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College graduates need certain skills and personal attributes to be ready for work in an occupation or field. Although many kinesiology and exercise science students have a career goal to become a fitness trainer, a comprehensive catalog of the skills and attributes needed in this work does not exist. Therefore, the objective of this project was to identify the generic skills, personal attributes, and specific skills essential to the work of fitness trainers. Using a panel of 15 fitness trainers and 14 supervisors of fitness trainers, the Delphi method was employed with three rounds of questionnaires to generate a list of essential generic skills, personal attributes, and specific skills. Panelists rated their agreement that each item is essential to the work of a fitness trainer on a five point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. All items meeting the inclusion criteria of 75% of panelists rating an item as Somewhat Agree or Strongly Agree are reported on the final list of 28 generic skills, 37 personal attributes, and 61 specific skills. Many of the generic skills are those that are seen as necessary across industries: communication, problem solving, critical thinking, professionalism, and information literacy. Other generic skills and personal attributes are those that are needed in helping professions, such as emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, empathy, caring, compassion, support, and humility. New specific skills related to sales, client education, client assessment, exercise programming, and behavioral coaching were added to what certifying organizations had already determined as essential. Educators developing curriculum in exercise science or kinesiology programs that intend to prepare students as fitness trainers should consider tailoring their curriculum to develop the essential skills and personal attributes of fitness trainers.

GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY: ESSENTIAL SKILLS

AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

OF FITNESS TRAINERS

by

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ii

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I: PROJECT OVERVIEW

Employability models suggest that higher education programs must develop students with the skills and personal attributes to be successful in an occupation in order to be employable upon graduation (Bridgstock, 2009; Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007; Hinchliffe & Jolly, 2011; Knight & Yorke, 2003). However, many college seniors and business leaders doubt whether higher education programs are meeting this expectation (Gallup, Inc. & Lumina Foundation, 2013; Strada Education Network & Gallup, Inc., 2018a). With most students attending college due to work and career aspirations (Strada Education Network & Gallup, Inc., 2018b), this poses a problem for students and higher education programs alike. Kinesiology and exercise science related programs face this problem, too. Many of these programs state they prepare students for work as a fitness trainer (*Explore a Kinesiology Degree at UNW*, 2021; *Kinesiology | What Can I Do with a Major In...?*, 2018; *Kinesiology Undergraduate Program*, 2011) so students turn to these programs to prepare for work in the fitness industry (Thomas, 2014). However, graduates of these programs and their employers have expressed dissatisfaction in their preparation for real-world work as a fitness trainer (Melton et al., 2008, 2010). Indeed, deficiencies in required knowledge and skill have been observed in college-educated fitness trainers (Baker et al., 2017; Jankauskiene, 2018; Jolley et al., 2020; Malek et al., 2002). While the career preparation needs of many professions have been well-researched, kinesiology programs lack this same depth of information about fitness trainers. At this time, the only guidance provided on the skills required of fitness trainers are the job task analyses from organizations that provide certification, but these have been created to develop certification exam content and not curriculum and are limited to specific skills needed in these roles. The present work expands on what the certifying organizations have researched and provides a more comprehensive catalog of the specific skills,

generic skills, and personal attributes needed by fitness trainers that may be used to inform curriculum development in kinesiology programs. Once the curriculum is tailored to support the development of the identified skills and personal attributes, these programs should be better equipped to meet the career preparation expectations of their students.

Background

Job growth for fitness professionals is expected to grow by 19% between 2021 and 2031 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2022). This is partly driven by the recognition of the influence physical activity has on health, as well as the growing population of older adults looking to the services provided by fitness professionals to prevent injury and illness associated with aging (U.S. Department of Labor, 2022). One type of fitness professional is a fitness trainer, defined as one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings. It should be noted, though, the role of fitness trainers extends beyond simply leading, instructing, and motivating. Research has shown that fitness trainers routinely fulfill multiple roles including teacher, counselor, supporter, coach, life management advisor, and personal life consultant (De Lyon et al., 2017). These roles, invariably, require knowledge and skill beyond just leading, instructing, and motivating others. To gain that knowledge and skill, future fitness trainers turn to kinesiology and exercise science programs as a potential path to prepare for work as a fitness trainer.

The number of kinesiology and exercise science degrees awarded annually has been steadily rising over the last 20 years, with an increase of over 400% from 2002 to 2017 (Nuzzo, 2020). Over 31,000 kinesiology and exercise science degrees were awarded in 2021 (Data USA, n.d.) and although many of these graduates go on to allied health or medical professions, some also use these degrees to prepare themselves for work as fitness trainers (Thomas, 2014).

2

Additionally, with low acceptance rates for entry into physical therapy and medical education programs (American Physical Therapy Association, 2020; Association of American Medical Colleges, 2020), even those kinesiology graduates that had intended to enter such a program may need to have an alternate option for professional work following their studies. Unfortunately, graduates from kinesiology and exercise science related programs and their employers have expressed dissatisfaction in the curriculum of these programs and the lack of preparation for real-world work as a fitness trainer, mainly related to the business aspects of the fitness industry and limited practical learning experiences (Melton et al., 2008, 2010). Further, gaps between desired knowledge and skills and actual knowledge and skills in graduates of kinesiology related programs have been noted (Baker et al., 2017; Jankauskiene, 2018; Jolley et al., 2020; Malek et al., 2002). As such, a review of the curriculum in these programs may be needed to prepare graduates for work as a fitness trainer so they may be employable upon graduation.

Employability models offer a framework for higher education institutions to explore what is required for graduates to be successful in the workforce. Employability can be defined as "having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful" (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007, p. 280). With this in mind, there are several models that have been developed to conceptualize what it takes to be successful in the workforce (Bridgstock, 2009; Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007; Hinchliffe & Jolly, 2011; Knight & Yorke, 2003). While there are differences in these models, there are some universal features present in all of them: degree subject knowledge and skills, generic skills, career navigation skills, and personal attributes or traits (Römgens et al., 2020). Degree subject knowledge and skills are unique to a discipline, occupation, or field. The degree subject skills are often called *specific* skills. *Generic* skills, also

known as soft skills, core competencies, or transferable skills, are skills that are needed across fields and disciplines (Suleman, 2018). *Career navigation skills* involve selecting a meaningful career, promoting oneself, and planning for long-term career development. *Personal attributes* are qualities or characteristics of a person. When higher education faculty have a thorough understanding of these and other employability factors specific to certain occupations, they are able to translate these into program outcomes or competencies and design a curriculum that develops employability as students move through an academic program. The present project focuses on specific skills, generic skills, and personal attributes.

While employability models offer a framework to conceptualize what is needed to increase graduate success in the workforce, scholars have not found an exact set of skills and attributes that might be generalized across all graduates and in all settings (Hinchliffe & Jolly, 2011; Suleman, 2018; Williams et al., 2016). It has been speculated this is because of variations in the context in which employability is explored, such as the country, economic situation, field, or occupation (Hinchliffe & Jolly, 2011; Suleman, 2018; Williams et al., 2016). Thus, it is up to those in each field to develop standards unique to their occupations. Athletic training provides an example of this through the Athletic Training Education Competencies from the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) (NATA, 2011). The NATA Board of Certification originally developed the Competencies in 1982 through a role delineation study to identify the competencies needed as an athletic trainer; these undergo occasional updates to remain current (Delforge & Behnke, 1999). The most recent version lists competencies by content area, similar to specific skills, and also foundational behaviors that include some generic skills and personal attributes (NATA, 2011). Extensive work to identify essential skills and attributes has been done for many other professions, like nursing, physical therapy, and education (American Nurses

Association, 2015; Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, 2020; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2014), but there has been little attention given to this type of research for fitness trainers.

Most related research on fitness trainers has been conducted by the organizations that provide certification in the U.S. and internationally. Lacking licensing or accreditation standards, professional organizations have sought to create standards through certification exams for various roles of fitness professionals: personal trainer, group fitness instructor, exercise physiologist, and others. For example, the American College of Sport Medicine (ACSM) periodically conducts a job task analysis to determine the knowledge and skills required of fitness trainers as they update their exam content for their certifications (Magal & Neric, 2020). A job task analysis, also known as a role delineation study, is a process that involves collecting information about the duties and tasks of a particular job using a panel of experts (Paternostro-Bayles, 2010). ACSM then uses the results of the job task analysis to define the expected knowledge and skills of their certificants and develop exam blueprints (Magal & Neric, 2020). Throughout the most recent exam content outline for ACSM's personal trainer certification, the emphasis is clearly on the ability to apply specific skills related to client consultation, fitness assessment, exercise programming, and client education (ACSM, 2020). Although the certifications are developed for the purpose of meeting minimum expectations of employers and ensuring certificants are safe and effective practitioners (Magal & Neric, 2020), they lack attention to the scope of employability needed by fitness trainers. Very little attention is given to generic skills, with only communication and collaboration mentioned. Reviewing other certifying organizations' job task analyses and exam content reveals similar findings (American Council on Exercise, 2016; National Academy of Sports Medicine, 2015; National Strength and

Conditioning Association, 2018). The job task analyses provide a solid start to capturing the specific skills required, but they may still be missing some important specific skills. For example, fitness trainers need to be able to promote and sell their services in order to be financially successful, but this is not included in the personal trainer job task analysis of most major certifying bodies (American College of Sports Medicine, 2020; American Council on Exercise, 2016; National Strength and Conditioning Association, 2018).

While the certifying organizations have contributed to some understanding of specific skills needed in fitness training, little research has been done to evaluate other factors related to employability of fitness trainers and those that have been done in the U.S. have focused on characteristics (Melton et al., 2008, 2010, 2011). Melton and colleagues (Melton et al., 2008, 2010, 2011) conducted a series of three studies in which they explored the characteristics of successful personal trainers from three different perspectives: personal trainer, manager, and client. Through these three studies, a number of desirable and undesirable characteristics of personal trainers were identified. The ability to motivate clients, maintain a "fit" appearance, design programs for individual needs, communicate well, and be social were all recognized in these studies. Also, some undesirable characteristics, seen as unethical or unprofessional, included flirting, making sexual comments, being late, or canceling appointments. The series of these three viewpoints offers a glimpse at a few characteristics that were collected through small focus groups, but is far from comprehensive and not generalizable due to the very small sample size (ranging from n=5 to n=11 for each study). More research on fitness trainers has been done internationally and has given light to some of the generic skills and attributes needed in this type of work. Coping with stress, positive attitude, enthusiasm, commitment to lifelong learning, interpersonal skills, self-confidence, time management, and flexibility have been recognized as

important in these jobs (Baker et al., 2017; Ku & Hsieh, 2020; Lloyd, 2008; Tsitskari et al., 2017).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research was to explore the specific skills, generic skills, and personal attributes essential to the work of fitness trainers, defined as those who lead, instruct, and motivate individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings. The research aims were:

1. To identify the specific skills essential to the work of a fitness trainer in the U.S.
2. To identify the generic skills essential to the work of a fitness trainer in the U.S.
3. To identify the personal attributes essential to the work of a fitness trainer in the U.S.

Methods

A modified Delphi method was employed using a panel of fitness trainers and supervisors of fitness trainers. Three rounds of questionnaires collected panelist feedback with an overall goal of producing a list of essential specific skills, generic skills, and personal attributes of fitness trainers. Questionnaires were administered electronically using Qualtrics, web-based survey software from Qualtrics XM. All data were collected and organized in Google Sheets, web-based spreadsheet software from Google.

Participants

Participants selected for the panel were fitness trainers or supervisors of fitness trainers because they were in a position to offer quality information on the skills required in the industry.

Fitness Trainers

Fitness trainers were defined as those that lead, instruct, and motivate individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings. To serve on the panel, fitness trainers

must have met the following criteria at the time the panel work began: (a) be currently employed as a fitness trainer as their primary employment in the U.S.; (b) possess a minimum of three years' experience as a fitness trainer as their primary employment; and (c) possess a National Commission for Certifying Agencies accredited personal trainer certification or a bachelor's degree or higher in kinesiology, exercise science, or related discipline.

Supervisors

Supervisors were defined as those that directly supervise fitness trainers. To be included, supervisors must have met the following criteria at the time the panel work began: (a) be currently employed as a direct supervisor of fitness trainers in the U.S.; and (b) possess a minimum of three years' experience in the fitness industry as a fitness trainer or supervisor.

Panelist Demographics

Upon completion of the recruiting period, 32 participants had volunteered. After the Round 1 Questionnaire was emailed, three participants withdrew their participation, leaving the panel with 29 members: 15 Fitness Trainers and 14 Supervisors. The majority of panelists (75.9%) had over six years of experience, with 48.3% having over 11 years of experience. Every region of the United States was represented with heavier representation from the West (37.9%), Southeast (27.6%), and Midwest (20.7%) and less from the Southwest (10.3%) and Northeast (3.5%). Panelists also worked for a variety of employer types: 37.9% were self-employed while others worked for local businesses (24.1%), recreation centers (17.2%), government/military (10.3%), corporate fitness/wellness (3.5%), and retirement communities (3.5%). Forty five percent possessed a bachelor's degree and 41% possessed a master's degree. Of those with degrees, 74.1% possessed a kinesiology, exercise science, or related degree. All but one panelist

held a current fitness certification with 82.1% possessing a personal trainer certification. Additional demographic details may be found in Appendix A.

Procedures

Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, the facilitator used their professional network to identify fitness trainers and supervisors to serve on the panel. Invitations were sent via email with a prewritten script (Appendix B) to inform potential panel members of the goals of the panel, the process to reach the goals, the expected time commitment, and the panel member inclusion criteria. Snowball sampling was also employed.

Round 1 Questionnaire

The first part of the Round 1 Questionnaire (Appendix C) shared the IRB Information Sheet and collected consent to participate. Panelists were asked to provide a four digit number for tracking of responses. Demographic information was also collected.

The rest of the questionnaire was organized into three sections: Generic Skills, Personal Attributes, and Specific Skills. In the first two sections, panelists reviewed a list of 17 generic skills and 19 personal attributes, informed by a survey of literature, and rated their level of agreement that each is essential to the work of a fitness trainer using a five point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Somewhat Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Somewhat Agree, 5=Strongly Agree). Panelists were also asked to suggest additional generic skills and personal attributes they felt were essential.

In the Specific Skills section, panelists reviewed lists of skills (Appendix D) that had already been identified in the personal trainer job task analyses and exam content outlines from four certifying organizations (American College of Sports Medicine, 2020; American Council on

Exercise, 2016; National Academy of Sports Medicine, 2015; National Strength and

Conditioning Association, 2018). The specific skills were broken into the following categories.

- Initial Client Consultation and Assessment (20 skills)

- Program Design and Implementation (22 skills)

- Behavioral Coaching (12 skills)

- Client Education (3 skills)

- Legal and Professional Responsibilities (17 skills)

- Other

Panelists reviewed each categorized list and made suggestions for additional items, essentially identifying what was missing. For all suggested items, panelists were asked to provide brief supporting comments to be shared with the rest of the panel in Round 2.

Panelists were given ten days to complete each questionnaire. Reminder emails were sent five days before the due date, the day before the due date, and the day after the due date. The Round 1 Questionnaire was completed by 29 panelists, with 15 trainers and 14 supervisors.

Measuring Consensus

To measure consensus on what items would be reported on the final list of essential skills and personal attributes, frequency and percent agreement for each item was calculated. Consensus to keep an item on the final list was determined when at least 75% of respondents rated an item as Somewhat Agree or Strongly Agree. This inclusion criterion was defined a priori and shared with panelists.

Round 2 Questionnaire

Panel member responses on the Round 1 Questionnaire were used to create the Round 2 Questionnaire (Appendix E). Panelists rated all suggested items or items where consensus was

not reached in Round 1. If supporting comments were shared in Round 1, they were added to the questionnaire with the associated item for panelists to consider other points of view. Some of the suggested items were altered by the facilitator to combine similar items, write concisely, or reword as skills instead of nouns or topics. All items were grouped in the same categories as the first questionnaire with the exception of the addition of a Business category due to a high number of business-related skills suggested in Round 1. Again, panelists were given the option to add supporting comments and suggest additional items. The Round 2 Questionnaire was completed by 26 panelists, with 14 trainers and 12 supervisors.

Round 3 Questionnaire

In a final attempt to find consensus on most items, the Round 3 Questionnaire (Appendix F) asked panelists to rate all items that were suggested or where consensus was not reached in Round 2. The Round 3 Questionnaire was completed by 25 panelists, with 13 trainers and 12 supervisors.

Results

At the conclusion of the Delphi, the panel produced a list of 28 generic skills, 37 personal attributes, and 61 specific skills. The skills and attributes are listed in Tables 1 and 2 while the percent agreement ratings may be found in Appendix G. There were also 21 other items considered by the panel that did not meet the inclusion criterion. Those items are reported separately in Appendix H with their final ratings from the Round 3 Questionnaire.

Generic Skills and Personal Attributes

Of the 28 generic skills meeting the inclusion criterion, 17 were included on the original list in Round 1, informed by a literature review of related professions. The remaining 11 were suggested by panelists on the Round 1 Questionnaire. Similarly, 17 of the 37 personal attributes

11

were derived from the original literature review with 20 more suggested by panelists. The generic skills and personal attributes are reported in Table 1. There were two personal attributes on the original Round 1 list that did not meet the inclusion criteria: *fit physique* and *college educated*. One panelist suggested skill, *negotiation*, was also omitted from the final list.

Table 1. Essential Generic Skills and Personal Attributes

Generic Skills (percent agreement)	Personal Attributes (percent agreement)
Oral Communication (100.0)	Punctual (100.0)
Lifelong learning (100.0)	Dependable (100.0)
Active listening (100.0)	Respectful (100.0)
Problem Solving (100.0)	Ethical (100.0)
Information Literacy (100.0)	Trustworthy (100.0)
Planning (100.0)	Attentive (100.0)
Interpersonal Skills (96.6)	Willing to learn (100.0)
Critical Thinking (96.6)	Patience[a] (100.0)
Time Management (96.6)	Flexible[a] (100.0)
Organization (96.6)	Caring[a] (100.0)
Cognitive flexibility[a] (96.2)	Consistent[a] (100.0)
Empathy[a] (96.2)	Supportive[a] (100.0)
Self-awareness[a] (96.2)	Knowledgeable (100.0)
Personal hygiene[a] (96.2)	Empathetic (100.0)
Emotional Intelligence[a] (96.2)	Honest (96.2)
Professionalism[a] (92.3)	Adaptable (96.2)
Physical self-care[a] (92.3)	Passionate (96.2)
Public Speaking[a] (88.5)	Compassionate[a] (96.2)
Service orientation[a] (88.5)	Sincere[a] (96.2)
Systems thinking[a] (88.0)	Understanding[a] (96.2)
Psychological flexibility[a] (88.0)	Confident (93.1)
Analytical and conceptual thinking (86.2)	Positive (93.1)
Leadership (86.2)	Realistic[a] (92.3)
Cultural Competence (86.2)	Humble[a] (92.3)
Stress Management (82.8)	Resilient[a] (92.3)
Technical Skills (82.8)	Kind[a] (92.3)
Writing Skills/Written Communication (82.8)	Enthusiastic (89.7)
Teamwork (75.9)	Creative (86.2)
	Action oriented[a] (84.6)
	Sociable (82.8)
	Reliable[a] (80.8)

Generic Skills (percent agreement)	Personal Attributes (percent agreement)
	Generous[a] (80.8)
	Inclusive[a] (80.8)
	Open[a] (80.8)
	Curious[a] (76.9)
	Certified[a] (76.9)
	Outgoing[a] (76.0)

Note: Items are listed in order of highest to lowest agreement ratings.

[a]Items were suggested by panelists.

Common Generic Skills

As their name implies, many of the generic skills identified by the panel are generally seen as necessary across industries. For example, *communication*, *critical thinking*, *professionalism*, *teamwork*, and *leadership* are listed in the career readiness competencies published by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (National Association of Colleges and Employers, n.d.). More specifically, *active listening*, *oral communication,* and *written communication* were all highly rated in the present work. The inclusion of *critical thinking*, *problem solving*, *systems thinking*, and *analytical and conceptual thinking* indicate the need to think critically and work with complex problems and systems. Some panelist comments focused on the need to think holistically about exercise programming and integrated body systems. *Professionalism* also made the final list and was reinforced by the inclusion of several personal attributes that demonstrate professional behaviors: *consistent*, *dependable*, *honest*, *positive*, *punctual,* and *reliable*.

Information literacy, in particular, received a lot of support with 100% agreement and was echoed in the specific skills under Client Education. One skill, *Educate clients on how to spot misinformation*, was directed at helping clients, but several panelists commented about fitness trainers being misinformed themselves. One panelist said, "we need to educate ourselves

too! I know plenty of trainers who beliece [*sic*] inaccurate information." A second panelist expanded on this by saying, "there are many trainers who … either believe things which we have little to no scientific data, or disregard the scientific data we do have on things." Another specific skill focused on the selection of appropriate sources of information. All of this points to a strong need to focus on information literacy for fitness trainers.

