

**Beyond Better Call #13**  
**May 8, 2008**

**Future Security, Continued Growth, and Trendspotting.**

From a conference call with Phil Kaplan as recorded by Brennan Forsyth

When entering the workforce one seldom considers the future consideration or possibility of getting to a point where you may not be working or may not want to work anymore

We've talked often about developing your endgame and building towards it

As you grow you must preserve the value of your assets both tangible and intangible

Tangible: Your studio, your equipment, even your home

Intangible: Branding, your business model, your accounts receivable

Of these, the Intangible are the most important.

The key to growing your business is to be mindful of one of the biggest Intangibles; the trends within our industry.

Be sure not to confuse 'Trend' with 'Fad' which is the difference between the industry adopting new developments in fitness and the latest diet from the pages of Woman's Week.

You know what works and what doesn't; use your knowledge to separate the two and be ready to change with the industry to continue to serve your clients. At the same time, always be ready to learn rapidly about the latest emerging trends to better position yourself to deal with them.

The results of changing will depend on if you adapt to the industry trends or change your business model to continue to meet the needs of your clients while attracting new ones. Whether you act on new trends or react to them both as a professional and a businessperson will determine the success of your business.

In any case, be different! There are thousands and thousands of 'Personal Trainers' out there, set yourself apart from them and position yourself to become a leader in our industry.

As you position yourself with changing and emerging trends, always be sure to leave room for lateral and upward movement; don't allow yourself to get pinned down or pigeonholed or worse yet contradict yourself.

The leaders set the trends. Whether it's magazines, TV shows or celebrity endorsements, the leaders can get the masses to follow suit. Become the leader

and you can set the trends that you know will work and will have long-lasting impact.

When a trend emerges, even a bad one, you may not be able to change it but you can certainly recognize it. That's it. Recognize it and based on your experience and knowledge, adjust your business accordingly.

A few emerging trends:

- One trend in the industry is the continued interest in fitness combined with the hectic pace Americans feel shackled to will create combination fitness/recreation activities. Things such as volleyball will be soon marketed as fitness programs.
- Science will reveal that nutrition and exercise are key players in stimulating drug-like compounds neurologically. If you can affiliate yourself with a doctor or laboratory you can find out for yourself if your own ideas (or those of the industry) on reducing the need for drugs and supplements to cure 'disease' have any basis.
- Perhaps the biggest trend that will soon emerge are 24 hour fully self-service fitness centers with no staff or trainers; they will provide the equipment, 24 hour access to it and most of all, a sense of privacy for the member. Go in, work out, leave. Who would want such a thing? People who have been pressured by sales driven 'Personal Trainers' in the past, perhaps?
- Since big business and corporate interests almost always sets the trends start to make connections with big business and when fitness becomes monetarily attractive to big business (which it will) you will already be in. Become the person they'll want to go to when they really start to get on board.
- Most importantly, people will soon find out that they have more control over their health than previously imagined and will learn that they can cure dis-ease without drugs. Think back to our previous discussions on how we as Fitness Professionals can cure 'dis-ease' with moderate exercise and proper nutrition.

Small business always follow big business but your lack of corporate resources can be made up for by joining or creating local business associations such as the Rotary or the local chamber of commerce or even one of your own invention.

A small business is a group, a large business is a community. Learn to interact with and compel both.

As you learn more, and you are always learning, find your Information Delivery (Website, Funnel, orientation) and continue growing it.

Find your Working Model; establish a place where you can showcase the model that make your business unique.

Find your strategic location that helps you with your Reach. Someplace such as a shopping plaza with at least two other businesses where the same people visit at least twice a week.

With these elements in place you will always be ready to ready to act. If there's a corporate trend you have a connection; if there's a scientific trend you have your doctor, your nurse or your lab connections.

Don't be afraid to confront potential clients on their past experiences and show them why your service is different and how it can work with them.

As the trends develop, the need will always remain the same. Approach potential clients honestly and congruently and they will accept you as the vehicle to take them to the results that they desire.

The changes are coming fast and furious. Stay on top of them and be ready, you're about to go to places you never thought you'd go to. Get ready to learn and always be ready to lead.

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