



CORPORATE BOOT CAMP

THE AYC HEALTH & FITNESS CLUB IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, HAS A FINGER ON THE PULSE OF THE CORPORATE WELLNESS MOVEMENT AND IS TARGETING PROGRESSIVE COMPANIES WHO UNDERSTAND WHAT FITNESS REALLY IS - AN INVESTMENT IN THE PEOPLE WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COMPANY'S SUCCESS - THEIR EMPLOYEES.

IN 1986, GREG JUSTICE FOUNDED AYC Health & Fitness, one of the first personal training fitness centers to open in the Kansas City, Missouri area. That same year, he also took the position of Corporate and Community Wellness Supervisor at the Johnson County Park and Recreation District. After working both jobs for two years, Justice left the county position, but continued his involvement with corporate fitness through AYC Health & Fitness.

AYC Health & Fitness services an average of 150 to 175 clients, with a focus on one-on-one and small group personal training. Justice and his staff do a great job of retaining members - he claims an average client tenure of over 18 years - which is what recently caused him to look for new ways to expand and reach out to new, and in some cases younger, clientele.

To do this, Justice decided to carve out a niche in corporate wellness. First, he partnered with Dr. Chris Herrera, a doctor of physical therapy and a U.S. Olympic sailing team coach. Together, they created a corporate wellness system that provides corporations with on-site, evidence-based, cost-effective care. "The main reason we go on site is because the adherence rate is much higher when the wellness provider takes the program to the company, rather than having the employee go to an off-site location," he confides.

Justice landed their first big client, a technology firm called Epiq Systems, simply by convincing them to give him a few minutes of their time and listen to his presentation. First, Justice did a survey to make sure there was sufficient interest among employees, then he made it convenient by figuring out a way to bring their state-of-the-art workout system to the company's headquarters - without disrupting other corporate activities. Finally, Justice assured Epiq that it would not be administratively burdensome to the company, and that AYC would handle almost all of the paperwork. "They agreed to participate in our program because we were able to convince them that it would be cost effective and mutually beneficial for the corporation *and* their employees," he says.

As for cost, the company pays 100% if the employee shows progress. "We keep track of and measure "progress" by a loss of body fat, increase in aerobic fitness, or a high attendance rate," Justice shares. If the employee doesn't show progress, he or she has to reimburse the company for their portion of the cost of the program - a condition that Justice believes has been critical to the success of the employees - and the program. He says the two pilot programs in Kansas City and Miami, Florida, have shown an average weight loss of 9 lbs, and an increase of 15.5% in aerobic fitness.

The boot camp begins with a 12 week "kick off" session, then runs in eight week increments. Currently, their marketing is done by networking, but Justice is also working to become a provider for health care companies. The class size is kept small - between ten and 15 people - and the workouts are 30 minute, high-intensity, interval training, and employ the new, patent-pending, Audio Interval Training System, developed by BJ Gaddour. This system allows trainers to automate workouts using music and it's iPod compatible and Internet accessible, which means that high-powered executives can keep up with workouts even when traveling.

Due to an incredibly positive response, Justice is working on packaging his program for sale. "There's no question that it's a great time to get involved in the corporate fitness industry," he says, adding "We're really just hitting the tip of the iceberg." He also advises any interested club owners to keep an eye on the Wellness and Prevention Act of 2007, and the Healthy Workforce Act of 2007, because if passed, these regulations could have an impact on the industry as a whole and could define what it will take to be considered a "qualified" program. - CS

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT AYC HEALTH & FITNESS AND THEIR CORPORATE BOOT CAMP, PLEASE CONTACT GREG JUSTICE AT AYCFIT@GMAIL.COM



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