Due to their importance across industries, common generic skills are often included as institutional student learning outcomes at colleges and universities and are promoted by professional organizations such as the American Association of Colleges and Universities and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (American Association of Colleges & Universities, 2020; *CAS Learning Outcomes*, n.d.). Because of the attention given to these common generic skills, their perceived importance across industries, and the perception that they are lacking in recent graduates (Gray, 2021), faculty may want to review the curriculum to ensure they are included and applied in contexts similar to that required in the industry.

Generic Skills and Attributes in Helping Professions

Beyond the common generic skills, other identified generic skills and attributes address the softer side of training. Fitness training is a service to clients as they support physical wellbeing, similar to other helping professions. This was seen in several panelist comments: "This is a 'client first' industry."; and "Training is a service-style job/career. The best trainers are able to understand they are serving their clients to help support their goals." Serving and interacting authentically with other human beings requires many generic skills and personal attributes that were highly rated by the panelists. *Emotional intelligence*, for example, was suggested by five panelists during Round 1 and then received 96% agreement ratings. Emotional intelligence encompasses different skills and attributes, many of which were captured by the

panel; *empathy*, *interpersonal skills*, *self-awareness*, *stress management*, *flexibility*, and

adaptability are all elements of emotional intelligence (Kewalramani et al., 2015). In support of

their responses, panelists mentioned the need to build rapport, maintain positive trainer-client

relationships, and support their clients. Several other personal attributes on the final list illustrate

the qualities needed to facilitate the close personal interactions trainers have with their clients:

caring, *compassionate*, *humble*, *understanding, respectful*, *supportive*, and *patient*. Because

relationships are central to the work of fitness trainers and contribute to the positive experience

of clients (Hill et al., 2022; Madeson et al., 2010), it is understandable why these were highly

rated by panelists.

With a focus on relationship building and service to others, the work of fitness trainers is

suited for those that want to help others. Potential students should be informed of this when

considering kinesiology or exercise science as a program of study to determine whether this

work aligns with their own self. Adding in learning activities to develop some of the generic

skills essential to helping professions would better prepare students for work as fitness trainers,

as well as the other kinesiology related careers they may be aiming for.

Specific Skills

Following the completion of the Delphi panel, 61 essential specific skills were identified.

These specific skills are in addition to those already identified by the certifying organizations

(Appendix D). Table 2 lists the essential specific skills by category.

Table 2. Essential Specific Skills

Category	Skill (percent agreement)
Initial Client Consultation and Assessment	Create feedback loop for re-assessment protocols/progress check ins. (100.0)
	Create and communicate an action-oriented outline of how the client may move toward their goals. (100.0)
	Educate clients on assessment results and client takeaways on forms. (100.0)
	Communicate with client when re-assessment/progress check in should be performed. (96.2)
	Identify the general needs, goals, and personal concerns of the client. (96.2)
	Create a comfortable environment for clients. (96.2)
	Screen for basic human movements (hinge, squat, lunge, push, pull, and carry). (92.3)
	Identify quantifiable and measurable performance goals based on information obtained in interview process. (92.3)
	Identify stress levels and utilize appropriate recovery/regeneration modalities in facilitating program design. (88.5)
	Select and administer mobility assessments. (88.5)
	Determine the appropriate order to execute assessments. (84.6)
	Provide tours of the training environment. (76.9)
Exercise Program Design and Implementation	Implement safe and effective exercise programs to improve mobility and flexibility. (100.0)
	Utilize a system of programming to ensure consistent results and time efficiency for creation. (100.0)
	Recognize daily variations in client physical and mental performance and adapt the program as needed during each training session. (96.2)
	Recognize signs and symptoms of burnout. (92.3)
	Solicit client preferences on exercise program design (exercise selection, equipment, other training variables). (88.5)
Behavioral Coaching	Recognize the need to refer clients to another trainer and refer as needed. (100.0)
	Address client concerns related to exercise adherence. (100.0)
	Make others feel important and do it sincerely. (100.0)
	Be genuinely interested in other people. (100.0)
	Identify individual motivators. (96.2)
	Establish expectations in the client-trainer relationship. (96.2)
	Remember people's names. (92.3)
	Apply positive reinforcement for a job well done. (88.5)
	Talk in terms of other people's interest. (88.5)
	Determine the client's self-identified support system. (88.0)
	Apply motivational interviewing techniques. (84.6)
	Make workouts or programs fun or enjoyable. (80.8)
	Implement elements of persuasion ethically and appropriately to elicit behavioral change. (80.8)
	Smile. (76.9)
	Select and recommend appropriate apps based on individual needs to motivate clients and track progress. (76.9)

Category	Skill (percent agreement)
Client Education	Educate clients on how to implement sustainable behaviors that fit their lifestyle. (96.2) Educate clients on risks (injury prevention, overtraining, etc.). (96.2) Educate clients about the relationship between exercise and nutrition, and how these impact weight loss. (96.2) Educate clients on why specific decisions are made about program design. (96.2) Educate clients on fundamentals of how exercise works (stress, recovery adaptation). (92.3) Educate clients on stress management techniques. (92.3) Educate clients on health risks. (88.5) Educate clients about the importance of different types of exercise (i.e., muscular strength training, cardiovascular exercise, mobility, etc.) and its impact upon overall health. (88.5) Use client training time effectively to educate clients on health and wellness topics. (88.50) Educate clients about basic anatomy, physiology and kinesiology and/or movement patterns (push, pull, hinge, squat, etc). (84.6) Select and use appropriate apps, reference materials, books, podcasts and other sources for additional information. (84.6) Educate clients on how to spot misinformation in social media. (84.6) Educate clients on mindfulness to build awareness around their actions. (84.6) Educate clients on how they can access resources for mental health, time-management, exercise adherence, general health, etc. to utilize when they are not in training sessions. (76.9)
Legal and Professional Responsibilities	Progress clients appropriately. (100.0) Follow the policies and procedures within the facility one works. (100.0) Obtain medical clearance when client returns or is under the care of a healthcare provider for injury, illness or other condition. (92.3) Respectfully address differences in trainer beliefs, methods, and philosophy. (88.5) Develop a communication protocol for all staff and/or participants which allows for long term and immediate information to be obtained. (88.5) Develop a network of allied health professionals to whom clients may be referred. (84.6)
Business	Set standards for client cancelations. (96.2) Implement sales strategies to sell training services to potential clients. (84.6) De-escalate and resolve conflict. (84.0) Develop assets to generate leads. (76.9) Track data of marketing and sales. (76.9)
Other	Adjust approach and interactions with clients based on client personality. (100.0) Demonstrate a client-first mentality. (100.0) Treat all clients equally. (92.3) Create and maintain emotional boundaries to support mental wellbeing. (88.5)

Note: Items are listed in order of highest to lowest agreement ratings.

Asking panelists to review the specific skills from the certifying organizations and then identify what was missing sheds light on some aspects of fitness training that have not been captured by the certifying organizations. However, many of the specific skills suggested by the panel could be seen as subskills that fall under the broader skills from the certifying organizations. For example, one of the Behavioral Coaching skills from the certifying organizations is "choose and apply appropriate health behavior modification strategies…" The panel suggested several strategies that could fall under this skill such as *motivational interviewing*, *identifying motivators*, *making workouts enjoyable*, and *applying positive reinforcement*. Similarly, two suggested skills involving the identification of goals in the Initial Client Consultation and Assessment category could be covered under the previously identified skill of "Facilitate effective goal setting…" in the Behavioral Coaching category. These suggestions from the panel offer some detail to the skills required in the work of fitness trainers and may be used to inform more specific curricular decisions.

Other suggested specific skills were not recognized by the certifying organizations at all. For example, the panel added skills in movement screening and mobility assessments to the Initial Client Consultation and Assessment category, whereas the certifying organizations have mostly focused on assessment of the health- and skill-related components of fitness. The Client Education category received a lot of attention from the panel, too. There were 19 suggestions, 14 of which made the final list. Almost all of the suggestions focused on educating clients about specific topics. Examples include basic anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, stress management techniques, mindfulness, nutrition, weight management, and the reasoning behind programming decisions. Fulfilling the role of educator requires trainers to possess a base of knowledge and

understanding about these topics, as well as the ability to teach others. This is something that should be considered when planning curriculum to prepare fitness trainers for their work.

One notable theme that emerged during Round 1 was the importance of business-related skills. Ten business skills were suggested during Round 1 and then another four during Round 2; however, only five skills made the final list. Of these, three were related to selling personal training services. In the fitness industry, fitness trainers are often required to sell training services to build and maintain clientele. A casual search of personal trainer job postings reveals the requirement of sales skills, too (*Personal Trainer Jobs, Employment in Portland, OR*, 2022). Past research has indicated the curriculum of kinesiology and exercise science programs lack attention to needed business skills (Melton et al., 2008), but given their inclusion on the essential skills list, faculty may want to consider incorporating content and learning activities to develop sales skills specific to the fitness industry: *generate leads, implement sales strategies* and *track sales data*. Interestingly, the other suggested business skills that did not meet the inclusion criterion focused on greater business concepts: business planning, marketing, finance, and managing facility operations. Panelist comments suggested these are needed if a fitness trainer wanted to open their own business or become a manager. As such, if exercise science students intend to move their careers toward one of these roles, advising them to complete coursework in business would help them better prepare.

Consensus and Disagreement

Lastly, although the purpose of this work was to find consensus, it is evident that disagreement exists as well. Two topics, in particular, received a lot of panelist engagement and demonstrated contrasting opinions.

19

Physical Self-care and Fit Physique

The consideration of *physical self-care* and *fit physique* demonstrated different perspectives within the panel. The Personal Attribute of *fit physique* did not make the list, but still gained 64% agreement ratings. The somewhat high ratings are not surprising due to the value placed on thinness and muscularity in the industry (Harvey et al., 2014; Hutson, 2013). Indeed, research suggests trainers that appear more physically fit are perceived to possess greater expertise and be more competent, trustworthy, and knowledgeable (Boerner et al., 2019; Park et al., 2022; Soekmawati et al., 2022). However, some panelists pushed back on these perceptions. One panelist discussed her own experiences being different sizes in her 20 years of training experience. "I think that many women came to me because I wasn't a super fit woman. I draw women who want to work with a 'real' woman." Another differentiated between a perfect physique and a fit physique, defining fitness in terms of cardiorespiratory fitness, strength, and flexibility rather than physical appearance. In addition, several panelists de-emphasized physical appearance when supporting the inclusion of *physical self-care*, which made the list with 92% agreement ratings. Panelists instead emphasized engaging in practices to support personal health and well-being, including exercise and good nutrition. This reinforces the inclusion of physical activity in kinesiology curriculum as suggested by the American Kinesiology Association (Chodzko-Zajko, 2014). Additionally, the de-emphasis of physical appearance aligns with a growing movement to apply body inclusive practices in physical activity settings to provide programs and spaces for diverse bodies (Pickett & Cunningham, 2017; Ulian et al., 2018; Zuest et al., 2022). As such, faculty may want to embed instruction on topics like weight stigma and body inclusive practices to prepare students to work with diverse bodies in their future work, as suggested by Zuest et al. (2022).

Trainer Education

Another topic that prompted a lot of discussion is related to trainer certification and education. *College educated* was introduced on the original list of Personal Attributes because it was one of the characteristics of successful personal trainers mentioned in two studies by Melton et al. (2008, 2010). However, the present panel, 86% of whom possessed a bachelor's or master's degree, provided varied responses with only 20% agreement ratings. In their supporting comments, several expressed a college education is helpful, but not essential. In contrast, *certified* met the inclusion criterion. This aligns with industry standards where a personal trainer certification is often *required*, but a college degree is only *preferred*, if mentioned at all (Robinson et al., 2006).

By including *certified* on the final list and not *college educated*, the panel implies that certification is enough to prepare trainers for this work. While certification exams evaluate specific skills and knowledge deemed essential to personal training, it is questionable whether they evaluate the depth of knowledge and skills needed to apply all of the skills identified by this panel. Like many other professionals, trainers learn in different ways such as learning on the job, learning from others, self-directed research through print and online sources, and trial and error (De Lyon & Cushion, 2013). As such, it may be possible for trainers to develop the essential skills and knowledge elsewhere, however, research suggests a college education provides a stronger foundation of knowledge. Fitness trainers with more college education have better knowledge of exercise prescription guidelines, testing protocols, nutrition, and health screening (Malek et al., 2002; Zenko & Ekkekakis, 2015) while fitness trainers without a college degree are more likely to believe common fitness misconceptions (Jolley et al., 2020). Advocating for raising the minimum education standards in the industry could help decrease these gaps.

21

General Implications for Higher Education

While a few specific recommendations were previously discussed, some general

recommendations may be helpful to guide the development of curriculum based on these results.

It may not be reasonable to plan a curriculum that fully addresses all 200 items in this work: 28

generic skills, 37 personal attributes, and 61 specific skills identified by this panel, plus the 74

specific skills from the certifying organizations. As such, faculty may need to select what they

feel is most important. Faculty could first look to the job task analyses from ACSM which

provides a comprehensive, if not complete, list of specific skills. ACSM first conducted a job

task analysis in 2009 and has updated it several times since so it is likely a reliable list of skills

(Magal & Neric, 2020; Paternostro-Bayles, 2010). Second, the ratings from the present list may

be helpful in prioritizing additional skills and personal attributes in the curriculum. Although not

a rating of importance, the higher agreement ratings indicate the item is perceived as essential by

more professionals. Focusing on higher rated items will more likely produce graduates that

possess the skills perceived as essential by more employers. Also, kinesiology faculty should

look outside of their program to see what generic skills may be developed elsewhere in the

academic experiences of students. First year seminars may cover some of the generic skills like

information literacy, *time management*, *critical thinking*, *stress management*, and *teamwork*.

Some of these are likely embedded in institutional student learning outcomes, too, and gained

through general education coursework.

In addition to selecting which skills and attributes to include in a program of study,

faculty also need to consider how they will be taught and if they even can be taught. It's

important to recognize that personal attributes, like *sincere*, *caring*, and *compassionate,* may be

difficult to teach students. For these, teaching students the behaviors that demonstrate these

might be a better approach. Also, faculty may not have the knowledge and expertise to teach all of the essential skills and attributes. Collaborating with other faculty, library services, and college success programs may be a good strategy to supplement instruction.

Future Directions

Because of the large number of items identified in this study, future research should seek to narrow the skills and attributes to what is most important to include in kinesiology and exercise science programs for students intending to work as fitness trainers. This study identified the *essential* skills and attributes, but prioritizing these through future research would help faculty prioritize their instructional time. A focus group from the panel used in the present study or a similar group could provide insight into the skills and attributes most important for recent graduates entering the work setting. A focus group could also finetune some of the language used in the skills and consolidate similar items in an effort to narrow down the list.

Limitations

There are several limitations for this study. Although representing a variety of industry segments, the panel consisted of a small sample so the data collected represent only a snapshot of the opinions of this group. Further research to validate these findings with a larger sample is recommended. Panelist attrition (13.8%) through successive rounds could also be a limitation, although this was within recommendations for the Delphi method (Sumsion, 1998). Also, the outcome of this work is a list of skills and attributes, but it may be helpful to determine the importance of each item to help educators prioritize the content and activities of the curriculum. Further research could clarify this.

Conclusion

The purpose of this work is to improve the professional preparation of fitness trainers through a better understanding of what it takes to be employable, focusing on individual skills and personal attributes. By considering the essential skills and attributes of fitness trainers when developing a curriculum, faculty may better meet the career preparation expectations of their students. The job task analyses already completed by certifying organizations provides a start in understanding what is required in these jobs, but the present work has brought forward additional items that warrant inclusion in the curriculum.

CHAPTER II: DISSEMINATION

The immediate dissemination of this work was a 45-minute presentation to 15 Exercise Science faculty members and the Program Dean and Pathway Dean over the Exercise Science (EXS) program at Portland Community College (PCC). The presentation reviewed the findings and compared them to the PCC EXS curriculum. Recommendations on how some of the findings can be embedded in the curriculum to improve graduate employability were also addressed. Following is a brief version of the presentation. The slides can be found in Appendix I.

Slides 1-2. Hello and thank you for being here! In the next hour, I will provide an overview of my dissertation work, relate it to our current curricular work, and share some things we may want to consider as we continue our curricular updates.

Slides 3-5. Employability models offer a framework to explore what is required to be employable – that is "having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding, and personal attributes in order to choose and secure satisfying and successful occupations." I explored a portion of these: generic skills, specific skills, and personal attributes. Generic skills are those that are needed across fields and disciplines. Specific skills, on the other hand, are those that are unique to a discipline, occupation, or field. Lastly, personal attributes are qualities or characteristics of a person. Before moving on, I want to point out that these are what an individual brings to an employer. There are other factors that influence employability that are within organizational or societal domains. Economic health, employment rates, worldwide pandemics, social inequalities, and organizational cultures affect employability, too. I focused on the individual factors because that is what we in higher education have control over – tailoring the curriculum to prepare each individual student that comes through our programs.

Slides 6-7. Most of what we know about the skills needed as a fitness trainer comes from the organizations that provide certification. They have developed specific skill and knowledge lists to develop certification exam content, but do not capture generic skills or personal attributes. I also questioned whether they were missing some specific skills, too. Some research has also highlighted some of the characteristics needed in these professions: the ability to motivate clients, maintain a "fit" appearance, design programs for individual needs, communicate well, be social, cope with stress. Other generic skills and attributes found in the literature include positive attitude, enthusiasm, commitment to lifelong learning, interpersonal skills, self-confidence, time management, and flexibility.

Slides 8-9. Overall, I wanted to know what's missing from the job task analyses from the major certifying organizations to better inform the curriculum development in exercise science programs. The aims of my research were to identify the specific skills, generic skills, and personal attributes essential to the work of a fitness trainer in the United States.

Slides 10-12. To reach those aims, I employed the Delphi method which uses a series of questionnaires to collect feedback from an expert panel in successive rounds with a goal of reaching consensus on a topic. In my project, the goal of the Delphi panel was to produce an agreed upon list of generic skills, specific skills, and personal attributes essential to the work of fitness trainers through three rounds of questionnaires. The panel was comprised of 15 fitness trainers and 14 supervisors of fitness trainers. I retained 86% which exceeds the expectations for rates of attrition in a Delphi. During Round 1, panelists were provided a list of generic skills and personal attributes and asked to rate their level of agreement that each is essential to the work of a fitness trainer. These were rated on a five point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Suggestions for additional generic skills and personal attributes were collected,

26

as well. Panelists were then asked to review categorized lists of specific skills from the JTAs and suggest skills they felt were missing. For each suggestion, panelists were asked to provide a brief comment on why they felt the item was essential, to be shared with the rest of the panel on the next round. Percent agreement was used to measure consensus. If at least 75% of the panelists rated an item as Somewhat Agree or Strongly Agree, then it made the final list. During Round 2, panelists rated all of the items suggested in Round 1, along with any items where consensus was not found in Round 1. Again, supporting comments were collected. Panelists were also given one more opportunity to suggest additional items. During Round 3, all newly suggested items from Round 2 were rated, along with a few items where consensus was not yet reached.

Slides 13-15. At the end of the three rounds, we ended up with 28 generic skills, 37 personal attributes, and 61 specific skills. The number of specific skills for each category are listed on the slide. Please note, the specific skills are those that the panel suggested in addition to what was listed from the certifying organizations.

Slides 16-17. As their name implies, many of the generic skills highlighted by the panel are generally seen as essential across industries. They show up on a lot of lists of skills most wanted, and often lacking, in college graduates as they enter the workforce. As such they often show up in college and university institutional student learning outcomes, including at PCC. Fortunately, we have captured these in our revised degree and certificate outcomes in the curricular work this last year.

Slides 18-20. To broadly capture the specific and generic skills we included this outcome: "Apply career navigation and essential job skills to succeed as a fitness professional in the fitness and wellness industry." We also specifically called out communication in our outcomes in a way that is very specific to our industry – applying communication strategies to educate, motivate,

and promote behavior change. There are a lot of other generic skills on this list so we will need to decide which we want to address. One way to do this would be to focus on the highest rated skills, as listed on the slide. In addition to being essential in future professional work, I think we need to recognize their importance to student success as well – planning, time management, communication, and organization are valuable student skills, too.

Slide 21. I would like to update the Skills Matrix assignment in FT 101 so that it highlights what students really need as a fitness trainer. Adding a section that asks students to identify generic skills they need to develop will help students recognize areas of growth; students can then discuss how they will develop the necessary skills as they move through the program towards graduation. We should have students revisit this in FT 180 so that they are ready to share them with potential employers. Finally, I think we should have students reflect on their application of generic skills during their internships.

