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PRESENTER

Michelle Dean

WE CAUGHT UP WITH AUSTRALIAN
FITNESS NETWORK'S PRESENTER
OF THE YEAR to find out what makes this
group exercise legend tick ...

Name, occupation, state, fitness qualifications:

Michelle Dean, shareholder and Chief of
Programming (fancy way of saying Group
Fitness Manager) for V Club, Sydney.

**How did you get into this industry and how did you
arrive at where you are today in your career?**

At the age of 13 I was a big fatty. For
my 14th birthday my dad bought me a
gym membership. Within two years I
was fit, healthy, in love with aerobics and
was certified as the youngest instructor
in Australia. Over the next 18 years I
represented Australia at the World Aerobics
Championships, presented at conventions in
20 countries, and was sponsored by Reebok, Brazil Body, Nike, Rhythm Express and
Trax. Most recently I spent seven years in Hong Kong working for California Fitness
and as a Les Mills Trainer. Now I am back in Oz setting up a new chain of fitness
centres called V.



Describe your typical day

Right now, V is opening, so my day is pretty hectic! I'm eating breakfast by 6:45am
and by 7:30am I've opened the club. I'll then stand on my head for 45 minutes out
the front of the club. Seriously – anything to generate interest and get peoples
attention! My morning is then spent coordinating schedules, training sessions and
courses, marketing events, ordering and maintaining equipment, recruiting staff,
doing the payroll and researching new programs. By then it's a relief to teach my 1pm
BODYCOMBAT® class!

After that I do my own training to become a pole dancing instructor (no laughing).
Then it's time for a late lunch at 3 o'clock after which I spend a couple of hours
learning the latest Les Mills BODYCOMBAT® and BODYJAM® releases in preparation
for the upcoming quarterly workshops. I'll then teach a couple more classes until
7pm, before wrapping up the days paperwork and preparing for tomorrow. Then its
home to eat, watch CSI and sleep!

What skills are needed for your job?

Patience, persistence, passion and professionalism

What are the best and worst aspects of your job?

The best things are undoubtedly making a difference to people's lives, trying new
programs and introducing them to the Australian market. The worst part is the non-

PROFILE:

creative side – the HR, lawyers, accounting, dealing with the council, IT, etc. But it is great to learn this stuff.

What has been your greatest career challenge to date?

Hmm... Good question. It would have to be starting this new fitness chain. Having been away from Australia for so long, then coming back to launch a new centre is a major challenge – but one that I know will pay off.

And your greatest highlight?

I know this sounds like a suck up, but winning the Presenter of the Year at this year's FILEX was a major high. I'm so passionate about the Australian fitness industry that even when I was living overseas I still came back every year to present at Network Conventions. Having seen so many amazing people win this award in the past makes me honored and humbled to be among them.

What's your main focus now and what are your goals for the future?

Right now, making V a huge success and putting together a professional and caring team that will be loyal. In return I will make sure that my team is well looked after in terms of training, compensation and benefits. As for future goals, honestly, over the next eight years I plan on working my tushy off building the next 14 V Clubs. Then I'll hang up my runners and take a year-long trip around Australia on my bike.

What do the coming years hold in store for group exercise in Australia?

Hang on, let me look into my crystal ball. I see Les Mills remaining a major player, plus the addition of more creative-styled classes such as pole dancing and even more growth in the mind body field. I see the return of more freestyle classes and clubs offering a wide range of group exercise services. I see management treating instructors with the respect and professionalism they deserve. ■



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