bear in mind that this is no different to any other professional roles like nursing and accountancy, where individuals start on a basic remuneration rate which increases as they gain more industry experience.

### Your role may be wide ranging - especially if employed in a gym

You'll be doing much more than training clients and writing programmes. If you are a gym instructor for example you will probably be responsible for supervising the gym and maintaining the facility, as well as contributing towards other club activities. You may therefore find yourself in any given shift distributing leaflets, cleaning equipment, covering on reception, and making contact with members on the gym floor, as well as taking several 1 on 1 consultation appointments. Independent and contract personal trainers are responsible for all their own business administration, health and safety and legal obligations, selling their services and between session client care and communication.

## You won't be training athletes or top performers.

The clients or customers you deal with in the average exercise facility or exercise professional business are not athletes or advanced exercisers.

In fact the vast majority will be ordinary people who are just looking to lose a little weight, get more active, and feel better on a daily basis by exercising regularly.

Sometimes clients may also have a range of health issues which has prompted them to get started into exercise, so they will be reliant on your knowledge and skill to help them and your ability to refer them when needed.

## Your work hours will not be 9 to 5

The exercise industry does not operate on a 9 to 5 working day. Your clients and customers need access to you and your facilities outside of their working hours. This means working early mornings, evenings and weekends, so be prepared to work spilt shifts to take this into account. It is also worth noting that if you are into sport yourself, getting extensive time off for training or matches may not always be convenient for your business or employer.

## Beware the 'setting up set-backs'

Setting yourself up in a business is no different to any small business start up. Many fail due to a lack of simple financial planning. Assume that setting up everything will take much longer than anticipated – income will therefore be slower coming in than predicted, and costs will also run higher.

Our advice is to have a realistic business plan in place with enough cash to see you through a reasonable length of time.

## Back yourself

All exercise professionals start out feeling a little overwhelmed at time. As with many new careers, it is easy to get into a 'confidence crisis' especially when you are working alone and feeling isolated. We recommend you develop networks and support groups with other exercise professionals and small businesses.

Joining organisations that can help you and can keep you motivated like the PT Council of NZ is a great start. By also attending some of the industry annual events (ExerciseNZ Roadshow, Fitex industry conference), you will also feel more in touch and have the opportunity to meet other local trainers. Seek out mentors that have 'been there, done that' and understand the issues you encounter.

If you put a bit of thought into these areas before getting started into the industry, then you will have a greater chance at success and a long and fruitful career ahead.



# SECTION 1E

## INDUSTRY PAY RATES

Pay rates in the exercise industry vary considerably, depending on role. The rates below give the common ranges for average payment for various roles in the industry to give some indication of remuneration rates. Like most industries in New Zealand, entry level pay rates can be closer to the minimum wage level until your skill level increases with experience.

Last updated May 2018

**Front Line Customer Service** (receptionist etc) - \$ 37,000-42,000 per annum, (or \$18-\$26 per hour)

**Dedicated Sales Membership Consultant** – \$43,000-49,000K per annum (or \$18-\$27/hr)

**Facility Managers** - \$51,000-58,000 for branch manager, or \$63,000-\$68,000 for a sole responsibility role

**Group Exercise** – \$30 to \$50 per class (yoga and Pilates both had higher averages of around \$49)

**Exercise Consultant/Gym Instructor** - Varies significantly depending on the experience and expectations of the role. Average pay rates are anywhere from \$21-\$40 per hour, with the top end for highly experienced senior staff providing high levels of customer care and direct supervision. Often entry level staff are paid \$17 - \$18 per hour.

**Personal Trainers**  
Personal training pay rates varies significantly. The main drivers of this are the two different employment structures in place.

**Personal Trainer Employees** - Where paid an hourly rate by the facility, the hourly rates range between \$25-\$40 per hour.

**Personal Trainer Contractors** - who charge clients directly, charge between \$40 and \$70 per hour, with the most common hourly rate being around \$45 per hour.

Note: Personal trainer contractors working from within a facility, normally also pay rent to the facility in the range \$150-\$225 per week. Those not in a facility often have other costs such as rental of space, and/or equipment and marketing.

**Important Note:** The above numbers are averages only, and actual pay rates vary considerably between roles, regionally (with larger cities paying slightly more), and dependant on the type of facility and exact make up of the role. It is very common in smaller facilities for a job to be a mixture of many of the above roles. Additionally, many people are employed part time in the industry, especially in group exercise and exercise consultant/gym instructor type roles.