Slides 22-24. Information literacy was also on our top 10 list and warrants special recognition. Our industry is inundated with incorrect, faulty, and outdated information, and we need to make sure our students are able to source valid information and evaluate fitness information against what science tells us. In addition to including information literacy on the generic skills list, the panel also had agreed on a couple of related specific skills. In our degree and certificate outcomes we have emphasized scientific foundations as a base for educating clients and exercise program design. I know we teach those scientific foundations very well, but how do we teach students how to source valid information and evaluate sources of information? Spot misinformation on social media and rebut it? Because of the prevalence of misinformation and misconceptions, I think we need to make sure our students are able to find valid information, evaluate sources of information, and challenge their own preconceived ideas or myths about

fitness. We could do this by introducing information literacy in FT 101 as an essential skill and then embedding instruction that challenges common misconceptions and critiques sources of information in key courses. I also think it would be very informative to assess our students on common misconceptions and sources of fitness information at the beginning of FT 101 and at end of FT 105 and FT 204 to see how they change as students move through our program.

Slides 25-27. Two trends seen in the personal attributes revolved around professionalism and the relationships and services provided to clients. Attributes like punctual, dependable, ethical, and willing to learn are all qualities or characteristics that demonstrate professionalism in the workplace. Other attributes point to the softer side of training that requires trainers to support others. Being patient, caring, attentive, and trustworthy help build and maintain trainer-client relationships. A few of the generic skills also demonstrate the importance of the trainer-client relationship: emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills. This reinforces the idea that fitness training is a *helping profession*.

Slide 28. We need to be clear that fitness training is a service to others when students are exploring our program or any of the exercise science related professions. Understanding this part of the job is essential to career selection. Once within our program, there are a few opportunities to weave personal attributes into the curriculum. They are already embedded within FT 101 in the Skill Matrix Assignment in which students identify their personal attributes and their potential value to work in exercise science. This could be revisited in FT 180 as students are preparing to promote themselves to potential employers. We could also add reflection on the demonstration of important personal attributes to the internship journals. Lastly, this could be touched on when preparing for the many teaching demonstrations students perform throughout our program – do they demonstrate care, patience, respect, and punctuality?

Slides 29-31. Asking panelists to review the specific skills from the certifying organizations and then asking what is missing from the list sheds light on some aspects of fitness training that have not been captured by the certifying organizations. Many of the specific skills suggested by the panel could be seen as subskills that would fall under the broader skills from the certifying organizations. With that in mind, there was nothing surprising in the following categories: Initial Client Consultation and Assessment, Program Design and Implementation, and Legal and Professional Responsibilities. However, there were some things that came up that really highlight what's missing from the certifying organizations.

Slides 32-34. Much of what was captured for the Behavioral Coaching category could be seen as subskills, as well. However, the panelist suggestions gave insight into the specific strategies used by trainers to elicit behavior change in their clients. When selecting strategies to teach within an exercise science program, we might look to this list. This is something we will need to consider as we emphasize behavioral coaching in our curriculum. This is likely one of the greatest shifts with the curriculum updates. By adding behavior change and motivational strategies to our degree and certificate outcomes, we will need to figure out how to embed that into instruction. First, we may want to select a couple of specific theories or frameworks to use. Because behavior change will be embedded in various courses with a focus on applying the strategies that work within the theories, I believe using the same theories in each course will provide a common thread so that students may connect the learning from previous coursework and build upon it. It would also be helpful to introduce behavioral coaching as an essential skill in FT 101 with a short module. Second, we will need to determine how we are assessing students, possibly through online discussions, group work or teaching demonstrations. This will be part of the curricular work through winter and spring terms.

Slides 35-37. The panel had a lot to add when it came to the Client Education category. Apparently, the panel feels that trainers need to be able to educate their clients on a wide range of fitness and wellness topics. On the slide is a list of the topics selected by the panel. We have included client education in our new outcomes, too, although client education in our curriculum is not new. It is mentioned in our current outcomes and has been a required objective for internships. From what I have seen, I believe we do really well at teaching students how to educate clients on exercise technique. I'm sure the topics suggested by the panel are also included in the *content* of the curriculum and the *knowledge* of these topics are probably assessed. Because educating clients is in the degree and certificate outcomes, I think we need to consider what other topics, if any, our graduates need to be able to educate their clients on and how we are assessing students on their ability to do that. As we move into our discussion around assessment of student learning for the remainder of the year, I would be interested in seeing how students are assessed on this in a way that mimics what is required in the industry.

Slides 38-40. Before we get to the last category, I want to remind everyone that the basic question that panelists were asked was "what's missing" from the specific skills list that came from the certifying organizations JTAs. Interestingly, there were 10 skills suggested during the first round that related to the business side of training. Because there were so many, a business category was added to round 2 and there were four more skills suggested. However, even though there were 14 suggested, only five made the final list. Three of them relate to sales – generating leads, sales strategies, and data tracking. This points to the need for fitness trainers to be able to sell personal training services. Sales skills were discussed when working on our revised degree and certificate outcomes; the SAC made the decision to capture these in course outcomes as part of the "essential skills" mentioned in the degree and certificate outcomes. We then captured them

31

at the course level: promoting and selling fitness services as part of the initial client consultation and then client retention in the implementation portion of exercise prescription. In addition to these for FT 104 and FT 105, marketing and promotion have been covered in FT 203.

Slide 41-42. For this category, I would also like to share what didn't make the list because it tells us something important about the industry. Business planning, marketing, and other business operations were seen as essential skills to some panelists. When looking at the supporting comments for these skills in the box on the right, it is evident that the essential skills change based on the employment type and the role of the fitness trainer. Trainers that are working as independent contractors or those that run their own business need more skills related to business operations. This is something students should be advised on. We have a lot of students that want to open their own business eventually. If that's the case, we should be advising them to take business courses. These could fit in some of the elective allotment in the AAS.

Slides 43-45. Lastly, I want to share something I found interesting. Panelists considered the skill of physical self-care and the attribute of fit-physique. I had fit physique on the original attribute list because it showed up in my literature review as something associated with successful trainers. Physical self-care was suggested by a panelist in the first round. The panelists had a lot to say on both of these items. Physical self-care made the essential skills list with 92% agreement ratings. From reading through the panelist comments, it is clear this is not about physical appearance, but rather about setting an example of healthy behaviors. Fit physique, on the other hand, did not make the essential attributes list, but still gained a lot of support. Some of the comments from panelists suggest that it is helpful because of the assumptions others make based on appearance. The industry, as well as much of our society, values a thin and muscular

appearance. However, with a growing focus on a holistic approach to health, there is a trend to apply body inclusive practices in fitness settings. In light of this, we may want to consider how we are teaching students about this. Perhaps we can discuss the ways in which we challenge weight bias and develop skill in body inclusive practices. For now, I think we are right on track promoting physical self-care with the inclusion of physical activity courses in our curriculum. In addition to the physical activity courses, I think we should actively encourage these kinds of activities where we can. for example, adding some reflection about physical self-care activities to the FT 280 journal would encourage students to engage in these activities in the work setting.

Slide 46. I know that was a lot to cover, but hopefully it has given you something to think about as we continue working for our students. My dissertation work has really influenced my decision making in my courses and how I assess students. We have made great progress with all the outcomes work and Tanya will keep that going with our conversations about assessment coming up. Let's all keep thinking about graduate employability – what our students need to be employable – as we make curricular decisions in our own courses and throughout the program. Thank you, again, for taking the time to listen to my passion project for the last couple of years. I hope it gave you some inspiration, or at least affirmation for how you teach your courses.

CHAPTER III: ACTION PLAN

The results of this work will first be presented to the faculty of the Exercise Science program at Portland Community College (PCC), as outlined in Chapter II. The findings of this work will be used to make curricular decisions at the program and course level. Recommendations will also be made for faculty to consider as they implement the curricular updates in the 2023-24 academic year.

Short Term Actions

Following the presentation to Exercise Science, I plan to offer two more presentations in 2023. The first presentation will be for the Faculty Chairs, Curriculum Chairs and interested deans of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs at PCC. CTE programs prepare students for work in specific job roles and industries. This presentation will provide an overview of employability and my research. I will also share how the Exercise Science faculty approached the curriculum review and subsequent update, much of which was influenced by my dissertation work. Recommendations on curriculum design considerations specific to CTE instruction will be offered.

The second presentation I plan to offer will be for faculty of kinesiology and exercise science programs at local four year colleges and universities. The purpose of this presentation will be to provide a review of graduate employability, an overview of the fitness industry, and the job roles therewithin. I will share my research results and then discuss ways in which these might influence the curriculum design in four year programs. The emphasis will be on recommendations for a four year degree that leads to graduate employability without the need to continue on to a graduate level professional preparation program like physical therapy.

Long Term Actions

Long term, I will be making some curricular changes to a series of courses in the
Exercise Science program at PCC. The courses are FT 101 Exploring Exercise Science Careers,
FT 180 Internship Prep, and FT 280 Internship I. FT 101 Exploring Exercise Science Careers
provides an overview of exercise science related professions and essential skills of these
professions. For this course, I will create an essential skills module, teaching students about the
skills needed in the industry. This leads to a Skills Matrix assignment in which students are
asked to identify their interests, generic skills, and personal attributes and how they relate to
exercise science professions. This will also involve reflection on generic skills that they feel they
need to improve and then ask students to create strategies on how to practice them. Although the
Skills Matrix assignment exists already, I plan to revise it to reflect the skills and attributes most
needed in the industry and will build some learning activities to prepare students for the
assignment.

FT 180 Internship Prep focuses on job search and self-promotion skill development.
Although this course has been offered for many years, it will be completely redesigned. The
focus will be on students identifying their knowledge, skills, and qualities that make them
competitive in the job market. Learning activities and assessments will be re-envisioned or
created to help students communicate what they have to offer to potential employers. Students
need to be able to succinctly and clearly communicate these to employers. If they cannot do that,
it may be difficult to find and secure employment upon graduation.

Lastly, FT 280 Internship I is a 120 hour internship experience where students work
onsite with a local employer. Internships serve as a valuable learning experience to transition
from a learning environment to actual employment in the industry. Students apply the knowledge

and skills gain through a program of study in a work setting to continue to develop skills and gain real world experience. There will be no significant change to the internship activities, however more self-reflection will be incorporated through the completion of an Internship Journal. The journal already exists but will be altered to have students discuss the generic skills and specific skills they have applied during their internships. Students will be asked to identify skills they have demonstrated well and skills that need more development. These reflections will focus on what fitness trainers really need to be able to do and will hopefully prompt self-development of these skills. Additionally, the Employer Evaluation form will be altered so that internship supervisors evaluate the specific skills and generic skills most important to their work.

Beyond the changes I plan to implement at Portland Community College, I will seek to present at the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) Oregon State Clinic. The annual clinic offers continuing education to NSCA certified strength and conditioning coaches and personal trainers. I will also submit an article to IDEA Fitness Journal, a quarterly online publication sharing content to support personal trainer careers. The presentation and article will focus on building generic skills to improve professional practice as well as describe ways in which essential personal attributes can be demonstrated.

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Table 3. Panelist Demographics

Age

Age	Percent	Frequency
18-24	3.45	1
25-34	27.59	8
35-44	31.03	9
45-54	34.48	10
55-64	3.45	1
65 and over	0.00	0
Prefer not to say	0.00	0

Gender

Gender	Percent	Frequency
Male	41.38	12
Female	55.17	16
Non-binary/third gender	0.00	0
Other[a]	3.45	1
Prefer not to say	0.00	0

Race and Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Percent	Frequency
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.00	0
Asian	3.33	1
Black or African American	3.33	1
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.00	0
White	83.33	25
Other	3.33	1
Prefer not to say	0.00	0
Hispanic/Latino/a/x	6.67	2

Experience

Years of Experience	Percent	Frequency
3-5 years	24.4	1
6-10 years	27.59	6
11-15 years	6.9	2
More than 15 years	41.38	12

Region

Region	Percent	Frequency
West (AK, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY)	37.93	11

Midwest (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI)	20.69	6
Southwest (AZ, NM, OK, TX)	10.34	3
Southeast (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV)	27.59	8
Northeast (CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT)	3.45	1

Current Job Title

Job Title	Percent	Frequency
Fitness Trainer	0.00	0
Personal Trainer	37.93	11
Exercise Physiologist	0.00	0
Fitness Manager/Director	31.03	9
General Manager	0.00	0
Other[b]	31.03	9

Employer Type

Employer Type	Percent	Frequency
Commercial gym chain	0.00	0
Local business - Multi-purpose Club/Fitness Center	10.34	3
Local business - Small Studio	13.79	4
Recreation center	17.24	5
Corporate fitness/wellness center	3.45	1
Retirement community	3.45	1
Medical clinic	0.00	0
Self-employed	37.93	11
Other[c]	13.79	4

Education

Education Level	Percent	Frequency
High school diploma	6.90	2
Associate's degree	6.90	2
Bachelor's degree	44.83	13
Master's degree	41.38	12
Doctoral degree	0.00	0

[a]Other gender identified as Agender.

[b]Other job titles were Area Manager, Lifestyle Coach, Fitness Club Owner/Operator, Facility Manger/Trainer, Gym Owner, Health Coach/Nutritionist, Fitness Trainer and Personal Trainer, Founder | CEO, Fitness Programmer.

[c]Other employer types were government, military.

Invitation Email

Hello!

I would like to invite you to be a part of an **expert panel** that will work on a short project to improve the career preparation needs of fitness professionals. Since you already work in the industry, you have probably seen firsthand the positive outcomes of this work - greater health and well-being in the communities in which you work. However, in order to do this work well and realize those positive outcomes, fitness professionals need the right preparation.

Perhaps you have questioned how well your training, whether through higher education or certification programs, prepared you to hit the ground running in this work; or maybe you have seen recent graduates or those that recently completed certification programs struggle to get started in the fitness industry.

This is where you come in! Your expertise will help identify the essential skills and personal attributes of fitness trainers to inform post-secondary education programs as they develop coursework to prepare fitness professionals for the industry. Your expertise will help solve that issue!

Interested? I sure hope so! Professionals like you are who I need to help with this! Following is a description of the intended activities and expectations of this expert panel.

Before getting to that, I want to briefly tell you about me and my work. I am an instructor of Exercise Science at Portland Community College. The curriculum in our program will be directly informed by the work of this expert panel. I am also a doctoral candidate in the Kinesiology program at University of North Carolina at Greensboro. This is part of my dissertation work and the outcomes will be freely shared with interested kinesiology and exercise science programs across the U.S. Finally, I have been a fitness professional for over 15 years in private and military settings and worked as a program manager, personal trainer and group fitness instructor. I believe in the work of fitness professionals and the value they bring to the communities in which they serve. I also believe that these professions need to be elevated in the eyes of healthcare - this is one small piece of that very complicated work.

Panel Expectations

First, the panel will be composed of those currently employed as a fitness trainer (personal trainer) as their primary employment and those that supervise fitness trainers. At least three years of experience in these roles will be necessary, as well.

In order to offer flexibility to panel members in their work on this project, along with giving everyone an equal voice, an anonymous process will take place. Through three rounds of questionnaires, you will be able to freely share your opinions, make recommendations, and provide commentary to the rest of the panel. In between each round of questionnaires, your responses will be collected and combined with others from the expert panel. The collected responses will then be shared with the full panel on the next questionnaire. Through the completion of these three questionnaires, the intended product of the expert panel will be an agreed upon list of skills and personal attributes that are essential to the work of a fitness trainer.

Overall, your expected time commitment will be about three hours over a 50-day period (August 10 - September 29). If you are able to commit to that, I invite you to complete the Panel Member Interest Form. After receiving your application, I will reach out to you with more details about the process and the planned timeline of work. You will be welcome to withdraw your application at a later time if you choose.

Please complete the application at the following link:
Fitness Trainer Expert Panel Interest Form

Lastly, if you know others that might be interested in this work, please feel free to pass this invitation along.

Thank you for your time! Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions you might have.

In health,
Alma Eaton

APPENDIX C: ROUND 1 QUESTIONNAIRE

Panel on Fitness Trainer Skills and Attributes

Introduction

Introduction

Thank you again for setting aside some time for this panel work.

- The questionnaire will take 30-45 minutes to complete.
- You may go back any time to review and change your responses prior to submission.

To get started, please read the Information Sheet below and consent to participate.

Then, in the next item, click Yes to provide consent and continue with the survey.

Information Sheet

Project Title: Graduate Employability: Essential Skills and Personal Attributes of Fitness Trainers Principal

Investigator: Alma Eaton

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Diane Gill and Dr. Paul Davis

What is this all about? I am asking you to participate in this research study because I want to create a better professional preparation program for fitness trainers. This research project will only take about two hours and will involve you completing three web-based questionnaires. Your participation in this research project is voluntary.

How will this negatively affect me? No, other than the time you spend on this project there are no known or foreseeable risks involved with this study.

What do I get out of this research project? There are no personal benefits.

Will I get paid for participating? There is no compensation for your participation.

What about my confidentiality? We will do everything possible to make sure that your information is kept confidential. All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. We will use a four digit number in lieu of personal identification. Also, all data will be stored on a secure cloud storage service. Absolute confidentiality of data provided through the Internet cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access. Please be sure to close your browser when finished so no one will be able to see what you have been doing.

What if I do not want to be in this research study? You do not have to be part of this project. This project is voluntary and it is up to you to decide to participate in this research project. If you agree to participate at any time in this project you may stop participating without penalty.

What if I have questions? You can ask Alma Eaton (aseaton@uncg.edu), Diane Gill (dlgill@uncg.edu), and Paul Davis (pgdavis@uncg.edu) anything about the study. If you have concerns about how you have been treated in this study call the Office of Research Integrity Director at 1-855-251-2351.

By clicking "yes," you are agreeing to participate in this study. By clicking "no," you are choosing not to participate.

○ Yes
○ No

Please choose a four-digit identification number for tracking purposes. This will allow for anonymous identification. The last four digits of your phone number or another unique identifier will work.

Demographic Information

Demographic Information

Please select your age group.

- ○ 18-24
- ○ 25-34
- ○ 35-44
- ○ 45-54
- ○ 55-64
- ○ 65 and over
- ○ Prefer not to say

Please select your gender.

- ○ Male
- ○ Female
- ○ Non-binary/third gender
- ○ [   ] Other
- ○ Prefer not to say

Please select your race or ethnicity (you may select more than one).

- ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic/Latino/a/x
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ [   ] Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Current Primary Employment

Current Primary Employment

Which of the following best describes the majority of your current work?

○ Fitness trainer (primarily instructing and motivating individuals in exercise activities in one on one settings)

○ Supervisor/manager of fitness trainers

How many total years have you worked as a fitness trainer or supervisor of fitness trainers as your primary employment?

○ Less than 3 years

○ 3-5 years

○ 6-10 years

○ 11-15 years

○ More than 15 years

Please select the region in which you work.

○ West (AK, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY)

○ Midwest (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI)

○ Southwest (AZ, NM, OK, TX)

○ Southeast (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV)

○ Northeast (CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT)

What is your current job title?

○ Fitness Trainer

○ Personal Trainer

○ Exercise Physiologist

○ Fitness Manager/Director

○ General Manager

○ [   ] Other

Which of the following items best describes the type of employer (business/organization) you currently work for?

○ Commercial gym chain

○ Local business - Multi-purpose Club/Fitness Center

○ Local business - Small Studio

○ Recreation center

○ Corporate fitness/wellness center

○ Retirement community

○ Medical clinic

○ Self-employed

○ [   ] Other

What is your highest level of education?

○ High school diploma

○ Associate's degree

○ Bachelor's degree

○ Master's degree

○ Doctoral degree

Do you have a degree in kinesiology, exercise science or a related discipline (exercise physiology, human performance, sport science, etc.)?

○ Yes

○ No

What fitness certifications, if any, do you currently possess (check all that apply)?

☐ ACE Personal Trainer

☐ ACSM Exercise Physiologist

☐ ACSM Personal Trainer

☐ NASM Personal Trainer

☐ NSCA Personal Trainer

☐ NSCA CSCS

☐ Other (please include the name of the organization and the name of the certification)
[   ]

☐ None (no certifications)

Questionnaire Overview

Questionnaire Overview

This questionnaire is split up into three main sections: generic skills, personal attributes, and specific skills. The specific skills are further broken down into categories. Definitions of each of these follows:

> - **Generic skills:** skills that are needed across fields and disciplines
> - **Personal attribute:** a quality or characteristic of a person
> - **Specific skills:** skills that are unique to a discipline, occupation or field

There are many job roles in the fitness industry, so as you consider the questions presented here, please use the job role of fitness trainer as defined below.

> - **Fitness trainer:** one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in non-clinical, one-on-one settings

Also please keep in mind that the **overall goal** for the expert panel is to produce a list of the specific skills, generic skills and personal attributes essential to the work of a fitness trainer. You may also go back and change any responses any time before you submit the questionnaire. Let's get started!

