

Choosing to Be a Self-Employed Personal Trainer



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Being an Independent Contractor

You know you're an independent contractor (IC) when

- You're hired for a job, but the hiring party has no control over how you do that job. i.e. you train clients as an IC at a gym, the gym cannot dictate how to train them, what hours to work, or what to wear.
- You must pay your own income tax withholding, Social Security and Medicare taxes, and unemployment tax



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Being an Independent Contractor

You know you're an independent contractor (IC) when

- You must provide your own business services (not utilizing any of the gym's resources)
- You receive no employee benefits (vacation pay, sick leave, etc.)



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Being an Independent Contractor

Within the IRS's definition of an independent contractor:

- "...the payer has the right to control or direct only the result of the work and what will be done and how it will be done."
- Looking at the whole picture: Behavioral, Financial, Type of relationship



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New Material!

***Being an Independent Contractor**

In September 2019, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 5 (AB 5) into law. This contains the ABC test of an independent contractor.

- A. "The hired person is free from the control and direction of the hiring entity in connection with the performance of the work."



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New Material!

***Being an Independent Contractor**

- B. "The hired person performs work that is outside the usual course of the hiring entity's business."

*Important note: Very few fitness facilities can satisfy Part B of the ABC Test.



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New Material!
***Being an Independent Contractor**

C. "The hired person is customarily engaged in an independently established trade, occupation, or business of the same nature as that involved in the work performed."

NEW

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Making the Decision to Be a Self-Employed Personal Trainer

All of the control AND... All of the responsibility

A Fatal Assumption

In the "E-Myth Revisited", author Michael Gerber cites 40% of new businesses will fail within a year, and 80% percent fail within five years.

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Training a Client at a Facility: Know Your Situation

As an independent contractor, be sure to know

- What and how you are paying for access
- Who you're allowed to train
- If you bring clients in, do they have to join? Pay a guest fee?
- Are you allowed to market within the facility?

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Benefits

- Access to a variety of equipment
- You may have access to the membership as a potential source of clients
- You can use this single location as your home base
- You may find opportunities to network with other independent personal trainers



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Challenges

Facilities vary greatly in how they deal with independent personal trainers. Challenges may involve issues related to:

- Clientele
- Equipment
- Payment



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Training a Client in a Home or Office: Benefits

- You don't have to make arrangements with anyone other than your clients.
- Getting paid is simple and easy—cash, check, or credit card. Square, PayPal, Venmo.
- Some apartment or condominium buildings contain their own gyms, and some clients have their own home gyms.



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Training a Client in a Home or Office: Challenges

- Space (clear and safe)
- Equipment (body weight, bands, to full gym)
- Travel time (coming to them is part of the value of your service and the travel time has to be factored in)
- Environmental distractions (phone, kids, animals, etc.)



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Training Clients Using an Online Platform

- While online training has been around for a while, back in 2017, it was predicted that “Online personal training may be in the process of going mainstream.” – Pete McCall (MS, CSCS, ACE CPT, and ACE expert)



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Training Clients Using an Online Platform

One of the major keys to online training and programming success, is to still do the following:

- Go through a medical history and lifestyle questionnaire.
- Get a physician’s signed approval if necessary.
- Choose assessments to track.
- Review and discuss the results of assessments.



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Training Clients Using an Online Platform

- Help the client clarify his or her goals.
- Recommend a course of action.
- Choose the equipment to use (based on what the client can access).
- Create a feasible and appropriate exercise program.
- Implement (via e-mail and online video sessions).



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2020 Took Everyone Online

- This included clubs, boutique studios, personal trainers, and class instructors
- Many in the industry weren't ready to go online
 - Many didn't want to go online
 - The closing and lockdown of businesses due to COVID-19 made it a "go online or go out of business" scenario
 - The industry recognized a new business opportunity with various means of delivery



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Online Opportunities

- Fitness/Exercise videos on demand
- Coaching and program design via phone, email, and text Live streaming, interactive, fitness classes, personal training, small group training
- Hybrid programs that include:
 - Combinations of the above
 - Combinations with in-person training



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Fitness/Exercise Videos On Demand

As old as Jane Fonda VHS tapes.
Now online, these may be:

- Subscription based (i.e. Peloton, MOSSAonDemand)
- New workouts may be released daily/weekly/monthly

NEW

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Coaching Using Phone, Email, Text and Online Software

- Coaching using phone calls and email are oldest version of remote “training” (i.e. Wellcoaches’ phone-based wellness coaching, founded 2000)
- For years, online trainers would email training programs to their clients and support with phone calls
- A program may now use online software, made up of combinations of exercise demonstration videos (i.e. Trainerize, TrueCoach)

NEW

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Coaching Using Phone, Email, Text and Online Software

- Now coaching, as a profession, may include health coaching, wellness coaching, fitness coaching, etc.
- Coaching may now use live streaming video
- Text/SMS is also a newer entry to coaching, but now very common to use as daily/weekly check ins, motivation, and to give tips

NEW

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Live Streaming

Interactive

- Classes, Personal Training, Small Group Training, Coaching
- Closest to the “in person” experience

NEW

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Benefits of Online Training/Coaching for the Provider

- No travel time
- You can train anyone from anywhere
- You can be anywhere
- They can be anywhere
- No brick and mortar overhead needed
- No worries about transmission of germs and diseases or social distancing

NEW

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Benefits of Online Training/Coaching for the Participant

- No travel time
- You can train from anywhere
- As much privacy as they want
- No worries about transmission of germs and diseases or social distancing

NEW

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Challenges of Online Training/Coaching for the Provider **NEW**

- Some clients are spatially challenged
- Some clients are technologically challenged
- It's the provider's responsibility to make sure the participant's space is safe
- No tactile cuing, verbal cuing needs to be on point
- Internet connection could be unreliable from either side (WiFi, cellular data, ethernet*)

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Set Up Practices to Provide Value **NEW**

- Use ethernet whenever you can
- Use a high-definition camera
- Use a tripod for head-on view (avoid low or high angles)
- Use an external mic
- Use an audio mixer
- Be well lit with a clear, contrasting background
- Speak loud enough and clearly enunciate

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Choosing to Be a Self-Employed Personal Trainer

Acting as an independent contractor their various avenues available

- Working out of a gym/studio
- Training people in their homes or offices
- Training people online

*All aspects of the business are now your responsibility



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Upcoming Discussions: Career Roles

- Employee✓
- Independent contractor✓
- Opening your own brick and mortar



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