### Sources

- ExerciseNZ and REPs industry surveys (2014, 2015)
- Zypay 2014 Staff Salary InfoGraph

# PART 2

## GETTING QUALIFIED AND REGISTERED



**If you are considering a career in the exercise industry then you must have a qualification.**

### **REPs Registered Qualifications**

The majority of New Zealand's reputable and relevant exercise professional qualifications and education institutions are registered with REPs. It is important to check that your intended qualification is REPs registered to meet New Zealand and international standards by going online at [www.reps.org.nz](http://www.reps.org.nz). If the qualification you intend to complete is not listed on the REPs website, you should contact REPs for further information. Completing a qualification not registered with REPs would result in the requirement to re-train, or undergo an assessment process which involves both cost and time to you. This means that you need to consider your training options carefully.

Some exercise facilities and workplaces require new employees or contractors to have their REPs registration prior to commencing their role in the facility, so it is important to be registered with REPs. The New Zealand Register of Exercise Professionals (REPS) provides a place for you to identify the skills and expertise that correspond with each career pathway option listed, and more. These skills and expertise are known as a 'scope of practice'.

*Note: Every registered exercise professional has a scope of practice which simply means the work they do is within their knowledge, competency and skill*

## Your Pathway to Getting Started

As you think about your planned career in the exercise industry, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do I want to undertake a full-time or part-time course?
2. Do I want to train locally or am I willing to travel for a short course?
3. Do I prefer lecture based, online or workplace training? (All forms of training have practical experience elements included)
4. What facilities do I want to target for employment? What training provider do they typically source their staff from?
5. If I want to become an exercise professional, will the qualification I complete be recognised by REPs for industry registration?
6. What types of exercise industry courses does my local education institution provide?
7. If I want to work in sales and marketing, what are the requirements of the facility where I want to work? Do I need to have undertaken business papers?

## TYPES OF TRAINING PROVIDERS:

### 'On-Job' Training with Skills Active Aotearoa

Skills Active is the industry training organisation for exercise in New Zealand. They are funded by government to create world-class, nationally-recognised qualifications that exercise industry staff can complete while they work.

The benefit of on-job training is that you are earning an income, gaining a qualification, and getting real-life experience, all in one go. And because Skills Active's programmes are government-subsidised, they are very affordable.

Skills Active works with a wide range of exercise facilities throughout New Zealand, from small to large. Skills Active or the facility will provide learning resources and assessment tasks for the staff member, and supporting materials will help the workplace to deliver the training.

In some cases, an organisation's own in-house training programme will be aligned to a Skills Active programme, so staff members who complete the in-house training will simultaneously earn a national qualification.

Skills Active also has a Recognition of Current Competency process, which means that you may be able to get your existing skills and experience recognised through a qualification.

A range of qualifications are on offer, covering the key roles in the industry, from group fitness, personal training and exercise consulting, through to administration and management.

To enrol in a Skills Active on-job qualification, you must be employed in the exercise industry. Make sure to check with the business that you're working in, or would like to work in, to see if they are already registered with Skills Active.

For more information go to: [www.skillsactive.org.nz](http://www.skillsactive.org.nz)

### Lecture based and face to face training with University/ Polytechnic, Wananga

There are a range of short courses and longer certificate to degree programmes available across NZ.

These courses involve a set face to face structure with lectures and practical workshop sessions. There is likely to be a placement component in an exercise facility.

The classroom setting allows for students to have a community and learn from each other as well as course material.

Access to the campus on a regular basis is required so less suitable for those in small towns or with less flexible travel options.

## Online and flexible training through Private Training Providers (PTE)

Short courses and longer programmes are becoming more available.

With online options access is available anywhere with an internet connection, with any face to face component allowing for a flexible schedule, and more likely to be weekend or irregular sessions allowing for other work or family commitments.

A high level of self-led study makes this option more suited for students who can work alone and are self-motivated.

## Before you get started in the New Zealand Exercise Industry

As you contemplate a career in the exercise industry, consider these simple strategies for 'getting started':

- Talk to exercise industry employees at your exercise facility or recreation centre. How did they get started?
- If you want to become a contracted exercise professional, then the starting point is often working on the gym-floor as an exercise consultant or gym instructor. Ask your local facility what their expectations are for qualifications in this role.
- Seek work as a receptionist before moving into a sales position.
- If you are planning on working for a large employer or in a franchised facility with multiple sites, check to see if they have their own internal training requirements.

Promotion of cityfitness



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*CityFitness provides all of the tools  
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Email: [PT@cityfitness.co.nz](mailto:PT@cityfitness.co.nz)

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## Things to think about

These pathways offer the most general entry into working in the exercise industry. It is highly recommended that you talk to the facility that you want to work in and explore the specific training and vocational opportunities that they may be offering. Other factors to consider are also whether or not you want to work for a large, multi-site facility or a smaller facility within your local community. The answer to this may lie in what best suits your character, vision and your personal goals.