Generic Skills

Generic Skills

55

In this section you will review a list of **generic skills** and **rate your level of agreement** that each item is **essential** to the work of a fitness trainer.
Please keep in mind that this may not offer a complete list of essential generic skills, so as you review these, **consider what may be missing**. At the end of this section, you will be invited to suggest additional generic skills.

As a reminder, these are the definitions of fitness trainer and generic skill to guide your work.

- **Fitness trainer:** one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings
- **Generic skills:** skills that are needed across fields and disciplines

For each of the following skills, select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is essential to the work of a fitness trainer.**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Active listening	O	O	O	O	O
Analytical and conceptual thinking	O	O	O	O	O
Critical Thinking	O	O	O	O	O
Cultural Competence	O	O	O	O	O
Information Literacy	O	O	O	O	O
Interpersonal Skills	O	O	O	O	O

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Leadership	O	O	O	O	O
Lifelong learning	O	O	O	O	O
Oral Communication	O	O	O	O	O
Organization	O	O	O	O	O
Planning	O	O	O	O	O

56

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Problem Solving	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Stress Management	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Teamwork	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Technical Skills	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Time Management	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Writing Skills/Written Communication	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘

What's missing? Please list any other generic skills you feel are essential to the work of a fitness trainer. You may also include a brief statement about why you think the suggested skills should be added to the list. *These will be added to the next questionnaire for feedback from the rest of the panel.*

Personal Attributes

Personal Attributes

In this section you will review a list of *personal attributes* and **rate your level of agreement** that each item is **essential** to the work of a fitness trainer.

Please keep in mind that this may not offer a complete list of essential personal attributes, so as you review these, **consider what may be missing**. At the end of this section, you will be invited to suggest additional personal attributes.

As a reminder, these are the definitions of fitness trainer and personal attribute to guide your work.

57

- **Fitness trainer:** one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings
- **Personal attribute:** a quality or characteristic of a person

For each of the following personal attributes, select your level of agreement with the following statement: *This personal attribute is essential to the work of a fitness trainer.*

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Adaptable	O	O	O	O	O
Attentive	O	O	O	O	O
College educated	O	O	O	O	O
Confident	O	O	O	O	O
Creative	O	O	O	O	O
Dependable	O	O	O	O	O
Empathetic	O	O	O	O	O

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Enthusiastic	O	O	O	O	O
Ethical	O	O	O	O	O
Fit physique	O	O	O	O	O
Honest	O	O	O	O	O
Passionate	O	O	O	O	O
Positive	O	O	O	O	O
Punctual	O	O	O	O	O

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Respectful	O	O	O	O	O
Sociable	O	O	O	O	O
Knowledgeable	O	O	O	O	O
Trustworthy	O	O	O	O	O
Willing to learn	O	O	O	O	O

58

What's missing? Please list any other personal attributes you feel are essential to the work of a fitness trainer. You may also include a brief statement about why you think the suggested attributes should be added to the list. *These will be added to the next questionnaire for feedback from the rest of the panel.*

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Specific Skills Introduction

Specific Skills Overview

In this section, you will be asked to review a list of **job-specific skills for fitness trainers**. The skills listed come from the job task analyses already conducted by the major certifying organizations for personal trainer certifications. Because these skills have been identified by major certifying organizations, you do NOT rate each skill.

The skills are grouped in the following categories:

- Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment
- Exercise Program Design and Implementation
- Behavioral Coaching
- Client Education
- Legal and Professional Responsibilities

For each of the categories, you will review a list of associated skills and then be asked if there should be additional skills added to the list (what's missing).
As a reminder, these are the definitions of fitness trainer and specific skills to guide your work.

- **Fitness trainer:** one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings

59

- **Specific skills:** skills that are unique to a discipline, occupation or field

Specific – Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment

Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment

Please review the below list of skills that fall under this category. After reviewing this list, please consider whether there are additional skills that belong in this category. If you would like to view this list in a separate document, click here.

1. Obtain a health/medical history, medical clearance, and informed consent
2. Conduct effective interviews to gather relevant health and lifestyle information
3. Apply effective interviewing strategies (e.g., open-ended questions, clarification, probing)
4. Interpret interview and questionnaire responses to determine risk factors for exercise participation using industry standards and guidelines (e.g., PAR-Q, ACSM guidelines) and facilitate program design
5. Identify modifiable risk factors for cardiovascular disease and teaching clients about risk reduction
6. Determine appropriate fitness assessments based on the initial client consultation
7. Select and administer cardiovascular fitness assessments
8. Select and administer muscular strength and muscular endurance assessments
9. Select and administer flexibility assessments for various muscle groups
10. Identify physiological demands of activities of daily living
11. Select and administer appropriate methods for assessing movement and balance
12. Select and administer speed, agility, and quickness assessments
13. Follow protocols during fitness assessment administration

60

14. Locate/palpate pulse landmarks, accurately measuring heart rate, and obtaining rating of perceived exertion (RPE)
15. Locate anatomical sites for circumference (girth) and skinfold measurements
16. Apply test termination criteria
17. Recognize postural deviations that may affect exercise performance and body alignment
18. Identify the effect of daily activities on movement efficiency (e.g., lifestyle, occupational, athletic)
19. Deliver test and assessment results in a positive manner
20. Interpret results of postural observation and movement screens and assessments to facilitate program design

What's missing? Please list any other specific skills you feel should be **added** to the **_client consultation and fitness assessment_** category. You may share a brief reason why you feel the suggested item should be included. *These will be added to the next questionnaire to collect feedback from the rest of the panel.*

Specific - Exercise Program Design and Implementation

Exercise Program Design and Implementation

Please review the below list of skills that fall under this category. After reviewing this list, please consider whether there are **additional skills** that belong in this category. If you would like to view this list in a separate document, click here.

1. Design individualized exercise programs based on interviews, assessments, and goals
2. Design individualized exercise programs in accordance with program goals (e.g., cardiorespiratory, muscular strength and endurance, mobility, stability, flexibility, body composition)

61

3. Design appropriate cardiorespiratory programs based on individualized exercise responses (e.g., heart rate, ventilatory thresholds)

4. Select and sequence appropriate exercises based on individualized health, fitness, movement, and goals

5. Incorporate appropriate equipment into program design

6. Implement safe and effective exercise programs to address muscle imbalances

7. Implement appropriate program components (e.g., warm-up, cardiorespiratory, muscular strength and endurance, cool-down) and effective exercise techniques

8. Teach safe and effective exercise technique using a variety of equipment, modalities, and feedback

9. Demonstrate exercises designed to enhance cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, balance, and range of motion

10. Demonstrate a wide range of resistance training modalities and activities (e.g., variable resistance devices, dynamic constant external resistance devices, kettlebells, static resistance devices)

11. Demonstrate a wide variety of functional training exercises (e.g., stability balls, balance boards, resistance bands, medicine balls, foam rollers)

12. Identify deviations from optimal movement patterns

13. Recognize and correcting compensatory movement patterns

14. Recognize changes in cardiorespiratory fitness and muscle function, weakness, and imbalances

15. Identify physiological responses based on observation and feedback during assessments and exercise

16. Interpret client comprehension and body language during exercise

17. Cue and provide constructive feedback during and after exercise

18. Use feedback to optimize a client's training sessions

19. Modify exercise technique as needed to promote safe exercise participation and goal attainment

20. Modify instruction and program components to accommodate individual differences in health and/or fitness status

21. Select exercises, equipment, and workloads to progress and regress exercise programs as needed based on client performance, health,

and fitness

22. Recognize signs and symptoms of overtraining (e.g., decline in physical performance, change in appetite, excessive fatigue)

What's missing? Please list any other specific skills you feel should be **added** to the *exercise program design and implementation* category. You may share a brief reason why you feel the suggested item should be included. *These will be added to the next questionnaire to collect feedback from the rest of the panel.*

Specific - Behavioral Coaching

Behavioral Coaching

Please review the below list of skills that fall under this category. After reviewing this list, please consider whether there are additional skills that belong in this category. If you would like to view this list in a sepatate document, [click here](#).

1. Establish and maintain professional client-fitness trainer relationships using rapport building and communication techniques
2. Build rapport, establish credibility, and develop trust
3. Maintain rapport, credibility, and trust
4. Facilitate effective goal setting (e.g., SMART goals, process, outcome)
5. Reevaluate and adjust program goals as necessary
6. Motivate clients to adhere to exercise programs
7. Identify potential barriers that influence program adherence and goal attainment
8. Implement strategies to help clients overcome barriers
9. Adjust program variables (e.g., sets, repetitions, intensity, rest, tempo) to promote adherence

63

10. Determine client attitudes, preferences, and readiness for behavior change and appropriate strategies to motivate program adoption and adherence
11. Choose and apply appropriate health behavior modification strategies based on the client's skills, knowledge and level of motivation
12. Facilitate lifestyle and behavioral change through education, monitoring, and communication strategies

What's missing? Please list any other specific skills you feel should be **added** to the **behavioral coaching** category. You may share a brief reason why you feel the suggested item should be included. *These will be added to the next questionnaire to collect feedback from the rest of the panel.*

Specific - Client Education

Client Education

Please review the below list of skills that fall under this category. After reviewing this list, please consider whether there are additional skills that belong in this category. If you would like to view this list in a separate document, <u>click here</u>.

1. Educate clients about basic nutrition and weight-management guidelines
2. Educate clients on how to manage the frequency, intensity, and complexity of various exercises
3. Educate clients on how to manage external factors that impact adherence (e.g., time, socioeconomic, social)

64

What's missing? Please list any other specific skills you feel should be **added** to the *client education* category. You may share a brief reason why you feel the suggested item should be included. *These will be added to the next questionnaire to collect feedback from the rest of the panel.*

<div style="border: 1px solid black; min-height: 150px;"></div>

Specific – Legal and Professional Responsibilities

Legal and Professional Responsibilities

Please review the below list of skills that fall under this category. After reviewing this list, please consider whether there are additional skills that belong in this category. If you would like to view this list in a separate document, <u>click here</u>.

1. Conduct risk analyses to minimize liability (e.g., identification, evaluation, management)
2. Demonstrate and carry out emergency procedures during exercise testing and/or training
3. Identifying, responding to, and documenting safety hazards
4. Access client emergency contact information rapidly
5. Assist, spot, and monitor clients safely and effectively during exercise testing and/or training
6. Modify exercise sessions based on extreme environmental conditions (e.g., altitude, hazardous weather, temperature, humidity)
7. Identify the need for referral to appropriate allied health professionals
8. Refer clients to appropriate allied health professionals
9. Reference non-original work
10. Document and secure confidential information (e.g., incident reports, accident reports, waivers, informed consent, SOAP notes)

11. Identify and implement proper protocols for secure use of technology (e.g., communication, marketing, data tracking, consent)
12. Conduct all professional activities within their scope of practice
13. Adhere to applicable professional standards, guidelines, regulations, and codes of conduct
14. Identify appropriate continuing education providers and courses
15. Apply appropriate knowledge and skills obtained through continuing education and professional development
16. Identify appropriate products and services using information obtained from credible resources
17. Develop and grow business (such as building client base, marketing, networking, financial planning)

What's missing? Please list any other specific skills you feel should be **added** to the ***legal and professional responsibilities*** category. You may share a brief reason why you feel the suggested item should be included. *These will be added to the next questionnaire to collect feedback from the rest of the panel.*

Specific - Other

Other Skills

Now that you have reviewed the ***specific skills*** captured by the certifying organizations, consider whether there are additional skills that should be added. These are the five categories of specific skills that you reviewed.

- Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment
- Exercise Program Design and Implementation
- Behavioral Coaching
- Client Education
- Legal and Professional Responsibilities

66

In the box below, please list any other **specific** skills that you feel should be added to this overall list. You may share a brief reason why you feel these are essential. All items collected here will be added to the next questionnaire for feedback from the rest of the panel. (open text response)

Now, please **consider what may be** *missing* from *any* lists you have reviewed (generic skills, personal attributes and specific skills). Remember that the **overall goal of this panel is to provide a comprehensive list of the skills and personal attributes** essential to the work of a fitness trainer.

In the box below, please list any other **generic skills,** *specific* **skills or** *personal attributes* that you feel should be added to the overall list. You may share a brief reason why you feel these are essential. *All items collected here will be added to the next questionnaire for feedback from the rest of the panel.*

In case you would like to review your previous work, below the question box you will see a link to all of the provided skills and attributes and your previously suggested skills and attributes.

The below link lists all of the personal attributes, generic skills, and specific skills that were provided in this questionnaire.
[Link to full list of attributes and skills](#)

Also, your suggested additional items are listed below, as entered in previous questions.

Your suggest generic skills:

67

${q://QID296/ChoiceTextEntryValue}

Your suggested personal attributes:
${q://QID376/ChoiceTextEntryValue}

Your suggested specific skills for Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment:
${q://QID56/ChoiceTextEntryValue}

Your suggested specific skills for Exercise Program Design and Implementation:
${q://QID378/ChoiceTextEntryValue}

Your suggested specific skills for Behavioral Coaching:
${q://QID379/ChoiceTextEntryValue}

Your suggested specific skills for Client Education:
${q://QID380/ChoiceTextEntryValue}

Your suggested specific skills for Legal and Professional Responsibilities:
${q://QID381/ChoiceTextEntryValue}

Other specific skills you suggested that fall outside these categories:
${q://QID246/ChoiceTextEntryValue}

Conclusion

What's next?

Thank you for your time in completing this first round questionnaire for the panel work. If you'd like, you may still go back and review your responses before submitting.

Once you are satisfied with your responses, please submit this questionnaire. After all the questionnaires have been received, I will collect the responses, collate them and prepare the next questionnaire. The next questionnaire will be sent to you around August 17th. The second questionnaire will likely be much

shorter than the first one.

Thank you again for taking the time to serve on this panel.

Don't forget to submit the questionnaire by clicking the arrow button on the right.

Sincerely,
Alma Eaton

Powered by Qualtrics

APPENDIX D: SPECIFIC SKILLS FROM THE CERTIFYING ORGANIZATIONS

Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment

1. Obtain a health/medical history, medical clearance, and informed consent
2. Conduct effective interviews to gather relevant health and lifestyle information
3. Apply effective interviewing strategies (e.g., open-ended questions, clarification, probing)
4. Interpret interview and questionnaire responses to determine risk factors for exercise participation using industry standards and guidelines (e.g., PAR-Q, ACSM guidelines) and facilitate program design
5. Identify modifiable risk factors for cardiovascular disease and teaching clients about risk reduction
6. Determine appropriate fitness assessments based on the initial client consultation
7. Select and administer cardiovascular fitness assessments
8. Select and administer muscular strength and muscular endurance assessments
9. Select and administer flexibility assessments for various muscle groups
10. Identify physiological demands of activities of daily living
11. Select and administer appropriate methods for assessing movement and balance
12. Select and administer speed, agility, and quickness assessments
13. Follow protocols during fitness assessment administration
14. Locate/palpate pulse landmarks, accurately measuring heart rate, and obtaining rating of perceived exertion (RPE)
15. Locate anatomical sites for circumference (girth) and skinfold measurements
16. Apply test termination criteria
17. Recognize postural deviations that may affect exercise performance and body alignment
18. Identify the effect of daily activities on movement efficiency (e.g., lifestyle, occupational, athletic)
19. Deliver test and assessment results in a positive manner
20. Interpret results of postural observation and movement screens and assessments to facilitate program design

Exercise Program Design and Implementation

1. Design individualized exercise programs based on interviews, assessments, and goals
2. Design individualized exercise programs in accordance with program goals (e.g., cardiorespiratory, muscular strength and endurance, mobility, stability, flexibility, body composition)
3. Design appropriate cardiorespiratory programs based on individualized exercise responses (e.g., heart rate, ventilatory thresholds)
4. Select and sequence appropriate exercises based on individualized health, fitness, movement, and goals
5. Incorporate appropriate equipment into program design
6. Implement safe and effective exercise programs to address muscle imbalances
7. Implement appropriate program components (e.g., warm-up, cardiorespiratory, muscular strength and endurance, cool-down) and effective exercise techniques

8. Teach safe and effective exercise technique using a variety of equipment, modalities, and feedback
9. Demonstrate exercises designed to enhance cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, balance, and range of motion
10. Demonstrate a wide range of resistance training modalities and activities (e.g., variable resistance devices, dynamic constant external resistance devices, kettlebells, static resistance devices)
11. Demonstrate a wide variety of functional training exercises (e.g., stability balls, balance boards, resistance bands, medicine balls, foam rollers)
12. Identify deviations from optimal movement patterns
13. Recognize and correcting compensatory movement patterns
14. Recognize changes in cardiorespiratory fitness and muscle function, weakness, and imbalances
15. Identify physiological responses based on observation and feedback during assessments and exercise
16. Interpret client comprehension and body language during exercise
17. Cue and provide constructive feedback during and after exercise
18. Use feedback to optimize a client's training sessions
19. Modify exercise technique as needed to promote safe exercise participation and goal attainment
20. Modify instruction and program components to accommodate individual differences in health and/or fitness status
21. Select exercises, equipment, and workloads to progress and regress exercise programs as needed based on client performance, health, and fitness
22. Recognize signs and symptoms of overtraining (e.g., decline in physical performance, change in appetite, excessive fatigue)

Behavioral Coaching

1. Establish and maintain professional client-fitness trainer relationships using rapport building and communication techniques
2. Build rapport, establish credibility, and develop trust
3. Maintain rapport, credibility, and trust
4. Facilitate effective goal setting (e.g., SMART goals, process, outcome)
5. Reevaluate and adjust program goals as necessary
6. Motivate clients to adhere to exercise programs
7. Identify potential barriers that influence program adherence and goal attainment
8. Implement strategies to help clients overcome barriers
9. Adjust program variables (e.g., sets, repetitions, intensity, rest, tempo) to promote adherence
10. Determine client attitudes, preferences, and readiness for behavior change and appropriate strategies to motivate program adoption and adherence
11. Choose and apply appropriate health behavior modification strategies based on the client's skills, knowledge and level of motivation
12. Facilitate lifestyle and behavioral change through education, monitoring, and communication strategies

Client Education

1. Educate clients about basic nutrition and weight-management guidelines
2. Educate clients on how to manage the frequency, intensity, and complexity of various exercises
3. Educate clients on how to manage external factors that impact adherence (e.g., time, socioeconomic, social)
   Legal and Professional Responsibilities

1. Conduct risk analyses to minimize liability (e.g., identification, evaluation, management)
2. Demonstrate and carry out emergency procedures during exercise testing and/or training
3. Identifying, responding to, and documenting safety hazards
4. Access client emergency contact information rapidly
5. Assist, spot, and monitor clients safely and effectively during exercise testing and/or training
6. Modify exercise sessions based on extreme environmental conditions (e.g., altitude, hazardous weather, temperature, humidity)
7. Identify the need for referral to appropriate allied health professionals
8. Refer clients to appropriate allied health professionals
9. Reference non-original work
10. Document and secure confidential information (e.g., incident reports, accident reports, waivers, informed consent, SOAP notes)
11. Identify and implement proper protocols for secure use of technology (e.g., communication, marketing, data tracking, consent)
12. Conduct all professional activities within their scope of practice
13. Adhere to applicable professional standards, guidelines, regulations, and codes of conduct
14. Identify appropriate continuing education providers and courses
15. Apply appropriate knowledge and skills obtained through continuing education and professional development
16. Identify appropriate products and services using information obtained from credible resources
17. Develop and grow business (such as building client base, marketing, networking, financial planning)

Panel on Fitness Trainer Skills and Attributes

Introduction

Introduction

Welcome to the second round of the panel work! Let's get started!

- This questionnaire will take 20-30 minutes to complete.
- You may go back at any time to review or change your responses before submitting the questionnaire.

Please enter the four digit ID you selected in the first questionnaire. If you are unsure, please check the email that was sent with the questionnaire link.

Questionnaire Overview

Questionnaire Overview

As you go through the questionnaire, please keep in mind:

- The **overall goal** for the expert panel is to produce a list of the specific skills, generic skills and personal attributes essential to the work of a fitness trainer.
- The keyword here is *essential*. You might feel like many things are valuable or important to a fitness trainer but I encourage you to consider what is essential.

For most of the questionnaire, you will be selecting ratings for each of the skills and attributes suggested by the panel in the first questionnaire.

The formatting has been designed to help you move through the questionnaire quickly, finding the information/questions you want easily.

- All skills that need to be rated will be displayed in **colored, bold typeface.**

- Any panelist comments included with suggested items in the first questionnaire will appear below the skill and in a gray box.
- Following every skill rating there is an optional text box to add supporting comments. These are in normal gray typeface and say "(optional)" at the beginning.

Like the previous questionnaire, this questionnaire is split up into three main sections: generic skills, personal attributes, and specific skills. The specific skills are further broken down into categories.

