



an official publication of FITNESS PROFESSIONALS

fitpro network

www.fitpro.com
FEBRUARY/MARCH 2008

Maximising performance

- › Using matrixes for powerful results
- › How nutrition can facilitate an increase in muscle mass
- › Your guide to eccentric training

The guinea pig scheme
Five steps to great marketing

Running the marathon?
How to increase your time



fitpro
SPRING CONVENTION APRIL 11-13

Book online NOW at www.fitpro.com/convention08

PLUS INDUSTRY NEWS DEBATE FORUM FACT FILE RESEARCH REVIEW

Report: Jeff Archer

The enjoyment factor

Maximising the performance of your clients in the gym, or with any type of fitness programme, all comes down to one very simple issue. How do you make exercise enjoyable?

You are one of a fortunate group of people who know what it's like to enjoy exercise indeed, you like being healthy and active so much that you've made it your career. But not everyone feels the same way. It's easy to forget that just because keeping fit, eating well and looking after yourself are themes that occupy your mind for much of the day, this isn't the case for everyone.

Instead, for much of the population these topics are far from their mind at any given moment. Sure, they know that they could probably feel a bit better, feel a bit more focused or a little more energetic, but often that's as far as their thinking goes – they're not motivated enough to move this thought forward and turn it into physical action. It's just not something they'd consider doing because exercise and activity aren't things they enjoy.

Even for the more forward-thinking among the general population, taking action is easier said than done, which is why they seek professional help. But even at the point of joining a gym, signing up for classes or booking some sessions with a personal trainer, it can be far from natural for some people to become enthused by traditional workout routines. If you find yourself working with people like this, you'll need to draw deeply on your creative thinking skills to come up with some approaches to exercise that will get them enthused and help them get the most out of their workouts. Some strategies that you could employ include:

- **Playing games.** Keeping fit can seem easier and a more attractive prospect when it becomes part of a higher purpose rather than being viewed as exercise for the sake of exercise. Playing active games with clients can give structure to a workout and can add a competitive element that will make their sessions far more exciting and rewarding.
- **Keep it varied.** Any training regime can become monotonous if it is repetitive. If people always know what they'll be expected to do in fitness classes or personal training sessions, and they're not in the mood for it, they may not even turn up

in the first place. If you withhold an element of surprise with their workouts they'll be excited to attend to see what's in store.

- **Make it relevant.** Find out what people like doing in their lives and incorporate aspects of this in their workouts. If they like hill-walking, use some specific cross-country walking fitness routines; if they enjoy particular sports like basketball, netball, football, hockey or rugby, then use some training techniques from these sports in their programmes and make sure you explain to them what you are doing. They'll love using similar workout routines to the sportspeople they see on the field or on television.

Even for the most reluctant exerciser you can find aspects of their daily routine to incorporate in their workouts, even if it's things as simple as practising good posture, improving core strength and undertaking the right mobility and flexibility routines to suit their lifestyle. If they understand that these components will mean they are more comfortable at work, will help them to see off any lingering aches and pains and mean that they stay injury-free for the long-term, they'll understand the benefit of what you're doing with them and they'll be better disposed to engage with their workouts, which will mean improved results, which always leads to increased enjoyment.

Making exercise exciting for clients is not always easy but if you, and they, keep an open mind and are prepared to experiment with different approaches, you'll eventually find a way of keeping them active and enjoying the process as well as the results. [In](#)



Jeff Archer is a director at The Tonic, a health and well-being company that work with businesses around the country to keep their staff happy, healthy and motivated. Jeff is author of *Teach Yourself Fitness* and *Teach Yourself Life Coach*. For more information visit www.the-tonic.com or www.hodderheadline.co.uk