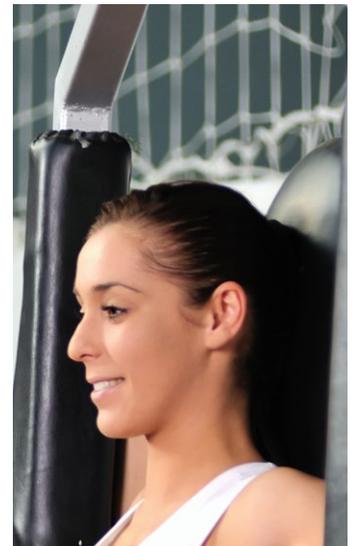
Have a clear picture of what you want your career to look like. If you are passionate about engaging with people, then become an exercise professional. If you are passionate about numbers and business strategies, then start out in membership sales and forge your way towards managing or even owning the business. The choice is yours – you have just got to put your heart and soul into it!



“As soon as I began my course, I immediately knew I wanted to work with people and I wanted to help them solve their health problems. I started both working in a small studio to get some gym experience as well as working from my own garage/studio at that stage. Choosing a good quality course certainly sets you up with a great foundation for what’s to come but it’s as important to work on continuously upskilling throughout the following years as well - otherwise you remain a generalist not a specialist which makes it harder to market yourself and stand out from the ever growing crowd.

Finding your niche would be the most important aspect of fine tuning your PT business. Which clients do you have the most fun with? Which ones bring the most satisfaction day to day - this is important if you are in for the long haul. Answering questions like these will help you fine tune your market and marketing message.”

Richard Ellis, Owner Fit 4 Life - Advanced Health Coaching (Exercise Industry Awards, PT of the Year 2016), Chief Mentor at ‘The PT Mentor’



**FACT:**  
26% OF  
AUSTRALIAN &  
NEW ZEALAND  
FITNESS  
FACILITIES ARE  
OPEN  
24 HOURS.  
(Ezypay, 2014)

# PART 3

## WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY



### SECTION 3A

## DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO WORK IN THE INDUSTRY?

### Meeting the needs of industry employers and workplaces

Seeking employment in the exercise industry can be just as challenging as any other sector. We encourage you to explore opportunities in the various exercise employment categories and then develop the necessary skills and personal attributes which we think employers are looking for. Whether you are seeking work in a large multi-site facility, an independent club, or a private studio, managers are first and foremost looking for professional team members who are positive, highly motivated and genuinely passionate about looking after members and clients.

Before you start searching for employment you need to have qualifications specific to exercise and the role you are seeking be it in exercise consulting, personal training, sales or management. Check out the REPs website for appropriate courses: [www.reps.org.nz](http://www.reps.org.nz)

*Note: You may want to talk to your local exercise facility to see if they have access to on-job training through Skills Active ITO.*

Don't forget to consider the specific values and purpose of the facility you are investigating, it may be an exclusive,

high cost facility or a community based model, or something else. You should also consider what makes the exercise industry and exercise businesses unique to other businesses.

- Great staff who are passionate about supporting people to make exercise a part of their life and who are role models for healthy living.
- Team members who understand that the 'customer experience' is paramount – from the time someone walks into an exercise facility until they leave.
- Knowledgeable and motivating exercise professionals who are focused on the delivery of results based, safe and enjoyable exercise services.
- Team members who understand that RETENTION, eg: members remaining active with the exercise facility, is the key to success in the 'business of exercise'.
- Having exciting and innovative exercise, nutrition and well-being solutions that meet the needs of the target market that the facility is servicing from beginner to advanced, including those with specialised needs.

The following information provides a brief outline of skills for each of the key roles in this REPs Getting Started Guide. The list is by no means definitive and we encourage you to contact the facility or business that you may be thinking about joining and meet with management or human resources in person to discuss the skills, attributes and qualifications that are specific to that business.

## Across all roles employers are looking for staff who have:

- High levels of motivation and understand the importance of customer service and client care.
- Excellent communication skills and professional presentation.
- Training in first aid and health and safety (specific requirements will be role dependent)
- Relevant and recognised qualifications for roles involved in exercise programming, safety and supervision, personal training and teaching classes (qualifications specific to each role)

### Group Exercise Instructor:

- Outstanding motivational skills and confidence in leading groups large and small.
- Ability to work with and interpret music.

### Gym Floor Instructor/ Exercise Consultant:

- Prepared to work shifts including weekends
- Ability to relate to wide range of people and make fast connections.

### Personal Trainer:

- Must be either self-employed or willing to combine gym floor instruction with extra hours as personal trainer
- Prepared to work shifts or book clients at a range of times including weekends, early mornings and evenings.
- Must have ability to sell own services to potential clients.
- Ability to self- manage administration, health and safety obligations, and business obligations

### Membership Sales Roles:

- Strong sales confidence and ability. You will usually be allocated a set number of hours for client care and admin work, including telephone calls and emails with the bulk of your time meeting and greeting potential members and clients to showcase your facility and generate sales.
- Be highly self-motivated, especially when it comes to generating new member leads and managing different client personalities
- This role suits people who thrive in a highly competitive sales environment and like working to targets.