There are many job roles in the fitness industry, so as you consider the questions presented here, please use the job role of fitness trainer as defined below.

- **Fitness trainer:** one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in non-clinical, one-on-one settings

Generic Skills

Generic Skills

In this section you will review a list of **generic skills** suggested by the panel or carried over from the previous questionnaire where there was a wide range of agreement. You will **rate your level of agreement** that each item is *essential* to the work of a fitness trainer. As a reminder, these are the definitions of fitness trainer and generic skill to guide your work.

- **Fitness trainer:** one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings
- **Generic skills:** skills that are needed across fields and disciplines

Also, if any panelists shared supporting comments in the first questionnaire for an item, these will be shared in a gray box for you to consider, but please remember you are rating the skills and not the panelist comments.

For each of the following skills, select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is <u>essential</u> to the work of a fitness trainer.**

After rating each item, you are invited to share your opinion on why you think the skill is essential or not. These comments will be shared with the rest of the panel on the last questionnaire in the event there is disagreement - **think of the comments as a way to persuade other panelists to agree with you.**

1a. Cognitive flexibility

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

1b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

2a. Emotional Intelligence

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

2b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

75

3a. Empathy

> **Comment from Panelist:**
>
> *"The fitness industry can easily become toxic to the mental and physical health of those seeking help with their wellbeing if empathy from the trainer is not present. I believe empathy can be a key factor in whether the trainer comes from a place of judgement or place of service and understanding when helping a client. A trainer doesn't have to have experienced their clients exact life experiences/situations to be of service to them, but understanding and not judging people for where they are in their health journey is a key factor in being of actual help to the client mentally and physically. The commercial/corporate side of the fitness industry is toxic enough without adding judgement from a trainer hired to help an individual."*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

3b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

4a. Negotiation

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

4b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

5a. Personal hygiene

◯ Strongly disagree

◯ Somewhat disagree

◯ Neither agree nor disagree

◯ Somewhat agree

◯ Strongly agree

5b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

6a. Physical self-care

> **Comment from Panelist:**
> *"personal exercise & nutrition habits, etc."*

◯ Strongly disagree

◯ Somewhat disagree

◯ Neither agree nor disagree

◯ Somewhat agree

◯ Strongly agree

6b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

7a. Professionalism

> **Comment from Panelist:**
> *"professionalism in conversation/words used (what words work best for each client - encouraging polite motivational words for one client while another client is motivated by 'in your face' words/strong language)"*

◯ Strongly disagree

◯ Somewhat disagree

77

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

7b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

8a. Psychological flexibility

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

8b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

9a. Public Speaking

Comment from Panelist:

"for group training; or speaking in front of a group of interested clients"

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

9b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

10a. Self awareness

> **Comments from Panelists:**
> *"awareness of own biases"*
> *"knowing yourself in order to know others"*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

10b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

11a. Service orientation

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

11b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

12a. Systems thinking

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

12b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

Attributes

Personal Attributes

In this section you will review a list of **personal attributes** suggested by the panel or carried over from the previous questionnaire where there was a wide range of agreement. You will **rate your level of agreement** that each item is **essential** to the work of a fitness trainer and have the option to share your opinion on why you think the attribute is essential or not.

As a reminder, these are the definitions of fitness trainer and personal attribute to guide your work.

> - **Fitness trainer:** one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings
> - **Personal attribute:** a quality or characteristic of a person

Also, if any panelists shared supporting comments in the first questionnaire for an item, these will be shared in a gray box for you to consider, but *please remember you are rating the attributes and not the panelist comments.*

1a. Action oriented

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

1b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

2a. Caring

80

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

2b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

3a. Certified

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

3b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

4a. College educated

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

4b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

5a. Compassionate

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

81

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

5b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

6a. Consistent

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

6b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

7a. Curious

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

7b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

8a. Fit physique

Panelist Comment:

"Although the pursuit of our own health/wellness is essential to being a great trainer I don't think being a "hard body" 100% of the time is required. Having been in the industry for over 15 years, while having two babies, I was just as capable of helping my clients with their goals

82

when I was 30# overweight post partum as I was at 15% body fat ready to compete in a fitness competition. Every body is different at different times in their lives and I don't feel the perfect physic is required to be a good trainer. Is it good for advertising? Yes. Because people are often drawn to trainers who they want to look like. Do trainers need to practice a healthy lifestyle/practice what we preach to clients? yes. Do we need to have a six pack? No."

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

8b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

9a. Flexible

Panelist Comment:

"as trainers, not everything goes as planned for each session (i.e. someone may be using the area or equipment you planned on using with your client so you need to adjust on the fly.)"

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

9b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

10a. Generous

Panelist Comment:

"The trainer owes the client their time, effort, and understanding. This is a selfless position where client needs may or may not be met based on the effort from the trainer. A trainer should be generous with their work in providing the best service to the client."

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

10b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

11a. Humble

Panelist Comment:

"being able to admit mistakes/learn from mistakes"

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

11b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

12a. Inclusive

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

12b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

13a. Kind

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

13b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

14a. Open

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

14b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

15a. Outgoing

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

15b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                              │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

16a. Patience

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"Patience with understanding people's different learning styles"*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

16b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                              │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

17a. Realistic

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

17b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                              │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

18a. Reliable

> **Panelist Comments:**
> *"client should be able to rely on their trainer for coaching outside of sessions"*
> *"The client should be able to contact the trainer for questions/concerns via call/text/email where the trainer should respond or make themselves available within a 24 hr period"*

86

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

18b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

19a. Resilient

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

19b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

20a. Sincere

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

20b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

21a. Supportive

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

87

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

21b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

22a. Understanding

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

22b. (optional) Why did you rate the above skill as you did?

[   ]

Specific Skills Introduction

Specific Skills Overview

In this section, you will be asked to rate a list of **job-specific skills for fitness trainers**. These are all the skills the panel suggested through the last questionnaire to add on to what the <u>certifying bodies have already determined</u>.

The skills are grouped in the following categories:

- Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment
- Exercise Program Design and Implementation
- Behavioral Coaching
- Client Education
- Legal and Professional Responsibilities
- Business
- Other

88

As a reminder, these are the definitions of fitness trainer and specific skills to guide your work.

- **Fitness trainer:** one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings
- **Specific skills:** skills that are unique to a discipline, occupation or field

Specific – Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment

Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment

In this section you will review a list of job-specific skills related to **Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment** that were suggested by the panel to add on to what the certifying organizations have already determined.

For each of the skills, there will be two questions:

1. (Requested) Select your level of agreement with the following statement:
   This skill is essential to the work of a fitness trainer.
2. (Optional) After rating each item, there will be an open text box for you to add comments if you choose. **If you feel strongly about one of the skills**, you may use the text box to:
   1. Share your opinion on why you think the skill is essential or not. These comments will be shared with the rest of the panel on the last questionnaire in the event there is disagreement.
   2. Suggest changes in the wording to better capture the skill.

Also, any comments made by panelists about the skill will be shared in a gray box for you to consider when rating, but *please remember you are rating the skills and not the panelist comments.*

1a. Provide tours of the training environment.

> **Panelist Comment:**
>
> *"I would add a generic tour of the facility to help individuals get acclimated to the environment."*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

1b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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[                                                                  ]
```

2a. Screen for basic human movements (hinge, squat, lunge, push, pull, and carry).

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

2b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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[                                                                  ]
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3a. Create feedback loop for re-assessment protocols/progress check ins.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

3b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

4a. Communicate with client when re-assessment/progress check in should be performed.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

4b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

5a. Assess respiration quality at rest and during strength, endurance activities, flexibility and recovery activities.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

5b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

6a. Identify stress levels and utilize appropriate recovery/regeneration modalities in facilitating program design.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

91

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

6b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[text box]

7a. Identify quantifiable and measurable performance goals based on information obtained in interview process.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

7b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[text box]

8a. Select and administer mobility assessments.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

8b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[text box]

9a. Create and communicate an action-oriented outline of how the client may move toward their goals.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

9b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

10a. Identify the general needs, goals, and personal concerns of the client.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

10b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

11a. Determine the appropriate order to execute assessments.

Panelist Comment:
"I would also want to change the order of the testing from least fatiguing to most fatiguing- and do anthropormorphic measures first OR on a different day if possible."

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

93

11b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

12a. Educate clients on assessment results and client takeaways on forms.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

12b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

13a. Create a comfortable environment for clients.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

13b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

Specific - Exercise Program Design and Implementation

Exercise Program Design and Implementation

In this section you will review a list of job-specific skills related to **Exercise**

Program Design and Implementation that were suggested by the panel to add on to what the <u>certifying organizations have already determined</u>.

Again, for each of the skills, there will be two questions:

1. (Requested) Select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is <u>essential</u> to the work of a fitness trainer.**
2. (Optional) After rating each item, there will be an open text box for you to add comments if you choose. **If you feel strongly about one of the skills**, you may use the text box to:
    1. Share your opinion on why you think the skill is essential or not. These comments will be shared with the rest of the panel on the last questionnaire in the event there is disagreement.
    2. Suggest changes in the wording to better capture the skill.

Also, any comments made by panelists about the skill will be shared in a gray box for you to consider when rating, but *please remember you are rating the skills and not the panelist comments.*

1a. Recognize daily variations in client physical and mental performance and adapt the program as needed during each training session.

> **Panelist Comments:**
> *"I feel that as a personal trainer it is critical to have the skill to recognize situations that warrant quick adaptation to a clients present condition."*
> *"Once a client is interviewed/assessed, and program is designed I do feel the ability of the trainer to modify/adapt the program "on the fly" during a session based on how the client is feeling/performing that day is very important. Knowing when to push the client through a "blah" feeling day, and when to pull back or completely change the pre-planned training session to better serve their physical and mental wellbeing in that moment is a skill that may need to be developed over time/experience in the field but should, in the least, be discussed when in education settings for future fitness professionals."*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

1b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

2a. Solicit client preferences on exercise program design (exercise selection, equipment, other training variables).

Panelist Comment:

"Allow client to give input on exercise selection and type of equipment they like to use. Have an overall layout of what you would like to accomplish, but allow client to make choices within their own program. Give them ownership."

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

2b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

3a. Design programs to include breathing technique/exercises for improving quality of respiration at rest and during strength, cardiorespiratory, and recovery/flexibility activities.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

96

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

3b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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4a. Utilize a system of programming to ensure consistent results and time efficiency for creation.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

4b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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5a. Implement safe and effective exercise programs to improve mobility and flexibility.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

5b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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6a. Recognize signs and symptoms of burnout.

97

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

6b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

Specific - Behavioral Coaching

Behavioral Coaching

In this section you will review a list of job-specific skills related to **Behavioral Coaching** that were suggested by the panel to add on to what the certifying organizations have already determined.

Again, for each of the skills, there will be two questions:

1. (Requested) Select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is _essential_ to the work of a fitness trainer.**
2. (Optional) After rating each item, there will be an open text box for you to add comments if you choose. **If you feel strongly about one of the skills**, you may use the text box to:
   1. Share your opinion on why you think the skill is essential or not. These comments will be shared with the rest of the panel on the last questionnaire in the event there is disagreement.
   2. Suggest changes in the wording to better capture the skill.

Also, any comments made by panelists about the skill will be shared in a gray box for you to consider when rating, but _please remember you are rating the skills and not the panelist comments._

1a. Select and recommend appropriate apps based on individual needs to motivate clients and track progress.

98

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

1b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

2a. Implement elements of persuasion ethically and appropriately to elicit behavioral change.

Panelist Comment:

"These concepts are utilized in our marketing and sales and come from the book influence by Robert Cialdini. Including but not limited to: reciprocation, commitment & consistency, social proof, like/know/trust/safety, authority building, scarcity, & social pressure. This could likely could fit into #10, but I think it warrants some more specificity. Some of these skills relate to building buy-in for the health/fitness program, but they are also equally important for marketing and sales pointing to underlying reasons why people make purchases. The training of future industry leaders (trainers) should involve a multi-dimensional skillset that includes the ability to persuade (i.e. marketing & sales) as well as more financial/business literacy. This ultimate will lead to the more sustainable careers that have growth possibilities, within current organizations, and through the creation of new organizations."

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

99

2b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

3a. Identify individual motivators.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

3b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

4a. Establish expectations in the client-trainer relationship.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

4b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

5a. Recognize the need to refer clients to another trainer and refer as needed.

Panelist Comment:
"Be client focused and open to suggesting a different trainer (even if just in conjunction with you) if they aren't connecting with your communication style."

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

5b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

6a. Apply motivational interviewing techniques.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

6b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

7a. Address client concerns related to exercise adherence.

Panelist Comment:
"Address their goals and their fears of committing to a program. Ensure that the trainer/client relationship is team-driven, and they are working together to improve the health of the client. Ensure open communication, trust, honesty, and emotional availability. "The more information you give me about your thoughts about committing to a training program, the more I can specify the program specific to you to ensure satisfaction."

○ Strongly disagree

101

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

7b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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8a. Determine the client's self-identified support system.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

8b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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9a. Make workouts or programs fun or enjoyable.

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"Teach the client to become more motivated by making it fun and simple. Complex is never fun!"*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

102

9b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

_____

10a. Apply positive reinforcement for a job well done.

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"Work with the client on using music they prefer, implement "fun days" or a "day off" after the client achieves a goal. Ex) Reward the client after 1-RM increase with a week of no treadmill."*

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

10b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

_____

11a. Be genuinely interested in other people.

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"These may be specific strategies that people can implement and may be grouped under one of the already listed skills, but we also view them as individual skills that can be practiced. these are skills we teach all interns and new trainers at our facility. they are from the book how to win friends and influence people by Dale Carnegie."*

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

103

11b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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12a. Smile.

Panelist Comment:

"These may be specific strategies that people can implement and may be grouped under one of the already listed skills, but we also view them as individual skills that can be practiced. these are skills we teach all interns and new trainers at our facility. they are from the book how to win friends and influence people by Dale Carnegie."

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

12b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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13a. Remember people's names.

Panelist Comment:

"These may be specific strategies that people can implement and may be grouped under one of the already listed skills, but we also view them as individual skills that can be practiced. these are skills we teach all interns and new trainers at our facility. they are from the book how to win friends and influence people by Dale Carnegie."

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

13b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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14a. Talk in terms of other people's interest.

Panelist Comment:
"These may be specific strategies that people can implement and may be grouped under one of the already listed skills, but we also view them as individual skills that can be practiced. these are skills we teach all interns and new trainers at our facility. they are from the book how to win friends and influence people by Dale Carnegie."

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

14b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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15a. Make others feel important and do it sincerely.

Panelist Comment:
"These may be specific strategies that people can implement and may be grouped under one of the already listed skills, but we also view them as individual skills that can be practiced. these are skills we teach

105

all interns and new trainers at our facility. they are from the book how to win friends and influence people by Dale Carnegie."

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

15b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

Specific – Client Education

Client Education

In this section you will review a list of job-specific skills related to **Client Education** that were suggested by the panel to add on to what the certifying organizations have already determined.

Again, for each of the skills, there will be two questions:

1. (Requested) Select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is essential to the work of a fitness trainer.**
2. (Optional) After rating each item, there will be an open text box for you to add comments if you choose. **If you feel strongly about one of the skills**, you may use the text box to:
    1. Share your opinion on why you think the skill is essential or not. These comments will be shared with the rest of the panel on the last questionnaire in the event there is disagreement.
    2. Suggest changes in the wording to better capture the skill.

Also, any comments made by panelists about the skill will be shared in a gray box for you to consider when rating, but *please remember you are rating the skills and not the panelist comments.*

Before getting to the individual ratings, one of your fellow panelists had a general comment about this category:

> *"I am going to have to be honest here and say that I have never worked with anyone where I've had any real influence on external factors or basic nutrition. They will talk with me about these and I have worked to educate them but ultimately have had to work harder on educating them on not being defeated when they don't adhere to a nutritional plan, or missed a few sessions because of life getting in the way. The above statements are great as a scholastic guideline, but if we're really being honest, for most of the general population, we are trying to educate them to stay motivated. Just my experience."*

1a. Educate clients about basic anatomy, physiology and kinesiology and/or movement patterns (push, pull, hinge, squat, etc).

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"I believe that this will allow clients to have more agency over their own movement practice and to learn how to create their own workouts and programs independent from us personal trainers. (understanding what things look like and how they work helps with teaching kinesthetic awareness)."*
> *"I believe that educating clients on basic anatomy and physiology for particular exercises is important. This allows them to focus on a specific muscle group during a specific exercise and also allows them to work on specific areas outside of session with trainer. "*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

1b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

2a. Use client training time effectively to educate clients on health and wellness topics.

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"I like to educate my clients as much as possible in the time I have with them. I feel ultimately successfully as a trainer when my client finds a new interest in further educating themselves on the topic of health/wellness. They understand how to read ingredient lists on food labels and can identify something unhealthy without me saying that ____ is unhealthy. They are able to identify or at least question things being put out by the corporate health industry, and be less susceptible to advertising lies and unhealthy advice they may come across after our time together has ended."*

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

2b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

3a. Educate clients on health risks.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

3b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

108

4a. Select and use appropriate apps, reference materials, books, podcasts and other sources for additional information.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

4b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

5a. Educate clients on how to spot misinformation in social media.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

5b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

6a. Educate clients that it is all discipline.

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"You can't rely on feelings. Just like getting up and going to work everyday, whether you "feel" like it or not. Understanding the difference."*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

6b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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7a. Educate clients on fundamentals of how exercise works (stress, recovery adaptation).

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

7b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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8a. Educate clients on stress management techniques.

> **Panelist Comments:**
>
> *"I think some level of stress management could apply, even if its using simple breathing exercises to calm the nervous system to aid in the list from above."*
>
> *"I believe educating clients on stress management is critical. I find that too many trainers are only focusing on pushing the client to get stronger with more exercises and diet change, but rest and recovery need to be spoken about more."*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

110

○ Strongly agree

8b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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[                                                                ]
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9a. Educate clients on mindfulness to build awareness around their actions

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

9b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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[                                                                ]
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10a. Educate clients about circadian rhythm theory of health.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

10b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

```
[                                                                ]
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11a. Educate clients about hierarchies of importance related to health and wellness.

111

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"Teaching them the skill of critical thinking and focusing on the big important concepts instead of the nuances and small details."*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

11b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

12a. Educate clients about the relationship between exercise and nutrition, and how these impact weight loss.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

12b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

13a. Educate clients about the importance of different types of exercise (i.e., muscular strength training, cardiovascular exercise, mobility, etc.) and its impact upon overall health.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

112

○ Strongly agree

13b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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14a. Educate clients on how they can access resources for mental health, time-management, exercise adherence, general health, etc. to utilize when they are not in training sessions.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

14b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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15a. Educate clients on risks (injury prevention, overtraining, etc.).

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

15b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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16a. Educate clients on how to implement sustainable behaviors that fit their lifestyle.

113

Panelist Comments:

"Educate clients that this is a lifestyle change. They can meet their goal yes. But if they revert back to the same eating and fitness habits as they had before they will revert to who they were before. It's not about quick weight loss or success. It's about understanding that small healthy lifestyle habit changes over a period of time make up who you become."

"Also on the note of health being a lifelong endeavor, being stewards of that way of thinking... fighting against the "lose 10# in 2 days", "want it now" culture... being an educator of how health/wellness/nutrition can fit into someones life long term will serve the majority of those seeking the aide of a fitness pro. If the goal is bigger than their daily routine (meaning they will rearrange and make large lifestyle shifts temporarily to fit in training for an event or a goal (iron man, marathon, competition of some sort, etc), then great! Create a plan that they will practice with an "I want this more than I want an extra hour of sleep" mentality. But for the rest of folks, the majority of people I see walk through my office door, they need to learn how to fit healthy habits into a long term busy life. Understanding what approach the client needs will help a trainer design the best plan for them."

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

16b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

> [   ]

17a. Educate clients on why specific decisions are made about program design.

114

Panelist Comments:

"Educate the clients on why you are doing the exercises, what the focus of the exercise (or grouping of exercises) is, why it is important to them/their goal, etc. This will also provide them with a baseline so that when it is returned to in the future, improvements can be noted - increasing the clients' confidence and drive (and confidence in trainer)."

"Educate client on reasons why trainer determines said program educate clients on why some exercises are more effective than others (based on range of motion, muscle mass used and force generated/weight moved)."

"Educate the client on the hows and whys of what you are seeing and the adjustments that are being made - if they better understand, they are more likely to stay committed rather than getting frustrated and disengage."

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

17b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

18a. Educate clients about dietary supplements and their risks and benefits.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

18b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

┌───┐
│   │
└───┘

19a. Create a list of accredited technological tools and educational newsletters for clients.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

19b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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│   │
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Specific – Legal and Professional Responsibilities

Legal and Professional Responsibilities

In this section you will review a list of job-specific skills related to **Legal and Professional Responsibilities** that were suggested by the panel to add on to what the certifying organizations have already determined.

