

Taking stock: A new start to the new season



Spring is nearing an end and no doubt you and your participants are already starting to think about the great summer ahead. At the start of summer it's always good to re-evaluate the season you've just had, plan for what you want to see, do and experience in the one ahead, and take action to put these plans in place.

Check out your own classes – others do!

A good starting point is to reflect on the classes you hold that have been successful and to consider why this is the case. Has your most popular class always been so successful? Have you continued the success created by a previous instructor or have you built the class yourself? It is always a good feeling to have a class that is well attended and it is a sign of a good instructor; even the most conveniently timetabled class would soon disappear if it was hosted by a poor instructor. If you have some classes that are not as well attended, identify exactly what it is that works for the successful ones and try to emulate that success across the board.

It is always very helpful to pick your participants' brains - they know what they want and what they like and they show it by attending your class. Anonymous surveys are useful as constructive tools. Participants will let you know for example, if the water temperature, noise or fumes from lawnmowers or poor lane space is bothering them. Outdoor classes are particularly susceptible to such challenges, which can spoil the exercise experience. If you are facing challenges, meet with the manager of the facility where you hold your classes and put your requests or concerns in writing. In these instances it is useful to offer a solution, rather than simply to identify the problem. You, more than anyone, will know what needs to happen and getting problems sorted out sooner rather than later is better for everyone.

Widen your horizons – it increases your earning capacity!

Evaluating the types of classes that you currently offer and potentially can offer is an interesting exercise. Doing the groundwork to widen your market in the summer months helps to keep the interest and diversity in the cooler months when numbers have a tendency to fall off. Do some market research on what other pools or facilities are offering. You will often find that there is an area of the market or a particular demographic that is not being catered for. Sporting teams, for example, are always looking for ways to vary their training and

continued on page 6



GET YOUR FREE STUFF HERE!

Network's Network is a program giving you % discounts, 2-for-1 specials, \$\$ savings, FREE offers and more, across all industries including health & beauty, adventure activities, dining, shopping, travel and accommodation.

And because there's no limit as to the number of offers you can download and redeem, your Network membership could now save you \$1000s!

It's all nationwide, it's all unlimited and it's all yours for just \$13.20 for up to 12 months access.*

To gain access to this awesome program, simply complete and return the Network's Network form enclosed with this publication and we'll be in touch with your login/password details for the Network's Network web site. Or visit www.fitnessnetwork.com.au/nn e-mail info@fitnessnetwork.com.au or phone 02 8424 7200 for more information.

Another benefit from



In cooperation with TLC Incentives & Promotions



* Your access to Network's Network is only valid while you are a Network member. You will be required to pay \$13.20 upon your annual renewal to retain access to the Network's Network program; but remember - just one voucher can return your \$13.20 investment!



Network Pilates

NEW

CERTIFICATE IV IN FITNESS PILATES (91313NSW)

LAUNCHING FEB 2007

**TO FIND OUT MORE
E-MAIL:**

pilates@fitnessnetwork.com.au

OR

PHONE 02 8424 7200



Taking stock: A new start to the new season

continued from page 5

there are huge numbers of teams just waiting to be presented with the sort of interesting new ideas that you are able to offer in aqua classes - you just need to find and cultivate them! Going to the training sessions and talking to the managers and trainers of sports teams, and presenting them with credible literature about aqua training, will bring results.

Summer also presents the opportunity to make the most of the feel-good factor that the season brings with it. Create your own summer games with local businesses and engage them in a friendly ten to twelve week competition. Programs can be designed around interval type activities and skills aimed at producing a measurable outcome, with teams needing to complete activities and exercise in order to score points. The activities are limited only by your imagination, and can be as challenging as you want them to be, making these competitions huge amounts of fun. They are also great for the local business community and introduce the benefits of aqua exercise to new participants, some of whom may then go on to take part in your classes throughout the rest of the year.

Your music and your moves

The next thing to check is your music and your workouts. Staying motivated enough to inspire your participants all of the time is a huge challenge, and one which can be addressed by sourcing new music and working out new routines - always fun and uplifting! An afternoon spent checking out all your music usually re-connects you to routines and moves that you have forgotten or haven't used for a while and can also be the trigger to create other formats. Adding new formats to the music you already know can also add a new slant to instructing, and attending other instructors' classes is a good way to keep stimulated and learn a few new moves. There are only so many ways to move the body, but one instructor's interpretation of a move may lead to a whole new interpretation by another instructor. Check out what you like about the class - the structure, the format, the energy, the moves or the cueing. If you enjoy the class then you will find that there is always something new, or slightly different to take away with you which can then be applied to your own class.

The most important asset - YOU!

Without you, your class wouldn't happen, so now it's time to think about you. The chemicals, the cement floor, the noise of the water and the constant distractions around you make the aquatic exercise environment hard on the body. You need self discipline and effort to look after yourself properly, and ongoing maintenance is essential to keep you working and injury free both poolside and afterwards. Poolside you need to have safe and comfortable footwear, voice, skin and eye protection and adequate hydration at all times. Away from the work environment your personal maintenance should include massage, caring for any niggly injuries before they worsen, moisturising, getting the right balance of rest, work and play, and correct diet and nutrition. Instructors need to walk their talk and to inspire others you need to be inspiring yourself. Without caring for yourself and striking the proper balance in your life you can't deliver the services that make you an outstanding instructor, motivator, mentor and role model. Taking stock of your classes, and of yourself, will ensure that you are ready, willing and eager to handle everything that this summer has in store! ♦



Laraine Dunn, MAppSc

A national and international presenter who is always in high-demand, Laraine was the recipient of Australian Fitness Network's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005. Her areas of expertise range from aquatic exercise education and healthy ageing, to lifestyle and personal and professional development. An educator, author and instructor, she has also been a mentor with the NSW DSRD Women in Business