### Reception / Admin roles:

- Excellent communication and multitasking skills and a friendly disposition especially under pressure.
- Understanding of the benefits of exercise and key products and services within the facility.
- Able and willing to work shifts including weekends



## On working in the exercise industry:

"I have had mentors throughout my life. My business mentors have played a huge part in where I am today - not just in business, but the flow on into everyday life too!

They have helped provide me with clarity in direction long term and also with the short term tasks to get there. Their knowledge and experience has saved me a bunch of mistakes and kept me accountable when times get tough.

Many of the tools and tricks I have learnt from them I still use and they have been transferable from work to play!

They have given me a push to do things I wouldn't have taken on without their support, and these leaps have given me confidence to push beyond the box and have turned some of my crazy dreams and ideas into reality :)"

Hilary Blackstock, PT and PTC Mentoring Manager



## Did you know?

### Why do people have a personal trainer?

The Ezy pay Survey (2015) states:

"Most people indicated the reason they chose to use a personal trainer was to:

- get better results (57.1%)
- for extra motivation (36.8%)
- to get advice on exercise (34.6%)
- to create an exercise program (27.1%).

### Why do people join a gym?

The 2015 Fitness Industry Survey (Ezy pay, 2015) says that:

The main reasons members surveyed joined up was:

- To do different types of exercise (19.8%)
- Club's location (19.4%)
- Value for money (9.3%)
- More or better classes (8.9%)
- Good customer service received during a visit or phone call (8.1%)
- Club offered up-to-date equipment (4%)
- Club offered a no-contract membership (3.2%)
- Club offered no joining fees (2%).



**The Exercise Association of New Zealand encourages future employees to go to the industry jobsite website to explore vacancies in the industry:**  
[www.fitnz.co.nz](http://www.fitnz.co.nz)



**REPs Registered Exercise Facilities make a commitment to only employ REPs registered exercise professionals. For a list of these facilities go to [www.reps.org.nz](http://www.reps.org.nz)**

# SECTION 3B

## REPS AND REGISTRATION

### What is REPs?

**Registration with REPs is the industry standard for exercise professionals and facilities in New Zealand.**

REPs Registration is independent verification and proof of your qualification and competency to work as an exercise professional. REPs registration provides assurance and confidence to your clients, your employer and other health professionals that you have the competency to perform your role, that you meet national industry standards and abide by the exercise professional code of ethics. Registration clearly enables exercise professionals to differentiate themselves from the 'cowboys' who have little or no training. We all know of individuals who claim to be 'qualified', but give incorrect and potentially dangerous exercise advice.

- REPs is **industry mandated** and supported with responsibility for ensuring exercise professionals meet approved national standards to deliver safe and effective exercise to New Zealanders.
- REPs provides a range of registration levels to meet exercise professional occupational roles, and also registers exercise facilities who agree to only engage the services of REPs Registered Exercise Professionals.
- REPs primary objective is to ensure that the public receive safe and effective exercise advice. REPs uses registration as the key mechanism of achieving this outcome.
- Committing to REPs registration shows that you take your role, and the clients you work with seriously. By being a REPs registered professional, clients know that you have their best interests in mind.
- By being REPs registered you are not relying on clients having to 'work out' for themselves what makes an exercise professional qualified, clients know that you have their best interests in mind.
- While looking fit tells a client that you practice what you preach, it's not a good standalone measure of knowledge and skill in providing exercise services.

**REPs message to the public is very clear - ONLY use REPs Registered Exercise Professionals for safe and effective exercise advice and instruction.**

The easiest way for the public to find Registered Exercise Professionals is at REPs Registered Exercise Facilities.

REPs operates as not for profit and is owned by the industry body Exercise Association of New Zealand Incorporated on behalf of the entire the industry.

## Why REPs Register? As an Exercise Professional

- As an independent third party verification body, REPs provides a **publicly recognisable, promotable and marketable quality mark**
- **International portability of REPs registration** for those moving overseas (Australia, UK, South Africa, Ireland, UAE - this network continues to grow)
- Continuing professional development educational and upskilling opportunities
- **Valuable resources and tools** including an industry approved pre-screening systems to support exercise professionals
- **Promotional and marketing material** to help promote your REPs registration
- **Ability to be recognised** by allied health professionals including the Ministry of Health, ACC, Worksafe New Zealand, and other authorities

## As a REPs Registered Exercise Facility

- A publicly recognisable, promotable and marketable quality mark
- Independent facility verification and recognition
- Easy quality check of your trainer qualifications
- Valuable resources to support facilities and their trainers
- Discounted registration fees for exercise professionals

REPs have made it easy for the public to find registered exercise professionals, by also registering exercise facilities. Registered facilities agree to **ONLY** use the services of registered exercise professionals in any exercise advice and demonstration roles.