Again, for each of the skills, there will be two questions:

1. (Requested) Select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is essential to the work of a fitness trainer.**
2. (Optional) After rating each item, there will be an open text box for you to add comments if you choose. **If you feel strongly about one of the skills**, you may use the text box to:
   1. Share your opinion on why you think the skill is essential or not. These comments will be shared with the rest of the panel on the last questionnaire in the event there is disagreement.
   2. Suggest changes in the wording to better capture the skill. Also, any comments made by panelists about the skill will be shared in a gray box

116

for you to consider when rating.

Also, any comments made by panelists about the skill will be shared in a gray box for you to consider when rating, but please remember you are rating the skills and not the panelist comments.

1a. Develop a network of allied health professionals to whom clients may be referred.

Panelist Comment:
"simply knowing that you need to refer a client doesn't necessarily mean you know professionals that can take them!"

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

1b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

2a. Obtain medical clearance when client returns or is under the care of a healthcare provider for injury, illness or other condition.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

2b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

117

3a. Develop a communication protocol for all staff and/or participants which allows for long term and immediate information to be obtained.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

3b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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```

4a. Follow the policies and procedures within the facility one works.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

4b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

```
                                                                    
```

5a. Progress clients appropriately.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

5b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

118

6a. Respectfully address differences in trainer beliefs, methods, and philosophy.

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"All staff should know or be aware of other trainer's beliefs, methods, philosophy to avoid conflict with other styles and how to respectfully address differences."*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

6b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

Specific - Business

Business

In the first questionnaire, many panelists suggested skills related to business planning, sales and marketing. Since there were so many under this theme, a new specific skill category was added: **Business.** For this section you will rate the skills and then be given the opportunity to suggest additional skills you think should be added to this category.

Again, for each of the skills, there will be two questions:

1. (Requested) Select your level of agreement with the following statement:
   This skill is _essential_ to the work of a fitness trainer.
2. (Optional) After rating each item, there will be an open text box for you to add comments if you choose. **If you feel strongly about one of the skills**, you may use the text box to:

119

1. Share your opinion on why you think the skill is essential or not. These comments will be shared with the rest of the panel on the last questionnaire in the event there is disagreement.
2. Suggest changes in the wording to better capture the skill.

Also, any comments made by panelists about the skill will be shared in a gray box for you to consider when rating, but *please remember you are rating the skills and not the panelist comments.*

1a. Develop a basic business plan.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

1b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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```

2a. Create a marketing plan.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

2b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

```
                                                                              
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3a. Create and implement a repeatable sales system.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree

120

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

3b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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4a. Develop assets to generate leads.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

4b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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5a. Implement sales strategies to sell training services to potential clients.

> **Panelist Comments:**
> *"In my experience trainers that come into our facility don't have a great grasp on how to effectively sell themselves and their services to potential clients in a way that is non-intimidating."*
> *"Again, I think that sales training & role-playing obstacles that keep people from making the initial commitment are missing. You can be the best trainer in the world but if you can't get people excited about their program you can't help anyone."*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

121

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

5b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

_____

6a. Track data of marketing and sales.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

6b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

_____

7a. Manage facility operations and equipment.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

7b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

_____

8a. Implement an organizational operating system.

○ Strongly disagree

122

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

8b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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9a. Manage business finances (forecast income/expenses, budget, accounting).

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

9b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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10a. Set standards for client cancelations.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

10b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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123

Because this is a new category, please consider **what's missing**? Please list any other specific skills you feel should be **added** to the ***business*** category. You may share a brief reason why you feel the suggested item should be included. *These will be added to the final questionnaire to collect feedback from the rest of the panel.*