All exercise professionals at the facility must be REPs registered. This means that the public have the assurance that every exercise professional at the registered exercise facility is registered at the level appropriate for their role.

A useful analogy is that of a hospital. When using a hospital the public are assured that all of the medical and nursing staff will be appropriately registered and undertake ongoing education to keep up to date with their knowledge. There is no need for the public to individually check whether each medical professional is registered. A registered exercise facility provides the public with the same assurance in that all of its exercise professionals will be registered with REPs at the appropriate level, and undertakes ongoing education to remain up to date in their role. (This medical example is not intended in any way to imply that exercise professionals are medically trained).

A REPs registered exercise facility must also be a member of Exercise New Zealand (the industry body) and follow the industry code of ethics which offers appropriate protections to users of the facility.

REPs registered exercise facility registration provides a powerful tool to promote a facility's commitment to international standards in the delivery of exercise advice, and REPs registered exercise facilities are authorised to use the REPs branding in their promotional material.



# REPs Resources

**As a registered exercise professional you have access to a range of professional looking and practical REPs resources and tools to help you operate your business, while at the same time promoting the benefits of using REPs registered trainers such as yourself. Designing and printing these resources would take you a significant amount of your time and money, so REPs registration saves you this effort.**

## REPs Pre-screening System

New Zealand's first ever evidence-based pre-screening tool and best practice guide for exercise professionals. The system provides a cutting-edge tool to deliver high quality pre-screening and exercise programme development. In the hands of REPs registered professionals, this tool enhances the health benefits of structured exercise through a comprehensive screening process.

There are four key sections to the pre-screening form itself:

1. Structured exercise participation risk stratification based on internationally accepted, evidence-based models. The section covers criteria such as known existing cardiovascular, pulmonary and metabolic conditions. It also allows for exercise professionals to conduct some simple screening tests.
2. Captures conditions not included within standard risk stratification criteria but clearly of importance for consideration in the exercise prescription process. Musculoskeletal conditions, diagnosed medical conditions other than those identified in the previous risk stratification section, and medications prescribed are included. Identification of important conditions and medications will encourage closer enquiry and consultation with allied health professionals such as a referring GP's on important exercise related implications.
3. A template to capture key exercise prescription information such as exercise participation history, goals and availability for attendance which all inform more effective and efficient exercise prescription.
4. 'Monitoring progression' and record exercise assessment results such as aerobic capacity, body composition, strength, and movement competency. The 'assessment-prescription connection' is an important aspect for exercise professionals to consider in order to underpin exercise prescription choices and objectively quantify progression towards stated targets.

## Tell Me More Consumer Information Series

This is our range of consumer information brochures on a selection of popular exercise related topics. They are excellent sources of information to share with clients and potential clients and are designed to start a conversation with the reader. The information in the Tell Me More brochures is designed encourage the client to seek

more detailed information and support from their REPs registered exercise professional.

There are currently 14 different Tell Me More brochures in the series, with new additions added regularly.

Registered exercise professionals can purchase these at subsidised rates through the REPs online shop via our website. These resources can be purchased as a full set of all resources included, or individually as required.

## Business Paperwork, Resources and Industry

### Best Practice Guides

REPs provide a range of business forms and resources that means trainers don't need to 'reinvent the wheel'.

The client/ trainer agreement form is a written agreement of the terms and conditions when providing PT services.

### Research Reviews

So that you can keep up to date with the latest exercise industry research and science REPs provides REPs registered exercise professionals with summaries of peer-reviewed science, with an emphasis on practically useful information. The articles provide key-point summaries and also links for further information if you want to delve further.

### SMEAEP

Stress Management Endorsed Exercise Programme (SMEAEP) developed by the Exercise Association of NZ enables exercise professionals and facilities to delivery exercise programmes that are tax deductible and not subject to Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) to businesses and self-employed individuals. It is an Inland Revenue requirement that exercise professionals delivering SMEAEP must be REPs registered.

For more details visit [www.stressmanagementexercise.co.nz](http://www.stressmanagementexercise.co.nz).

## Health and Safety Considerations Guides

All contracted exercise professionals and facilities must meet their obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

The Exercise Association has created guides for both facilities and exercise professionals to support the industry in meeting it's obligations and highlight elements that are unique or need special consideration in an exercise setting.



# SECTION 3C

## WORKING AS A SELF-EMPLOYED CONTRACTOR



### Meeting your obligations

For those of you running your own business, regardless of the set-up, financial matters are an essential component. A reminder that as an employee, tax is deducted by your employer (PAYE tax), so the need to set up a business is not required. Anyone who collects money directly from clients, or provides an invoice to a business or individual, is very likely to need to keep their own income and expenses records, and pay tax on it.

#### Getting started financially

One of the first steps in setting up a business is deciding on what business structure to use. Many independent trainers operate as a Sole Trader which has the advantage of being the simplest structure, but does expose the trainer to liability issues should the business have financial issues. Conversely, setting up a company is more complex, but offers more protection, and allows for more than one person to be involved.

Before deciding on the business structure, get advice from a lawyer. This is especially important if you are going into business with other people, as it's important to consider what happens in the future, such as one person wanting to sell their part of the business, or if things go wrong.

#### Tax Obligations

Any person who does not have PAYE deducted from income, must declare this income to the IRD, and pay tax on it. For Sole Traders, this is added to the individual's tax return, companies have their own tax return. Businesses must also keep records of all money earned (income) as well as receipts for all expenses related to the business.

A reminder that tax is paid on net profit (not on income). Rates constantly change, so check [www.ird.govt.nz](http://www.ird.govt.nz) for the most up to date tax calculations. Tax rates also vary between individuals and a company.

### **The tax honeymoon and the hangover**

For anyone earning wages, tax is paid as you earn it (hence PAYE – pay as you earn), but for a business it is paid at the end of the tax year (the first year is the honeymoon). However, then comes the hangover - from the second year onwards businesses are required to pay tax IN ADVANCE, meaning they must estimate their net profit and pay tax on this in advance of earning it. This is often a shock to new businesses, as at the end of their first year, not only do they have to pay tax on their first year's profits but also to start to pay tax on their second year (which hasn't even been earned yet). There is a 6.7% discount if you make voluntary payments during your first year of business and before the tax year ends 31 March. The solution: Put aside a portion of your earnings as you go (having a separate bank account for this is a good idea) - think of it as self-imposed PAYE - and in your first year, make this more, since you need to budget for two years' tax.

### **ACC**

ACC premiums are paid for by the employer for anyone earning wages or a salary. However, businesses must pay ACC premiums at the end of the tax year, based on the net profit. ACC premiums are around 2%, and payable in advance, based on estimated profits. Again, watch out for the double whammy in year one, where the ACC premiums for both the first and second year are due.

### **GST**

If you know you will receive more than \$60,000 income (before tax) for the year ahead you must register for GST. This means you must charge GST on your services but you can also claim back on your purchases. If you are below the \$60,000 threshold registration is voluntary however it makes sense to register if you are going to be buying high cost items like vehicles and equipment to use in the business as you can claim the GST back on these items. GST returns can be made monthly, bi-monthly, or 6 monthly. At present GST is 15%.

### **FBT or Fringe Benefit Tax**

This is paid where a business asset has been made available to a staff member or self-employed person for their personal use/benefit. The IRD require that where there is an element of personal benefit you quantify the value of this and inform the IRD through regular FBT returns. Cars and bikes would be good examples here as you use them for business trips but also for your personal use. A log book should be kept to measure what

level of personal use is being made. Your accountant will be able to best advise you as to the ways FBT is calculated and returned to the IRD.

### **Tax Responsibility**

The onus of paying tax is all on the tax payer. Ignorance is no excuse and the IRD could attach penalties and interest if you don't pay what you are required to pay on time. The message here; Don't ignore the paperwork or bury your head in the sand.

### **What expenses can I claim?**

Costs incurred in the 'generation of income' is deemed tax deductible for Sole Traders. Costs of a private nature are not. Seek advice from an accountant.



### **Keeping up to date**

Make it a discipline to deal with your admin and paperwork weekly. Just like housework if you do a little often it won't turn into a herculean task. The 'shoebox scenario' (where all your receipts and bills etc. are shoved in a shoebox or something similar) is not the best way of record keeping. These days there are a range of apps and online services that can assist with managing your tax obligations. It is good practice to keep all receipts for expenses you are claiming for but for items under \$50 proof of receipt is not required by the IRD.

Most businesses, whether they are sole traders, or companies, will benefit from professional advice – a lawyer when first starting the business or signing leases, and an accountant when getting advice on what records to keep, and how much tax to pay. Inland Revenue also provide a small business unit that provides advice to businesses on tax matters, and many local chambers of commerce provide support and advice on various business matters to their members.

**IMPORTANT.** The above business information is a general guide only and REPs recommends professional advice is sought in all matters of tax and accountancy.

## Marketing Yourself

Before starting on any marketing you need to establish what it is exactly you are marketing, and to who.

### Generalist vs. Specialist?

One of the most difficult things when you start out is not being clear about the area of fitness and exercise you will specialise in or the type of client you work best with. It is only through experience that you build up knowledge and credibility in a specialist niche area but the earlier you can start focusing on this area the better. Increasingly successful trainers are moving away from being “jack of all trades” to really honing their skills in two or three niche areas. You can probably eliminate many areas already that you have no interest in and develop a short list of the type of work and client you want to focus on. Bear in mind however, that early on any paying session is a good session!

### Choosing a business name

Many newcomers entering the personal training business make the mistake of spending way too much time and money on creating a business name and logo. Our advice is not to overly agonise coming up with a business name. If you have one you want to use, great but if not consider using your own name or a derivative of it. After all YOU are your brand and it is no coincidence that the world’s most successful trainers seem to use their own names.