```
[                                                                    ]
```

Specific - Other

Other Skills

In this section you will review other skills suggested by panelists in the first questionnaire that don't fit in any of the other categories.

Again, for each of the skills, there will be two questions:

1. (Requested) Select your level of agreement with the following statement:
   This skill is <u>essential</u> to the work of a fitness trainer.
2. (Optional) After rating each item, there will be an open text box for you to add comments if you choose. **If you feel strongly about one of the skills**, you may use the text box to:
   1. Share your opinion on why you think the skill is essential or not. These comments will be shared with the rest of the panel on the last questionnaire in the event there is disagreement.
   2. Suggest changes in the wording to better capture the skill. Also, any comments made by panelists about the skill will be shared in a gray box for you to consider when rating.

Also, any comments made by panelists about the skill will be shared in a gray box for you to consider when rating, but please remember you are rating the skills and not the panelist comments.

1a. Create and maintain emotional boundaries to support mental wellbeing.

> **Panelist Comments:**
> *"The overall health of American's is sadly very poor and thus behavioral*

change is a BIG part of training in this country. I also find it can be very draining on trainers when they put their time/effort into creating programs that are not followed through on by the client. When educating future fitness professionals touching on the importance of doing all we can, and having a large "behavioral change tool kit" to pull from to serve different types of clients that we will serve, but also the ability to emotionally let go if the client gives up. There is a great amount of work we can do to help a client reach their goals, but ultimately THEY have to do the work to get there. We should never give up on people as health/wellness is a lifelong journey, but also shouldn't take it on a personal failure every time a client gives up on themselves. For an empathic person who is a fitness professional that can be draining and negatively effect the way they work in the industry."
"Learn to cope with the realisty of clients dying if working with senior clients. I learned about how to deal with this professionally and personally. Letting my clients know that I do not go to Funerals at all. I started my career out paying my amends but I got to be to many clients and too often. I have had to learn to cope with my clients dying."

- ◯ Strongly disagree
- ◯ Somewhat disagree
- ◯ Neither agree nor disagree
- ◯ Somewhat agree
- ◯ Strongly agree

1b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

2a. Adjust approach and interactions with clients based on client personality.

Panelist Comment:
"Personality education. Every person is different from the next and the

125

client is already taking drastic steps to change who they are as a person. Be sure as a trainer to adjust to the clients personality as much as possible. Some clients like a tough agonizing workout every time. Some clients like to ease into it and gain confidence and learn to trust you as a trainer before pushing. It is up to you as a trainer to find out which client you have in front of you at that time."

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

2b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

3a. Demonstrate a client-first mentality.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

3b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

4a. Treat all clients equally.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

4b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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5a. Understanding of body privilege.

> **Panelist Comment:**
>
> *"I think all trainers should have an understanding of body privilege (as an industry specific element of broader social justice awareness) and how that plays out both in our work and in wider society. Our traditional cultural idea of a fitness trainer is someone who is thin/"fit"/muscular, able-bodied, young, and typically white and cisgender - all attributes that give people who have them large amounts of privilege and social capital. Those with more social capital tend to have more power in wider society as well as in interpersonal interactions (leading to things like microaggressions). I think we see this often play out between trainers and clients, wherein the trainer believes themselves, or is culturally believed, to be at best an aspirational figure, and at worst morally superior to their client, simply because they occupy a body that sits at the intersection of several privileged identities. I believe that understanding body privilege ultimately allows a trainer to train to their clients in a less (implicitly) authoritarian, more collaborative way."*

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

5b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

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6a. Implement trauma-informed practices when working with clients.

> **Panelist Comment:**
>
> *"I also think that personal trainers should be trauma-informed. Many clients come to us with histories of eating disorders and compulsive exercise developed as a result of traumatic events, who have trauma around exercise as a result of such things as being forced to exercise as children by their parents or being ridiculed by gym teachers, or who have traumatic memories or experiences related to specific body parts or areas (esp the pelvic floor and abdominal area). If trainers are not aware of trauma and how it manifests and can be triggered, we run the risk of harming or re-traumatizing our clients."*

- ◯ Strongly disagree
- ◯ Somewhat disagree
- ◯ Neither agree nor disagree
- ◯ Somewhat agree
- ◯ Strongly agree

6b. (optional) Use this box to add supporting comments to share with the rest of the panel or to make recommendations to revise.

[   ]

Skill Refinement

Skill Refinement

There were several things shared in the first questionnaire that didn't quite fit as skills or personal attributes. For each of these, if you strongly feel that they should be considered by the panel, please suggest associated skills to be added to the last questionnaire. (optional)

1. Do you have a suggested skill associated with this?

> **Panelist Suggestion:**
>
> *"I have been a supervisor, fitness instructor, personal trainer and gym*

> owner. I have been in all positions, in this business over 30 years.
> Throughout the years, I've seen staff that define themselves and
> remain in clicks (for lack of a better word). All jobs/positions are
> equally important and can learn from each other. Everyone needs to
> learn from each other and have the ability to interchange rolls if
> needed, using the skills you have and learned by the relationships you
> have built with your co-workers."

2. Do you have a suggested skill associated with this?

> **Panelist Suggestion:**
> *"Liability insurance"*

Lastly, in the box below, please list any other **generic skills, specific skills or personal attributes** that you feel should be added to the overall list. *This will be your last opportunity to suggest additional items for the panel to consider.* You may share a brief reason why you feel these are essential. All items collected here will be added to the next questionnaire for feedback from the rest of the panel.

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129

Panel on Fitness Trainer Skills and Attributes

Introduction

Introduction

Welcome to the third round of the panel work!

- This questionnaire will take 10-20 minutes to complete.
- You may go back at any time to review or change your responses before submitting the questionnaire.

Please enter the four digit ID you selected in the first questionnaire. If you are unsure, please check the email that was sent with the questionnaire link.

Questionnaire Overview

Questionnaire Overview

As you go through the questionnaire, please keep these things in mind to help contribute to the overall success of the panel.

- The **overall goal** for the panel is to produce a list of the specific skills, generic skills and personal attributes essential to the work of a fitness trainer.
- The keyword here is **_essential_**. You might feel like many things are valuable or important to a fitness trainer but I encourage you to consider what is essential.
- The **purpose of this final questionnaire is to resolve disagreement** among the panel on the essential skills and attributes. "Consensus" is determined where items receive at least 75% of ratings as "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" (or at the other end as "Somewhat Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree.")

- To help the panel reach a higher level of consensus in this final questionnaire, I encourage you to **consider choosing Strongly Disagree/Somewhat Disagree <u>OR</u> Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree**. However, you will still have the option to choose "Neither Agree or Disagree" if you still feel that is the best response. Making a decision that leans towards "disagree" or "agree" will **help reach the goal of this panel**.
- If you would like to have them handy, here are links to the <u>skills already identified by the certifying bodies</u> and <u>skills/attributes that have already reached a high level of agreement</u>.

Because of the additional information shared in this round, the individual questions are displayed differently. Here is a quick overview that will help you navigate easily.

- For each item, the panelist ratings from the last questionnaire will be shared in a table so you can see where the panel is leaning.
- All **supporting comments** from the last questionnaire are also shared for your consideration - **think of these as dialogue you might have with other panel members as you consider others' point of view.** These are separated according to the rating the panel member selected for each item (ie., if someone selected "Somewhat Agree" and left supporting comments,

131

these will be listed under the "Agree" list). All comments are displayed in a gray box.

- To limit confusion, there will be only **one skill/attribute per page**.

Let's get started!

Generic Skills

Generic Skills

On the following pages you will review a list of **generic skills** carried over from the previous questionnaire where there was a wide range of agreement levels.

As a reminder, these are the definitions of fitness trainer and generic skill to guide your work.

> - **Fitness trainer:** one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings
> - **Generic skills:** skills that are needed across fields and disciplines

For each of the following skills, select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is <u>essential</u> to the work of a fitness trainer.**

Negotiation

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	*Somewhat disagree*	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Somewhat agree*	*Strongly agree*
0%	4%	38%	35%	23%

132

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- It's my job to challenge my clients (and recognize their limitations) I don't feel their is any benefit to setting the precedent with a client that they can make things easier if I'll give in to negotiating. Pretty sure this is my own personal opinion on the matter and it works for me.

Neither Agree or Disagree

- I'm not sure what negotiation means in this context
- It is not a huge necessity. More in the beginning of your career than anything. If you have a program that is proven to work and you have evidence that it works, then people will be more willing to trust in investing in you. People are willing todo what they "WANT". They will pay $400 for a ticket to a concert. Wait in line for said concert for 2hrs. Stay up late at that concert and then show up to work the next day tired or not show up at all. People will do what they truly want.
- Trainers must be able to work with clients in an effective manner. In doing so, they should be able to appropriately determine the sort of work that will support a client's health and fitness goals. After developing an understanding of a client's goals, trainers must be able to present an argument in favor of "X" (i.e., why they are proposing a particular training structure) to a client to create a certain level of buy in. However, they must also be willing to adjust the plan to fit the needs of the client, while also gently pushing the client out of their comfort zone to create progress.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- Helping clients change habits may take some negotiating skills. You can ask your client what they are willing to do and not do, this is a form of negotiating and a very useful skill.
- We've all had the client who is a bit recalcitrant about something or another and we have to say something along the lines of, "i hear you don't want to do this, but i've programmed it for you because

xyz, so what if we do this modification of the exercise". Of course, at the end of the day, the client is in ultimate control of their body, so our negotiation tactics may not work and if we are too forceful with them we may end up manipulating a client into violating a boundary the have for themselves and thus causing harm and damaging the client-trainer relationship.

- Yes; but you can't change people, you can give them the education but if they don't want to change, they won't

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Psychological flexibility

For those unfamiliar with this term, here one description from research: "recognize and adapt to various situational demands; shift mindsets or behavioral repertoires when these strategies compromise personal or social functioning; maintain balance among important life domains; and be aware, open, and committed to behaviors that are congruent with deeply held values" (Kashdan, 2010, p. 1).

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
0%	4%	23%	46%	27%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- It seems to me that including cognitive flexibility, emotional intelligence and psychological flexibility on this list may be redundant. I also had to look up what psychological flexibility

134

means, and it seems like a rather niche term used in psychologically therapeutic practices. I think we get into treacherous waters when trainers begin to think they need to be doing something therapy-adjacent with their clients when this is absolutely outside of their scope of practice. Yes, we should be present and emotionally available to our client, but there must be a boundary here. We work first and foremost with the body, and while that body is indeed attached to a brain and a nervous system, we must remember that we are not equipped to work with the brain or nervous system in a therapeutic or psychological way.

Neither Agree or Disagree

- I'm not really sure what this means and how to answer.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- this is very similar to cognitive flexibility, in my mind
- Trainers should be able to maintain a level of control over their mood/mental state to provide the best care for their clients when they are working with someone.
- Everyone's personality is different and you will have to adjust your mindset and personality to fit each different client.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

Systems thinking

For those of you unfamiliar with this term, here is one description: "Systems thinking is a set of synergistic analytic skills used to improve the capability of identifying and understanding systems, predicting their behaviors, and devising modifications to them in order to produce desired effects. These skills work

together as a system" (Arnold & Wade, 2015, p. 675).

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	*Somewhat disagree*	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Somewhat agree*	*Strongly agree*
4%	0%	23%	38%	35%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- Because I had to google it to know what you were talking about

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Not sure exactly what is meant by 'systems thinking' to be able to answer this one :)
- this needs more info

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- This is extremely important because many corporate fitness trainers only focus on one or two aspects of wellness.
- This is a good one. I have a client who has worked with physical therapists and other trainers on and off for years as they have dealt with a chronic connective tissue disorder. When the client came to me they presented with knee pain and difficulty walking for extended periods. Despite all the treatment the client had received, no one had asked her to remove her shoes to see how her feet and toes moved. I did this and found forefoot rigidity, lack of toe splay, and inability to achieve active or passive hallux extension. We must think of the body as a whole and unified system in order to train clients for functionality and help them regain the ability to do daily necessary activities. Additionally, we also have to view our client as a human in context. This does not mean trying to be their therapist or even trying to get them to have "better habits", but it does mean recognizing that when a client experiences poor quality of sleep, or

136

familial or job stress, or systematic injustice because of the color of their skin, size of their body or their gender, this will impact the way they live in their bodies and the way they move them too.

- Trainers must be able to understand how ideas come together to form a full system. Be it the cardiovascular system and the type of exercise that improves its function, or the gym/fitness center and the systems that are in place to uphold patron safety.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Attributes

Personal Attributes

On the following pages you will review a list of **personal attributes** carried over from the previous questionnaire.

As a reminder, these are the definitions of fitness trainer and personal attribute to guide your work.

- **Fitness trainer:** one who leads, instructs, and motivates individuals in exercise activities in one-on-one, non-clinical settings
- **Personal attribute:** a quality or characteristic of a person

For each of the attributes, select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This attribute is <u>essential</u> to the work of a fitness trainer.**

College educated

Panelist Ratings from Round 2

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
8%	35%	27%	27%	4%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- As long as they receive proper education from certification course/onboarding, college education is not necessarily required to be a good trainer
- As with "Certified", this seems like it belongs elsewhere in the essential skills list. Additionally, I do not believe you need to be college educated to be a trainer so long as you have adequate knowledge of your field.
- Many fitness trainers with degrees in Exercise Science and Kinesiology are not prepared to be a fitness trainer. Additionally, I do not believe personal training is so complex that it would necessitate a degree.
- Some of the most brilliant trainers I know are not college educated.

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Am I a better professional from having gone through my course work in attaining my degree? Yes. Do I lean more on the knowledge I learned in my own personal study of nutrition and health purely because I have a passion and interest in it? Yes. When I share tidbits of knowledge I've learned over the years it's usually not from things I learned in college. It's things I've learned in my own personal study. I find what I learned in college to be about 5-10 (sometimes even more) years dated.
- Some very educated people aren't certified and some certified individuals are very uneducated

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- College is needed for more education if the trainer wants to go to higher levels but is not needed to be an effective personal trainer.
- I've worked with some great trainers who are not college educated - but, if they are educated in the field, I think it helps in many ways - adding much more depth to their knowledge as a trainer.
- Many exercise science programs lack a practical application that teaches students how to transfer what they're learning in the classroom into helping people become stronger, healthier and more physically fit.
- Trainers with a background in exercise science will be more likely to have a better understanding of exercise and its benefits.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Fit physique

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
8%	19%	8%	35%	31%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- What is commonly called a 'fit physique' is arbitrary and highly dependent on desirability politics, ableism, classism and racism, amongst other things. I am a fat trainer with a thriving business; however, because I am fat, the likelihood that I would be hired by a mainstream/big box gym is little to none because based on a visual assessment of my body, people assume that I cannot possibly do

the job that I do. I have been assumed to be a nurse or a physical therapist, but no one ever assumes that I am a personal trainer because they see a fat body and assume that my fat body has no knowledge or experience of "fitness".

Neither Agree or Disagree

- They should be healthy. But being ripped isn't a priority

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- I agree with the panelist comment. I too have been all sizes over my 20+ years of training. AND honestly, I think that many women came to me because I wasn't a super fit woman. I draw women who want to work with a "real" woman.
- I think this depends on which metrics we are (sic)
- We all go through seasons of life and may not be as 'fit' as we'd like at any given time, but clients would rather work with trainers who keep up their own physique.
- I agree with a large portion of the statement provided above. Trainers do not need a perfect, six pack, 6% body fat body. However, I do believe there is a difference between a fit physique and a perfect physique. Fitness refers to one's capacity for fitness (cardiovascular, strength, flexibility, etc.). Trainers should be able to uphold *their* fitness capabilities. This is the essence of talking the talk and walking the walk.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

Outgoing

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly	*Somewhat*	*Neither*	*Somewhat*	*Strongly*

disagree	disagree	agree nor disagree	agree	agree
8%	4%	23%	42%	23%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- I know many trainers that are shy and not very outgoing, but are amazing at 1:1 training.
- An introverted individual can still play the role of a trainer with proper practice and execution

Neither Agree or Disagree

- I think this term lacks contextualization. If it means that a trainer needs to be a bubbly extroverted cheerleader type, then no. If it means that a trainer needs to be able to hold a heartfelt conversation and relate to their clients in a deep and human way, then yes.
- It helps but not sure it's essential
- Similar to public speaking, this will depend in large part on the type of training they are doing. Group fitness will require a greater level of openness than one-on-one personal training.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- An outgoing personality may lend itself to a trainer when wanting to advertise their services and build a client base. I don't think it's essential for a trainers success though.
- Being outgoing and social definitely helps, but not mandatory to be a good trainer.
- You need to be able to read your client and what is appropriate for them
- Yes you have to be outgoing. I am an Introvert, but I am not shy, and need to be high profile, and outgoing to meet new clients and market as well as engage with current clients even outside of training time.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Specific Skills Introduction

Specific Skills Overview

On the following pages, you will rate a list of **job-specific skills for fitness trainers** that received varying levels of agreement on the previous questionnaire. If you would like to have them handy, here are links to the skills already identified by the certifying bodies and skills/attributes that have already reached a high level of agreement.

The skills are grouped in the following categories:

- Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment
- Exercise Program Design and Implementation
- Client Education
- Business
- Other

Previously, there were two more categories (Behavioral Coaching and Legal & Professional Responsibilities), but there are no items to rate from those categories so you will not see them on this questionnaire.

Specific - Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment

Initial Client Consultation and Fitness Assessment

The following skill falls under this category and was carried over from the previous questionnaire due to a wide range of responses received.

For each, please select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is <u>essential</u> to the work of a fitness trainer.**

142

Assess respiration quality at rest and during strength, endurance activities, flexibility and recovery activities.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
0%	12%	27%	38%	23%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- I think this depends on the trainer's specializations and expertise. Sure we can notice if a client is breathing diaphragmatically or not, but other than that I have no idea how to assess respiration quality other than by noticing if the client is breathing more or less heavily. I don't believe the ACSM has a respiratory quality component in its testing protocols (the VO2 Max test measures QUANTITY not quality).

Neither Agree or Disagree

- When working with performance athletes, yes. Not when working with a mom of 5 who just wants to lose a little weight and make exercise a priority.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- depends on your scope of practice- but obviously screen for deconditioning and potential medical issues
- You can do this by being present with your athletes
- This is a crucial aspect of monitoring a person's response to exercise.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Specific - Exercise Program Design and Implementation

Exercise Program Design and Implementation

The following skill falls under this category and was carried over from the previous questionnaire due to a wide range of responses received.

For each, please select your level of agreement with the following statement:
This skill is _essential_ to the work of a fitness trainer.

Design programs to include breathing technique/exercises for improving quality of respiration at rest and during strength, cardiorespiratory, and recovery/flexibility activities.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	_Somewhat disagree_	_Neither agree nor disagree_	_Somewhat agree_	_Strongly agree_
0%	15%	15%	31%	38%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- Is this actually useful? is there data showing these types of exercises are effective?
- This depends on the trainer's expertise and the client's need. Breath work/techniques are not heavily focused on in the ACSM certification and so likely require additional certifications and continuing education. If a gym or studio specializes in breathing mechanics, then it may be essential that the trainer have this ability, but if not I don't think it is entirely essential. This all said, knowing

144

how to teach someone to brace for heavy lifts such as in powerlifting is very important. So all in all, important if it is needed, but not essential if the trainer doesn't specialize in breath work.

Neither Agree or Disagree

- None

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- Breathing properly supports safer/more effective movement and overall physical functioning.
- Breathing technique is important to teach the client, but not much 'design' needs to go into it in my opinion.

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

Specific - Client Education

Client Education

The following five skills fall under this category and were carried over from the previous questionnaire due to a wide range of responses received.

For each, please select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is <u>essential</u> to the work of a fitness trainer.**

Educate clients that it is all discipline.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	*Somewhat disagree*	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Somewhat agree*	*Strongly agree*

| 8% | 12% | 23% | 35% | 23% |

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- I don't think this comment takes medical and mental health issues into account.
- It certainly is not ONLY discipline. There are many factors that contribute to a client's success. This also discounts many external factors and contributes to the blaming of the client for their missteps.
- Maybe I am misunderstanding the wording, but I feel like when we say "it's just discipline" we are dismissing our client's feelings. Instead we need to teach them ways to incorporate the workouts (or whatever) in a manner that feels doable. Yes, we know it's discipline, but the client needs to learn easy to implement small tasks to create that habit.
- This is completely and utterly dismissive of our clients as human beings who have messy and complicated lives outside of their training sessions. It invalidates any client who is struggling to maintain a movement practice while also juggling a job, a family, and any mental or physical health issues that may impact the "disciplined" adherence to training. I would immediately fire a trainer who said this to me.

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Some clients care a lot about this, others do not care at all. This will depend on the client in question and their interests/goals/lifestyle. Still trainers should provide a basic explanation of what they are doing and why it is important. Based on this, they can gauge the client's interest and elaborate if they seem to be interested in the topic/ideas.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- The most important days to exercise are the days when you really don't want to.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Educate clients about circadian rhythm theory of health.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
4%	12%	38%	27%	19%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- Why do we think we need to be these holistic wellness experts? If a client has trouble with sleeping or what we like to call sleep hygiene, the most I feel qualified to do is suggest that they talk to their doctor about doing a sleep study or using a CPAP machine. I am not a sleep researcher, so I leave this to them.

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Some clients care a lot about this, others do not care at all. This will depend on the client in question and their interests/goals/lifestyle. Still trainers should provide a basic explanation of what they are doing and why it is important. Based on this, they can gauge the client's interest and elaborate if they seem to be interested in the topic/ideas.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- Depends on the client.

147

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Educate clients about hierarchies of importance related to health and wellness.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
0%	4%	27%	31%	38%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- None

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Some clients care a lot about this, others do not care at all. This will depend on the client in question and their interests/goals/lifestyle. Still trainers should provide a basic explanation of what they are doing and why it is important. Based on this, they can gauge the client's interest and elaborate if they seem to be interested in the topic/ideas.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- I think this is a good thing, especially for clients who tend to want quick fixes or who are drawn to gimmicks (hello shake weights, theraguns, fascia blasters and the like). Reminding clients that the basics of sleep, food, and intentional movement will go farther than gimmicks can be helpful.

148

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Educate clients about dietary supplements and their risks and benefits.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
4%	4%	31%	27%	35%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- Possibly out of scope of practice, may be a role for someone else
- Refer to registered dietitian and their doctor- you don't know how supplements may impact their body/dx/medications

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Some clients care a lot about this, others do not care at all. This will depend on the client in question and their interests/goals/lifestyle. Still trainers should provide a basic explanation of what they are doing and why it is important. Based on this, they can gauge the client's interest and elaborate if they seem to be interested in the topic/ideas.
- This gets into murky waters. I prefer that my trainers refrain from discussing supplements, since they are not FDA regulated, and therefore their claims cannot be taken at face-value

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

149

- I think this is fine. I'd especially focus on the risks of supplements, especially in light of the popularity of them on social media.
- Only if properly educated to do so.
- This one is tricky - we have to be super careful about what we recommend or talk about when it comes to supplements. I think general education about what they do is best versus recommending they buy something.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Create a list of accredited technological tools and educational newsletters for clients.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
0%	23%	50%	12%	15%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- Sounds like a dangerous rabbit hole- there's a whole "nutrition program" at Cornell that is complete garbage- I think you point people in the right direction, but they have to make the decisions
- This seems like a lot of extra work for very little return
- What are accredited technological tools? Who accredits them? To what end is this meant to be done? We as trainers should know about newsletters and such, and we can share what we learn from them with our clients, but I don't think many clients will want to

150

read our industry specific literature. It is our job to distill it for them instead.

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Some clients care a lot about this, others do not care at all. This will depend on the client in question and their interests/goals/lifestyle. Still trainers should provide a basic explanation of what they are doing and why it is important. Based on this, they can gauge the client's interest and elaborate if they seem to be interested in the topic/ideas.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- None

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

Specific - Business

Business

The following six skills fall under this category and were carried over from the previous questionnaire due to a wide range of responses received.

For each, please select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is <u>essential</u> to the work of a fitness trainer.**

Develop a basic business plan.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

0%	4%	23%	42%	31%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- Many FT's work in a gym as a W-2 employee

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Depends where you work
- Necessary if you are an independent contractor or gym/studio owner, but not if you work at a 24 hour fitness.
- This will depend on the trainer and their professional goals. Some trainers work on the side for fun, others work full-time. This will depend on a particular situation.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- Only important if self-employed.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Create a marketing plan.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
0%	0%	31%	35%	35%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- None

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Depends on employment role
- depends on where you work
- I've never done this and my business is thriving.
- This will depend on the trainer and their professional goals. Some trainers work on the side for fun, others work full-time. This will depend on a particular situation.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- Important if self-employed.
- Or at least find someone (biz coach/marketing friend) to help!

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

Create and implement a repeatable sales system.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
0%	4%	23%	35%	38%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- Depends on employment role

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Depends on your work environment - if you're a gym owner, sure. If you are and IC at a gym or work at 24 hour fitness , you don't need this.
- This will depend on the trainer and their professional goals. Some trainers work on the side for fun, others work full-time. This will depend on a particular situation.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- everything is sales on some level

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

Manage facility operations and equipment.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
4%	12%	31%	19%	35%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- Equipment management is crucial, but trainers may not be responsible for facility management
- Management should be doing this, not FT's

154