### Considerations when designing a logo

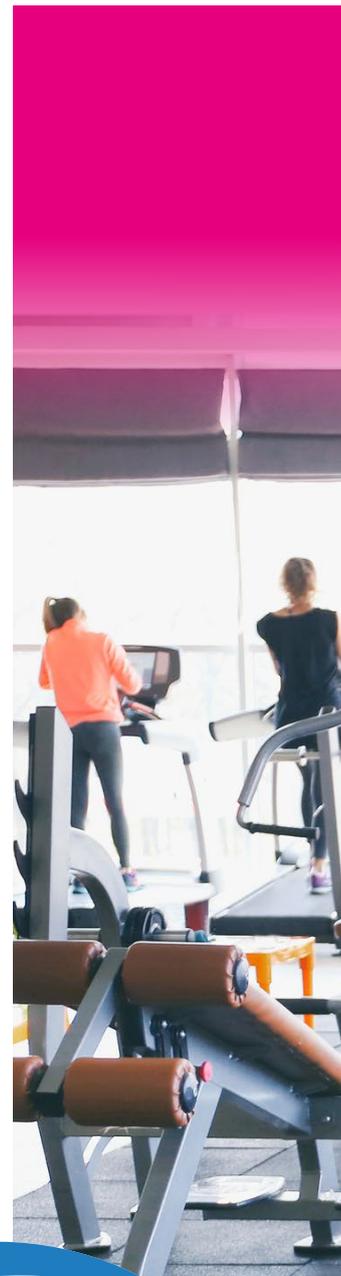
Ensure it is not overly complex and reliant solely on colour for its effect. The font should be clear and readable. Think about how it will look on a variety of media; web, print, clothing, car for example. Logos that are horizontal rather than vertical are possibly more versatile but consider having 2 options – a vertical and a horizontal option to cover all eventualities.

### Your profile

One of the REPs resources is a professional looking profile template. Simply download your photo and text using whatever headings you like. Advice on how to present your profile is given on the REPs website.

### Leads are your lifeblood

There are two aspects to lead generation – whom you target and how you target them. The following list is a combination of the two and is designed to get you thinking about what may work for you given your contacts, interests and resources.



### **Get Online**

In the 21st century being online is a must.

A website is important; It needn't be huge but should carry a minimum of your profile, picture, contact details and a contact form. With a range of website design platforms available, you can manage the design yourself or get a professional to set up your site to begin but make changes ongoing yourself so you are not reliant on someone else. Social Media is used increasingly by everyone for business and social engagement. Platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube are simple to use and can offer you excellent client reach. There are many tools and tricks available to help you make the most of social media.

### **Professional Networks And Community**

Connecting with other businesses is a great way to work together to grow sales. Whether it's advertising in a local café, putting up notices or working on a joint project with a compatible business it's well worth connecting.

### **Be Seen In Action**

Whether in a park, studio or gym being seen in action is cost-effective lead avenue you have. It can cost you nothing BUT you must be prepared to get out and talk to people and be confident. The Interactive Instructor book and online training course (go to [www.interactiveskillstraining.com](http://www.interactiveskillstraining.com)) can help you with some ideas on just how to approach people you don't know when on the gym floor.

### **Local Papers & Publications**

This is an option certainly but beware that print adverts may not necessarily result in the return you are hoping for so be mindful that money spent in this area could be put to better use elsewhere.

### **Seminars/Workshops**

This works well with other businesses.

Start small and even if you only have a small audience start with that and turn it to your advantage by making it a personal interactive session. Never cancel anything unless it is necessary.

### **In a nutshell:**

Use your cash wisely. The most effective lead generator is YOU getting out and talking to people. Selling yourself is as important, if not more important, than selling your product.

### **Your database and testimonials**

Your database is gold dust. Right from the start keep a record of every contact and lead you make. At the least record their name, email and how they came to be on your list. You can then work the list in a variety of ways. Also, continually gather testimonials from people you work with. They will not volunteer them, you will have to ask. As a rule of thumb every 2-3 months you should get a new testimonial from a successful client.

### **Professional standards and etiquette**

Because marketing is "everything you say and everything you do" you must be aware of how you come across in a variety of situations.

### **Here are a few tips to make sure you come across well:**

- Get your written work proof read by others. If you can afford a professional, get them to do it.
- Be very careful with making jokes etc. online and if you have something contentious to deal with, you may be better speaking in person as misunderstandings are common via social media.
- Never make derogatory remarks about any other trainers or facilities.
- Do not make phone calls before 8am or after 9pm unless you know the client well or it is an emergency.
- Think about what you wear, your body language and your behaviour when you are training clients as you are a walking billboard to potential clients.

# SECTION 3D GETTING SUPPORT

## Industry Organisations

There are many organisations that support individuals and businesses operating in the exercise industry in New Zealand. The most significant of those are listed below.



### ExerciseNZ

The Exercise Association of New Zealand (ExerciseNZ), is a non profit representative organisation, who's mission is to proactively support a sustainable exercise and fitness industry in New Zealand by growing participation in structured exercise through advocacy, information and industry standards. ExerciseNZ provides resources to support exercise business, advocacy on behalf of the industry, and runs educational events (such as the FitEx Conference). For more details visit [www.exercisenz.org.nz](http://www.exercisenz.org.nz)



### Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs)

REPs operates the professional register for exercise professionals, exercise facilities and exercise education providers in New Zealand. For members of the public and other health professionals, registration with REPs is the recognised standard to ensure safe and effective exercise advice. REPs is recognised by many organisations, including Exercise New Zealand (the industry association), Skills Active Aotearoa (the government mandated education provider for our industry), and the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs). For more details visit [www.reps.org.nz](http://www.reps.org.nz)



### Personal Trainers Council of New Zealand

The PT Council is a network of individual ambassadors who are personal trainers and are committed to the enhancement of the exercise industry in NZ. Through regional meetings, Facebook and their website, they provide a vehicle for personal trainers to connect with other trainers and the wider industry, get upskilling information and discuss common issues and concerns of relevance to them and the personal training industry. For more details visit [www.ptcouncil.co.nz](http://www.ptcouncil.co.nz)



### Skills Active Aotearoa

Skills Active are the Industry Training Organisation (ITO) for the Sport, Exercise, Outdoor Recreation, Snow Sports and Community Recreation sectors in New Zealand. They are government funded to support on-job qualifications and up skilling, helping workplaces deliver National Certificate qualifications to their staff. For more details visit [www.skillsactive.org.nz](http://www.skillsactive.org.nz)

# SECTION 3E INDUSTRY EVENTS



There are three key events on the New Zealand exercise calendar that are important and are designed to support, educate and celebrate those in the exercise industry.



## **FitEx Conference**

FitEx is the conference for the fitness and exercise industry in New Zealand. FitEx is held at the end of November in Auckland each year with over 700 people in attendance. This makes it the largest exercise industry networking opportunity in New Zealand. FitEx features the latest in science and business for every facet and role within the exercise industry – from facility owners, through to exercise professionals including personal trainers, yoga teachers and group exercise instructors. More information at: [www.fitex.co.nz](http://www.fitex.co.nz)



## **Roadshow**

The Exercise Association Roadshow facilitated by Exercise New Zealand is a half day workshop held in locations around NZ in June and dedicated to supporting the New Zealand exercise industry.

The workshops provide takeaway ideas to implement into your exercise business immediately. [www.exercisenz.org.nz/roadshow](http://www.exercisenz.org.nz/roadshow)



## **Exercise Industry Awards**

Co-timed with the FitEx conference weekend.

The awards are about recognising people for the outstanding work they do in our industry and celebrating the important impact that our industry has on the lives of many New Zealanders.

Award categories include a range of exercise facilities, individual awards and special categories including community and innovation. There is even an award category to recognise students, and for those who are new to the industry.

<http://www.exerciseindustryawards.co.nz>

# SECTION 3F WORKING AS AN EXERCISE PROFESSIONAL INTERNATIONALLY



REPs registration is the expected standard globally with over 210,000 exercise professionals registered with the member registers of the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs). REPs NZ is a founding member of ICREPs.

ICREPs purpose is to facilitate the sharing of best practice systems between its member registers.

For smaller countries like New Zealand, being part of this global network provides much value, and the opportunity to be a part of global best practice and standards for the benefit of New Zealand exercise professionals.

The full family of ICREPs member registers are (as at May 2019):

- Australia (REPs Australia/Fitness Australia)
- United Kingdom (REPs UK)
- Ireland (REPs Ireland)
- South Africa (REPs South Africa)
- United States of America (USREPs)
- United Arab Emirates (REPs UAE)
- Canada (NFLA)
- REPs Poland
- REPs India (associate member)

## Global Portability of New Zealand REPs Registration

Many of the most popular destinations which New Zealand exercise professionals travel to work include Australia, and the United Kingdom which require you to be registered to work. The good news is that New Zealand REPs registration is recognised through portability arrangements with the registers in the following countries:

- Australia
- United Kingdom
- South Africa
- Ireland
- United Arab Emirates

**Note! If you intend to travel and work overseas, speak to the team at REPs or go to our website ([www.reps.org.nz](http://www.reps.org.nz)) WELL IN ADVANCE of your departure date to ensure your registration is in order.**

New global portability partners continue to come on board as more countries establish registers, so please go to our website [www.reps.org.nz](http://www.reps.org.nz) to check if the country you are travelling to is part of the global portability agreement.





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