- This usually does not fall within the scope of a trainer at a recreation center. However, if someone owns their own business I could see this applying to that scenario.

Neither Agree or Disagree

- depends on your role at the facility
- If you own a gym/studio then absolutely, but if you are an IC or work in a chain gym this doesn't seem essential

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- None

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

Implement an organizational operating system.

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
0%	4%	27%	35%	35%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- for the manager/owner/director to do

Neither Agree or Disagree

- If you own a gym/studio then absolutely, but if you are an IC or work in a chain gym this doesn't seem essential

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- None

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Manage business finances (forecast income/expenses, budget, accounting).

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
0%	8%	23%	23%	46%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- Depends on employment position
- for the manager/owner/director to do

Neither Agree or Disagree

- If you own a gym/studio then absolutely, but if you are an IC or work in a chain gym this doesn't seem essential
- This will depend on the trainer and their professional goals. Some trainers work on the side for fun, others work full-time. This will depend on a particular situation.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

156

> - I think this is super helpful and an area I struggle with even though my business is successful.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Specific - Business (New)

Business - Newly Suggested Skills

The below skills were suggested in the last questionnaire and have not been rated. If any supporting comments were included with the suggestion, you will see them in a gray box.

For each, please select your level of agreement with the following statement: **This skill is _essential_ to the work of a fitness trainer.**

De-escalate and resolve conflict.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Understand the essential business relationships with other professionals (CPA, business attorney, financial advisor, marketing agency, business mentor, etc.)

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

157

○ Strongly agree

Make quick and informed business decisions.

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"Speed of decision making. In business, speed of decision making is paramount. There are deadlines that need to be met so there needs to be efficiency and confidence to avoid paralysis by analysis."*

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

Develop a system to find new talent on an ongoing basis.

> **Panelist Comment:**
> *"In this industry, your business is built on who you hire and that can change unexpectedly. Having an ongoing list of candidates that are a good fit for your facility can make transitions much easier."*

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

Specific – Other

Other Skills

The following two skills fall under this category and were carried over from the previous questionnaire due to a wide range of responses received.

For each, please select your level of agreement with the following statement:
This skill is <u>essential</u> to the work of a fitness trainer.

Understanding of body privilege.

For those unfamiliar with this term, here is a description: Body privilege is "an invisible package of unearned assets that thin or normal-sized individuals can take for granted on a daily basis. These 'normal' bodies, because of size, shape, or appearance, unwittingly avert various forms of social stigma, while simultaneously eliciting social benefits" (Kwan, 2010, p. 147).

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
12%	4%	23%	23%	38%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- This is a presumptive, toxic and terrible way to think with what end goal in mind? I reject the notion entirely that anyone must accept some sort of guilt for immutable characteristics in order to help others.
- When trainers implement service/caring/compassion/kindness/emotional intelligence/empathy/professionalism they are expressly denying the idea that they are superior to the client. They are assuming a role of a teacher and are there to help clients.

Neither Agree or Disagree

- This is a new term for me. hmmm?

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- This is my contribution.

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

Implement trauma-informed practices when working with clients.

For those of you unfamiliar with this term, here is one description: "Trauma-informed practice considers how an environment, both physical and cultural, impacts an individual's wellbeing as they pass through and/or interact with that environment" (Sachs, 2022, p. 24).

Panelist Ratings from Round 2				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
4%	0%	23%	23%	50%

Supporting Comments from Panelists:

Strongly/Somewhat Disagree

- This is completely outside the scope of practice for a personal trainer as far as I'm aware. Clients with eating disorders or trauma should be referred to a mental health professional.

Neither Agree or Disagree

- Or be willing to refer to someone who is trauma-informed.

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

- Trainers, much like hair dressers, tend to become somewhat of a therapist for their clients. Having a strong understanding of our

scope of practice and referring clients to the right professionals may be the best route when dealing with trauma/disorders. It would be amazing if all fitness professionals had kinesiology and nutrition degrees, and also minors in psychology. And maybe a second minor in trauma/mental disorders, but at some point we have to just realize we are "just personal fitness trainers" and not try to take on a role of therapist when that's not really our area of expertise. I think that is where compassion and empathy can come into play. A trainer faced with a distressed or simply a client sharing their past trauma may not be able to help them with those issues in a professional sense but can be a listening ear and compassionate sounding board.

- This is also my contribution.
- We aren't mental health providers so yes be aware but also to refer to therapists/counselors who can help

○ Strongly disagree
○ Somewhat disagree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Somewhat agree
○ Strongly agree

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Table 4. Essential Generic Skills Ratings

Skill	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree Total[a]
Active listening	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	10.34%	89.66%	**100.00%**
Analytical and conceptual thinking	0.00%	0.00%	13.79%	37.93%	48.28%	**86.21%**
Cognitive flexibility[b]	3.85%	0.00%	0.00%	23.08%	73.08%	**96.16%**
Critical thinking	0.00%	0.00%	3.45%	20.69%	75.86%	**96.55%**
Cultural competence	0.00%	0.00%	13.79%	44.83%	41.38%	**86.21%**
Emotional intelligence[b]	0.00%	0.00%	3.85%	26.92%	69.23%	**96.15%**
Empathy[b]	0.00%	0.00%	3.85%	23.08%	73.08%	**96.16%**
Information literacy	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.59%	72.41%	**100.00%**
Interpersonal skills	0.00%	0.00%	3.45%	3.45%	93.10%	**96.55%**
Leadership	0.00%	3.45%	10.34%	41.38%	44.83%	**86.21%**
Lifelong learning	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	6.90%	93.10%	**100.00%**
Oral communication	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	**100.00%**
Organization	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	37.9%	58.6%	**96.55%**
Personal hygiene[b]	0.0%	3.9%	0.0%	19.2%	76.9%	**96.15%**
Physical self-care[b]	3.9%	0.0%	3.9%	30.8%	61.5%	**92.31%**
Planning	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	31.0%	69.0%	**100.00%**
Problem solving	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	24.1%	75.9%	**100.00%**
Professionalism[b]	0.0%	3.9%	3.9%	11.5%	80.8%	**92.31%**

						Agree Total[a]
Psychological flexibility[b]	0.0%	4.0%	8.0%	56.0%	32.0%	**88.00%**
Public speaking[b]	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	50.0%	38.5%	**88.46%**
Self awareness[b]	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	34.6%	61.5%	**96.16%**
Service orientation[b]	0.0%	3.9%	7.7%	26.9%	61.5%	**88.46%**
Stress management	0.0%	0.0%	17.2%	20.7%	62.1%	**82.76%**
Systems thinking[b]	0.0%	0.0%	12.0%	20.0%	68.0%	**88.00%**
Teamwork	0.0%	3.5%	20.7%	41.4%	34.5%	**75.86%**
Technical skills	0.0%	3.5%	13.8%	48.3%	34.5%	**82.76%**
Time management	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	24.1%	72.4%	**96.55%**
Writing skills/written communication	0.0%	6.9%	10.3%	62.1%	20.7%	**82.76%**

Note. Bold text indicates the Agree Total percentages that measured consensus.

[a]Agree Total is the summation of the "somewhat agree" and "strongly agree" percentages.

[b]These items were suggested by panelists.

Table 5. Essential Personal Attributes Ratings

Attribute	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree Total[a]
Action oriented[b]	0.0%	3.9%	11.5%	34.6%	50.0%	**84.6%**
Adaptable	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	13.8%	82.8%	**96.6%**
Attentive	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.3%	89.7%	**100.0%**
Caring[b]	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	23.1%	76.9%	**100.0%**
Certified[b]	0.0%	15.4%	7.7%	15.4%	61.5%	**76.9%**
Compassionate[b]	0.0%	3.9%	0.0%	26.9%	69.2%	**96.2%**
Confident	0.0%	0.0%	6.9%	24.1%	69.0%	**93.1%**
Consistent[b]	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	23.1%	76.9%	**100.0%**
Creative	0.0%	0.0%	13.8%	34.5%	51.7%	**86.2%**
Curious[b]	0.0%	7.7%	15.4%	38.5%	38.5%	**76.9%**
Dependable	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	96.6%	**100.0%**
Empathetic	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	37.9%	62.1%	**100.0%**
Enthusiastic	0.0%	0.0%	10.3%	37.9%	51.7%	**89.7%**
Ethical	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.9%	93.1%	**100.0%**
Flexible[b]	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%	80.8%	**100.0%**
Generous[b]	0.0%	3.9%	15.4%	46.2%	34.6%	**80.8%**
Honest	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	10.3%	86.2%	**96.6%**
Humble[b]	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	23.1%	69.2%	**92.3%**
Inclusive[b]	0.0%	3.9%	15.4%	38.5%	42.3%	**80.8%**
Kind[b]	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	26.9%	65.4%	**92.3%**
Knowledgeable	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	24.1%	75.9%	**100.0%**

Open[b]	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%	42.3%	38.5%	**80.8%**
Outgoing[b]	0.00%	8.00%	16.00%	64.00%	12.00%	**76.00%**
Passionate	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	31.0%	65.5%	**96.6%**
Patience[b]	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	84.6%	**100.0%**
Positive	0.0%	3.5%	3.5%	10.3%	82.8%	**93.1%**
Punctual	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	**100.0%**
Realistic[b]	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	11.5%	80.8%	**92.3%**
Reliable[b]	0.0%	15.4%	3.9%	11.5%	69.2%	**80.8%**
Resilient[b]	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	53.9%	38.5%	**92.3%**
Respectful	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	96.6%	**100.0%**
Sincere[b]	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	26.9%	69.2%	**96.2%**
Sociable	0.0%	0.0%	17.2%	27.6%	55.2%	**82.8%**
Supportive[b]	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	23.1%	76.9%	**100.0%**
Trustworthy	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.9%	93.1%	**100.0%**
Understanding[b]	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	26.9%	69.2%	**96.2%**
Willing to learn	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.3%	89.7%	**100.0%**

Note. Bold text indicates the Agree Total percentages that measured consensus.

[a]Agree Total is the summation of the "somewhat agree" and "strongly agree" percentages.

[b]These items were suggested by panelists.

Table 6. Essential Specific Skills Ratings

Skill	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	**Agree Total[a]**
			Initial Client Consultation and Assessment			
Provide tours of the training environment.	0%	7.7%	15.4%	34.6%	42.3%	**76.9%**
Screen for basic human movements (hinge, squat, lunge, push, pull, and carry).	0.00%	0.0%	7.7%	19.2%	73.1%	**92.3%**
Create feedback loop for re-assessment protocols/progress check ins.	0.00%	0.0%	0.0%	30.8%	69.2%	**100.0%**
Communicate with client when re-assessment/progress check in should be performed.	0.00%	0.0%	3.9%	26.9%	69.2%	**96.2%**
Identify stress levels and utilize appropriate recovery/regeneration modalities in facilitating program design.	0.00%	0.0%	11.5%	26.9%	61.5%	**88.5%**
Identify quantifiable and measurable performance goals based on information obtained in interview process.	0.00%	0.0%	7.7%	26.9%	65.4%	**92.3%**
Select and administer mobility assessments.	0.00%	0.0%	11.5%	34.6%	53.9%	**88.5%**
Create and communicate an action-oriented outline of how the client may move toward their goals.	0.00%	0.0%	0.0%	38.5%	61.5%	**100.0%**
Identify the general needs, goals, and personal concerns of the client.	3.85%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	96.2%	**96.2%**
Determine the appropriate order to execute assessments.	0.00%	3.9%	11.5%	30.8%	53.9%	**84.6%**
Educate clients on assessment results and client takeaways on forms.	0.00%	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%	80.8%	**100.0%**
Create a comfortable environment for clients.	0.00%	3.9%	0.0%	7.7%	88.5%	**96.2%**
			Exercise Program Design and Implementation			

Recognize daily variations in client physical and mental performance and adapt the program as needed during each training session.	0.0%	3.9%	0.0%	3.9%	92.3%	**96.2%**
Solicit client preferences on exercise program design (exercise selection, equipment, other training variables).	0.0%	3.9%	7.7%	42.3%	46.2%	**88.5%**
Utilize a system of programming to ensure consistent results and time efficiency for creation.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	26.9%	73.1%	**100.0%**
Implement safe and effective exercise programs to improve mobility and flexibility.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%	80.8%	**100.0%**
Recognize signs and symptoms of burnout.	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	11.5%	80.8%	**92.3%**

<div align="center">Behavioral Coaching</div>

Select and recommend appropriate apps based on individual needs to motivate clients and track progress.	3.9%	3.9%	15.4%	42.3%	34.6%	**76.9%**
Implement elements of persuasion ethically and appropriately to elicit behavioral change.	3.9%	0.0%	15.4%	42.3%	38.5%	**80.8%**
Identify individual motivators.	0.0%	3.9%	0.0%	7.7%	88.5%	**96.2%**
Establish expectations in the client-trainer relationship.	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	11.5%	84.6%	**96.2%**
Recognize the need to refer clients to another trainer and refer as needed.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	88.5%	**100.0%**
Apply motivational interviewing techniques.	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	23.1%	61.5%	**84.6%**
Address client concerns related to exercise adherence.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	88.5%	**100.0%**
Determine the client's self-identified support system.	0.0%	0.0%	12.0%	44.0%	44.0%	**88.0%**
Make workouts or programs fun or enjoyable.	3.9%	0.0%	15.4%	26.9%	53.9%	**80.8%**
Apply positive reinforcement for a job well done.	0.0%	3.9%	7.7%	38.5%	50.0%	**88.5%**
Be genuinely interested in other people.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	23.1%	76.9%	**100.0%**
Smile.	7.7%	0.0%	15.4%	15.4%	61.5%	**76.9%**
Remember people's names.	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	11.5%	80.8%	**92.3%**

Talk in terms of other people's interest.	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	42.3%	46.2%	**88.5%**
Make others feel important and do it sincerely.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%	80.8%	**100.0%**

Client Education

Educate clients about basic anatomy, physiology and kinesiology and/or movement patterns (push, pull, hinge, squat, etc).	0.0%	3.9%	11.5%	26.9%	57.7%	**84.6%**
Use client training time effectively to educate clients on health and wellness topics.	0.0%	7.7%	3.9%	38.5%	50.0%	**88.5%**
Educate clients on health risks.	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	7.7%	80.8%	**88.5%**
Select and use appropriate apps, reference materials, books, podcasts and other sources for additional information.	0.0%	3.9%	11.5%	26.9%	57.7%	**84.6%**
Educate clients on how to spot misinformation in social media.	0.0%	3.9%	11.5%	30.8%	53.9%	**84.6%**
Educate clients on fundamentals of how exercise works (stress, recovery adaptation).	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	26.9%	65.4%	**92.3%**
Educate clients on stress management techniques.	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	26.9%	65.4%	**92.3%**
Educate clients on mindfulness to build awareness around their actions.	0.0%	3.9%	11.5%	38.5%	46.2%	**84.6%**
Educate clients about the relationship between exercise and nutrition, and how these impact weight loss.	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	30.8%	65.4%	**96.2%**
Educate clients about the importance of different types of exercise (i.e., muscular strength training, cardiovascular exercise, mobility, etc.) and its impact upon overall health.	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	11.5%	76.9%	**88.5%**
Educate clients on how they can access resources for mental health, time-management, exercise adherence, general health, etc. to utilize when they are not in training sessions.	0.0%	3.9%	19.2%	34.6%	42.3%	**76.9%**

Educate clients on risks (injury prevention, overtraining, etc.).	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	23.1%	73.1%	**96.2%**
Educate clients on how to implement sustainable behaviors that fit their lifestyle.	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	15.4%	80.8%	**96.2%**
Educate clients on why specific decisions are made about program design.	0.0%	3.9%	0.0%	30.8%	65.4%	**96.2%**

Legal and Professional Responsibilities

Develop a network of allied health professionals to whom clients may be referred.	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	26.9%	57.7%	**84.6%**
Obtain medical clearance when client returns or is under the care of a healthcare provider for injury, illness or other condition.	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	7.7%	84.6%	**92.3%**
Develop a communication protocol for all staff and/or participants which allows for long term and immediate information to be obtained.	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	15.4%	73.1%	**88.5%**
Follow the policies and procedures within the facility one works.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	96.2%	**100.0%**
Progress clients appropriately.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	**100.0%**
Respectfully address differences in trainer beliefs, methods, and philosophy.	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	11.5%	76.9%	**88.5%**

Business

Develop assets to generate leads.	0.0%	3.9%	19.2%	26.9%	50.0%	**76.9%**
Implement sales strategies to sell training services to potential clients.	0.0%	7.7%	7.7%	26.9%	57.7%	**84.6%**
Track data of marketing and sales.	0.0%	3.9%	19.2%	38.5%	38.5%	**76.9%**
Set standards for client cancelations.	0.0%	3.9%	0.0%	3.9%	92.3%	**96.2%**
De-escalate and resolve conflict.	0.0%	8.0%	8.0%	44.0%	40.0%	**84.0%**

Other

Create and maintain emotional boundaries to support mental wellbeing.	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	0.0%	88.5%	**88.5%**
Adjust approach and interactions with clients based on client personality.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	84.6%	**100.0%**
Demonstrate a client-first mentality.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%	80.8%	**100.0%**
Treat all clients equally.	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	23.1%	69.2%	**92.3%**

Note. The specific skills identified are in addition to what the certifying organizations have already determined. These were provided to panelists in the Round 1 Questionnaire. Bold text indicates the Agree Total percentages that measured consensus. All items in this list were suggested by panelists.

[a]Agree Total is the summation of the "somewhat agree" and "strongly agree" percentages.

Table 7. Items that Did Not Meet Inclusion Criteria

Item	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree Total[a]
Generic Skills						
Negotiation[b]	0.0%	2.0%	20.0%	40.0%	32.0%	**72.0%**
Personal Attributes						
College educated	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	16.0%	4.0%	**20.0%**
Fit physique	4.0%	20.0%	12.0%	48.0%	16.0%	**64.0%**
Specific Skills: Initial Client Consultation and Assessment						
Assess respiration quality at rest and during strength, endurance activities, flexibility and recovery activities.[b]	8.0%	8.0%	24.0%	36%	24.0%	**60.0%**
Specific Skills: Exercise Program Design and Implementation						
Design programs to include breathing technique/exercises for improving quality of respiration at rest and during strength, cardiorespiratory, and recovery/flexibility activities.[b]	0.0%	20.0%	12.0%	40.0%	28.0%	**68.0%**
Specific Skills: Client Education						
Educate clients that it is all discipline.[b]	24.0%	36.0%	24.0%	4.0%	12.0%	**16.0%**
Educate clients about circadian rhythm theory of health.[b]	16.0%	20.0%	44.0%	8.0%	12.0%	**20.0%**
Educate clients about hierarchies of importance related to health and wellness.[b]	0.0%	4.0%	32.0%	44.0%	20.0%	**64.0%**

Educate clients about dietary supplements and their risks and benefits.[b]	8.0%	16.0%	16.0%	48.0%	12.0%	**60.0%**
Create a list of accredited technological tools and educational newsletters for clients.[b]	12.0%	28.0%	52.0%	8.0%	0.0%	**8.0%**

<div align="center">Specific Skills: Business</div>

Develop a basic business plan.[b]	0.0%	12.0%	28.0%	40.0%	20.0%	**60.0%**
Create a marketing plan.[b]	0.0%	12.0%	32.0%	28.0%	28.0%	**56.0%**
Create and implement a repeatable sales system.[b]	4.0%	4.0%	28.0%	48.0%	16.0%	**64.0%**
Manage facility operations and equipment.[b]	4.0%	20.0%	48.0%	24.0%	4.0%	**28.0%**
Implement an organizational operating system.[b]	12.0%	20.0%	36.0%	24.0%	8.0%	**32.0%**
Manage business finances (forecast income/expenses, budget, accounting).[b]	4.0%	12.0%	40.0%	16.0%	28.0%	**44.0%**
Understand the essential business relationships with other professionals (CPA, business attorney, financial advisor, marketing agency, business mentor, etc.).[b]	0.0%	16.0%	36.0%	28.0%	20.0%	**48.0%**
Make quick and informed business decisions.[b]	0.0%	8.0%	44.0%	32.0%	16.0%	**48.0%**
Develop a system to find new talent on an ongoing basis.[b]	0.0%	16.0%	20.0%	40.0%	24.0%	**64.0%**

<div align="center">Other Skills</div>

Understanding of body privilege.[b]	36.0%	12.0%	36.0%	4.0%	12.0%	**16.0%**
Implement trauma-informed practices when working with clients.[b]	8.0%	24.0%	16.0%	36.0%	16.0%	**52.0%**

Note. Bold text indicates the Agree Total percentages that measured consensus.

[a]Agree Total is the summation of the "somewhat agree" and "strongly agree" percentages.

[b]These items were suggested by panelists.

What We Know - Research

- Melton et al. (2008, 2010, 2011)
  - Desirable characteristics: motivate clients, maintain a "fit" appearance, design individualized programs, communicate well and be social.
  - Undesirable characteristics: unethical or unprofessional behaviors like flirting, sexual comments, being late and cancelling appointments.
- Other research has identified additional factors: communication, being social, positive attitude, enthusiasm, interpersonal skills, lifelong learning, self-confidence, time management, and flexibility (Baker et al., 2017; Ku & Hsieh, 2020; Lloyd, 2008; Tsitskari et al., 2017).

7

My Dissertation

What's missing?

8

Purpose and Aims

Purpose: Explore the specific skills, generic skills and personal attributes essential to the work of fitness professionals.

The aims are to:

1. To identify the specific skills essential to the work of a fitness trainer in the U.S.
2. To identify the generic skills essential to the work of a fitness trainer in the U.S.
3. To identify the personal attributes essential to the work of a fitness trainer in the U.S.

9

Methods

- Employ the Delphi method, a group consensus method, with an expert panel of fitness professionals
- A series of questionnaires collect panelist feedback through three rounds
- *Delphi goal:* produce a list of generic skills, specific skills and personal attributes essential to the work of fitness trainers

Round 1 Questionnaire
Round 2 Questionnaire
Round 3 Questionnaire
Essential Skills and Attributes

10

Results - Participants

15 Fitness Trainers **+** 14 Supervisors of Fitness Trainers **=** Panel of 29 participants

11

Methods

- Round 1
  - Rate generic skills and personal attributes.
  - Suggest additional generic skills and personal attributes.
  - Suggest specific skills not captured in JTA
- Round 2
  - Rate suggested items, provide supporting comments.
  - Suggest additional generic skills, personal attributes, and specific skills.
- Round 3
  - Rate new items and items where consensus was not reached.

For each of the following skills, select your level of agreement with the following statement.

"This skill is essential to the work of a fitness trainer."

Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree

Consensus = 75% Agreement Ratings

12

Results

Results

		Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Final List
Generic Skills	Generic Skills Rated	17	12	3	
	Generic Skills Suggested	12	0	-	
	Generic Skills Moved to Final List	17	9	2	28
Personal Attributes	Personal Attributes Rated	19	22	3	
	Personal Attributes Suggested	20	0	-	
	Personal Attributes Moved to Final List	17	19	1	37
Specific Skills	Specific Skills Rated	-	75	19	
	Specific Skills Suggested	75	4	-	
	Specific Skills Moved to Final List	-	60	1	61

Results – Specific Skills

Category	Number of Skills
Initial Client Consultation and Assessment	12
Exercise Program Design and Implementation	5
Behavioral Coaching	15
Client Education	14
Legal and Professional Responsibilities	6
Business*	5
Other	4

*Added after Round 1 due to the suggestion of many business related skills.

Generic Skills
What do we do with this?

Common Generic Skills

- Active listening
- Oral communication
- Written communication
- Critical thinking
- Problem solving
- Analytical and conceptual thinking
- Information literacy
- Lifelong learning
- Cultural competence
- Time management
- Professionalism
- Organization
- Teamwork
- Technical skills

Revised Degree and Certificate Outcomes

Degree/Certificate	Related Outcome
AAS	Apply career navigation and essential job skills to succeed as a fitness professional in the fitness and wellness industry.
Personal Trainer Certificate	Apply career navigation and essential job skills to succeed as a personal trainer in the fitness and wellness industry.
Group Fitness Leader Certificate	Apply career navigation and essential job skills to succeed as a group fitness instructor in the fitness and wellness industry.
Healthy Older Adult Certificate	Apply career navigation and essential job skills to succeed as an entry level older adult fitness instructor.

"Essential job skills" are more than the specific skills related to our industry.

Revised Degree and Certificate Outcomes

Degree/Certificate	Related Outcome
AAS	Apply effective communication strategies to educate clients and the community using scientifically sound information.
Personal Trainer Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate clients using scientifically sound information.
Group Fitness Leader Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate, motivate, and promote behavior change using scientifically sound information.
Healthy Older Adult Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate, motivate, and promote behavior change using scientifically sound information.
Yoga Teacher Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate participants on hatha yoga history, philosophy and lifestyle.

Communication specific to our industry.

19

Top 10 Generic Skills

1. Oral communication
2. Lifelong learning
3. Active listening
4. Problem solving
5. Information literacy
6. Planning
7. Interpersonal skills
8. Critical thinking
9. Time management
10. Organization

20

Things to consider - Generic Skills

- FT 101 Skills Matrix Assignment
  - Currently - identify skills and how they apply to EXS careers
  - Recommend adding areas of improvement
- FT 180
  - Reflection on generic skills?
- FT 280
  - Reflection on generic skills in journals
  - Evaluation by supervisors

21

Generic Skills – Information Literacy

- Misconceptions on nutrition and fitness among fitness professionals is very common for all education levels, but does improve with education (Jolley et al., 2020 ; Kiss et al., 2020; Malek et al., 2002; Weissman & Magnus, 2011; Zenko & Ekkekakis, 2015).

"we need to educate ourselves too! I know plenty of trainers who believe [sic] inaccurate information."

"there are many trainers who are themselves misinformed about [health and wellness topics], and who either believe things which we have little to no scientific data, or disregard the scientific data we do have on things."
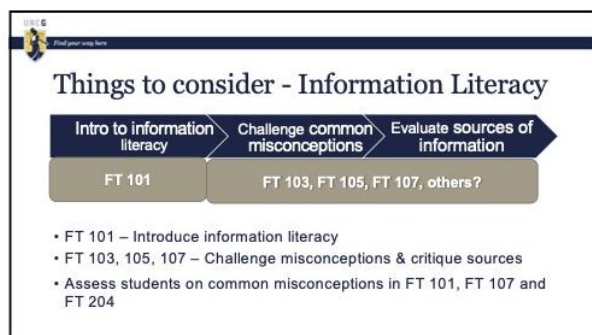
22

Revised Degree and Certificate Outcomes

Degree/Certificate	Related Outcomes	
AAS	Design and implement specific exercise programs based on scientific foundations and client needs for healthy adults, youth, and individuals with specialized requirements.	Apply effective communication strategies to educate clients and the community using scientifically sound information.
Personal Trainer Certificate	Design and implement specific exercise programs based on scientific foundations and client needs for generally healthy individuals.	Apply effective communication strategies to educate clients using scientifically sound information.
Group Fitness Leader Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate, motivate, and promote behavior change using scientifically sound information.	
Healthy Older Adult Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate, motivate, and promote behavior change using scientifically sound information.	

23

Things to consider - Information Literacy

Intro to information literacy	Challenge common misconceptions	Evaluate sources of information
FT 101	FT 103, FT 105, FT 107, others?	

- FT 101 – Introduce information literacy
- FT 103, 105, 107 – Challenge misconceptions & critique sources
- Assess students on common misconceptions in FT 101, FT 107 and FT 204

24

Personal Attributes

What do we do with this?

25

Personal Attributes

- Many describe qualities that demonstrate professionalism in the fitness industry
- Many attributes describe qualities that are helpful when working with others

26

Top 10 Personal Attributes

1. Punctual
2. Dependable
3. Respectful
4. Ethical
5. Trustworthy
6. Attentive
7. Willing to learn
8. Patient
9. Flexible
10. Caring

Helping professions:

"occupations that provide health and education services to individuals and groups, including occupations in the fields of psychology, psychiatry, counseling, medicine, nursing, social work, physical and occupational therapy, teaching, and education."

(American Psychological Association, n.d.)

27

Things to consider – Personal Attributes

- Inform interested students that fitness training and other exercise science professions requires service to others
- FT 101 – identification and reflection on personal attributes
- FT 180 – identifying attributes that are valuable to a potential employer
- FT 280/B – reflect on demonstration of select personal attributes
- FT 280/B – employer evaluation?
- Teaching demonstrations?

28

Specific Skills

What do we do with this?

29

Specific Skills Overview

- Many items may be seen as associated skills or sub skills for what is already on the job task analyses
- Highlights what's missing from the job task analyses from the certifying organizations

30

Specific Skills

- Initial Client Consultation & Assessment
  - Added movement screening and mobility assessment
- Program Design & Implementation
  - Emphasis on individualized and flexible programming
- Legal & Professional Responsibilities
  - Respectfully address differences in trainer beliefs, methods, and philosophy

31

Behavioral Coaching

- 15 added skills
- Many of the panelist suggestions could be seen as specific strategies in use by fitness trainers
  - Motivational interviewing
  - Identifying motivators
  - Identifying support systems
  - Using positive reinforcement techniques
  - Selecting and using apps

32

Revised Degree and Certificate Outcomes

Degree/Certificate	Related Outcome
AAS	Apply behavior change and motivational strategies to enhance client and community adherence to exercise, physical activity and healthy behaviors.
Personal Trainer Certificate	Apply behavior change and motivational strategies to enhance client adherence to exercise, physical activity and healthy behaviors.
Group Fitness Leader Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate, motivate, and promote behavior change using scientifically sound information.
Healthy Older Adult Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate, motivate, and promote behavior change using scientifically sound information.

33

Things to consider – Behavior Change

- Coordinate what theories and strategies we want embedded in our curriculum.

Apply Behavior Change Theories/Strategies				
FT 101	Pro Acts	FT 103	FT 105	FT 202
Intro	Specific Settings	Nutrition	Individuals	Older Adults

- Determine how we will assess student achievement of the outcomes.

34

Client Education

- How to implement sustainable behaviors that fit their lifestyle
- Risks (injury prevention, overtraining, etc.)
- The relationship between exercise and nutrition, and how these impact weight loss
- Why specific decisions are made about program design
- Fundamentals of how exercise works (stress, recovery, adaptation)
- Stress management
- The importance of different types of exercise and its impact on overall health
- Health risks
- Mindfulness
- Basic anatomy, physiology, kinesiology
- How to access resources for mental health, time management, exercise adherence, general health

35

Revised Degree & Certificate Outcomes

Degree/Certificate	
AAS	Apply effective communication strategies to educate clients and the community using scientifically sound information.
Personal Trainer Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate clients using scientifically sound information.
Group Fitness Leader Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate, motivate, and promote behavior change using scientifically sound information.
Healthy Older Adult Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate, motivate, and promote behavior change using scientifically sound information.
Yoga Teacher Certificate	Apply effective communication strategies to educate participants on hatha yoga history, philosophy and lifestyle.

36

Things to consider – Client Education

- We thoroughly teach and assess students on their ability to educate clients on exercise performance
- What other topics, if any, do we want students to be able to educate their clients on?
- How is this assessed?

37

What's missing from the JTAs?

38

Business

- Develop assets to generate leads.
- Implement sales strategies to sell training services to potential clients.
- Track data of marketing and sales.
- Set standards for client cancelations.
- De-escalate and resolve conflict.

39

Revised Course Outcomes

- **AAS Outcome:** Apply career navigation and essential job skills to succeed as a fitness professional in the fitness and wellness industry.
- **PTC Outcome:** Apply career navigation and essential job skills to succeed as a personal trainer in the fitness and wellness industry.

Course	Course Outcome
FT 104 Fitness Assessment	Conduct an initial client consultation to gather client information and promote and sell fitness services.
FT 105 Exercise Prescription	Apply behavior change and motivational strategies to enhance client retention and client adherence to exercise and wellness behaviors.

40

Business – what didn't make the list

- Develop a system to find new talent on an ongoing basis (64%)
- Create and implement a repeatable sales system (64%)
- Develop a basic business plan (60%)
- Create a marketing plan (56%)
- Understand the essential business relationships with other professionals (CPA, attorney, ...) (48%)
- Make quick and informed business decisions (48%)
- Manage business finances (44%)

"Necessary if you are an independent contractor or gym/studio owner"

"Depends on employment role"

"Depends on your work environment"

"This will depend on the trainer and their professional goals"

"Depends on employment position"

"For the manager/owner/director to do"

41

Things to consider - Business

- Sales skills taught and assessed in FT 104, FT 105, and FT 203.
- Advise students about the importance of other business skills if their professional goals lead to self employment.

42

Slide 43

Something Interesting?

Physical Self-Care & Fit Physique

43

Slide 44

Physical Self-care vs. Fit Physique

- Physical Self-care (92% agreement)
  - Not about physical appearance
  - Set an example of healthy behaviors
- Fit physique (64% agreement – did NOT make the list)
  - Generally agree that it's helpful because of the assumptions others make

44

Slide 45

Things to consider – Physical Self-care

- Keep HE/PE 295 and PE 181
- Encourage students to implement and maintain healthy habits (physical activity, nutrition, sleep, stress management)
- Add reflection about self-care activities in the FT 280 journal
- Discuss how we might teach students body inclusive practices

45

Slide 46

Wrap Up

Let's keep thinking about graduate employability when making curricular decisions – in our courses and throughout our program.

46

Slide 47

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Thank you!

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47

Slide 48

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48

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49