We publish every day.

Every morning, I wake up at 4am. By 4:30, I'm writing.

Content marketing is a powerful tool. We teach it to every client in every niche. But that's not why I write.

Writing clears my head and reduces stress. But that's not why I write either.

I write because gym owners aren't fulfilling their true potential.

We've been given the entrepreneurial, financial, social and self-actualizing opportunity to extend lives. We can make people truly happy. We can change their self esteem, get them off most of their meds, and help them make better friends. We can introduce them to their future wife. We can brag for them. We can save them.

But who's going to save US?

If our gyms fail, all of that potential goes away. If our gym isn't full, those empty spots could be lives saved. If we recruit people and don't keep them, we've failed them. And we've failed our families, our staff and ourselves.

I write every day because I'm compelled to.

Social Media (especially Facebook) is a flattery platform: people post flattering pictures of themselves. Others post advice, or brag of their success. The emperor might not be wearing any clothes...but there's an app for that. A lie, wrote Mark Twain, can fly around the whole world while the truth is putting its boots on. I believe the truth should get up earlier and lace up so it has a head start.

My first book was a compilation of blog posts chronicling my gym's recovery. It didn't have page numbers or chapters. It's the bestselling fitness book of all time, because it's the most true.

Last week, I was asked, "How much do you actually write in a year?" So I asked our editor at TwoBrainBusiness.com to copy all of our blog posts from 2017 into one document to find out. The answer: 382 pages.

That's a book.

And that's not counting our YouTube content, or the stuff I write on TwoBrain.com, IgniteGym.com, UpCoach.org, Catalystgyrn.com, Medium, EliteFTS, or the CrossFit Journal. These are the blog posts from TwoBrainBusiness.com, our site dedicated to helping gyms get profitable.
The book is in chronological order. My first post, "State of the Industry 2017" was left in, because I thought it was interesting to see what had already come true, and what was still to come. If you're a TwoBrain mentoring client, the first post you'll read is "Gold Standards 2018"--a summary of what the best gyms are doing now, and what the greatest gyms will be doing by the end of next year. If you're not in the TwoBrain family, perhaps you will be by then.

Links have been left in because many topics are SO important that you’ll probably want to dig a bit deeper.

This compulsion to get up and write could be blamed on the chip on my shoulder, or the pebble in my shoe. I prefer to blame the love in my heart: I've been where you are now; I keep coming back; and until every gym owner is a millionaire, I can't leave it alone.

Chris
December 5, 2017
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STATE OF THE INDUSTRY, 2017 (AND WHAT I LEARNED IN 2016)

My friends, I think we’ve begun to turn the tide.
2016 opened as a year of uncertainty for many microgym owners. Some doubted our brand; others doubted their ability to survive. We heard pleas, blame and--frankly--desperation.

But in hindsight, most of this self-doubt and questioning of authority was just part of the maturation process. To put it another way, 2016 was the year many gyms grew up: from breakeven hobbies to profitable businesses with a real future.

The most common theme we published in 2016 was this: if you want to help more people in the long-term, fix your business right now. I know other groups followed the TwoBrain lead. And now, happily, we're entering 2017 with a new sound ringing in our ears:

**Success.**

We've all been successful at fitness for years. CrossFit has been a turning point in the fitness of many people, and it's been the catalyst for launching thousands of small businesses worldwide.

But a fitness model isn't a business model. As 2017 dawns, so does the realization that the affiliate world needs models of success, and clear steps to get there. Sustainable business doesn't come from great programming. It doesn't come from data. Good business comes from good business coaching.

Why do I think we're turning the tide? Here are few reasons:

1. If I said the word "profit" in public two years ago, I'd have been skewered. "I'm not in it for the money" was the rally cry of the affiliate owner. It was once mine. No longer. Now we don't confuse "profit" with "greed". We know WHY we need money. Right? For stuff like this:

2. No one falls for the "projected revenue" story anymore. And no one takes gross revenue at face value. We've all figured out that spending is easy. People ask about net, or profit, more often than ever before.
3. We're buying houses and cars and having families. We're securing our nests. We're preparing a home in ownership.

4. More callers now ask me, "How do I raise my rates?" than "How do I get more members?"

5. I see more posts about education than ever before. Gym owners talk about podcasts, books and courses. They talk about mentors. We're learning.

I spend most of my time surrounded by gym owners in the TwoBrain group, so my sense of reality might be skewed by their success. But I still do one free call every single day (and Danielle sometimes does three in a day.) I've been doing this for years. There's no sales pitch, just a discussion (frankly, we turn away more people than we accept now.) I ask questions, take notes, and then try to give as much help as I can in thirty minutes.

No one else in the entire industry spends this much time with people who will never pay them a cent. Except maybe box owners. I know why you do it; that's why I do it, too.

Are we there yet?

A few months ago, I was recording a podcast in Denver. I was talking about "the tip of the spear" and how, in most movements, it takes about 4% of the total population to influence everyone else. Kevin Kelly calls this "the tip of the spear". You could also think about this top 4% as the engine of a 25-car train, or the top 4% of the CrossFit competitors: they show us what's possible. They lift the ceiling. They provide a model for success for the rest of us.

The TwoBrain family has grown from 0 to 260 gym owners in 2016. These gym owners are flooding media with positive messages. They're keeping members a LOT longer. They're buying houses and starting second businesses. They're mentoring other business owners in their towns. Some are writing books. They're all working less and profiting more - every single one. These are the models we need in the microgym world.

What are they doing differently?

1. They're following a clear, proven path to business success instead of trying to "figure it out" as they go.
2. They're focusing on 150 great members and escaping the volume trap.
3. They're being held accountable by a mentor.
4. They're taking action on what they learn in podcasts, books and videos (they're not passive consumers of knowledge).
5. They're sharing, openly and honestly, in a protected environment of the top box owners in the world.

4% of 13,000 CrossFit gyms is right around 500. In 2017, our mentorship practice will focus on the 500 gyms who will lead the rest. This is how we'll turn the tide.
What have I learned in 2016?

SO much.

First is focus: that when a goal is important enough, you don't get sidetracked by the little stuff. I've had cancelled flights, corrupted hard drives, floods in my gym and nasty letters from lawyers this year. But The Movement was too important; I wasn't distracted by any of them. In airports; in rubber boots; in hotel rooms at midnight, I worked. Because the work is important. Saving gyms means saving lives.

Second is leadership: I started 2016 looking for someone to push me forward instead of backward. First, I brainstormed a list of the best LEADERS in the gym community. They all eagerly agreed to work with me at TwoBrainBusiness. Second, I sought mentorship from someone outside the gym world for a big-picture perspective. I found a remarkable business mentor for myself. He, in turn, has mentors. No one succeeds alone.

Third is happiness in others: what makes ME happy isn't what makes everyone happy. As I refine this concept for gym owners (you can see the video in the CrossFit Journal here) I continue to study human behavior and joy (my favorite topics!)

Fourth is gratitude: I've cultivated the Stoic mindset for years. I wrote "Help First" almost two years ago on the very couch I'm now sinking into (postural correction break!) I get a lot of joy from giving to others. But as a staff person reminded me on Tuesday: "Chris, you need to learn how to RECEIVE." Sometimes the greatest thing you can do for a person is to take their advice.

What will I do differently in 2017?

1. Upgrade the mentoring experience. I can't upgrade the interactions between mentor and gym owner, because those are impeccable. But I can upgrade the flow of information, the feedback loops, and help people visualize their goals better. That's already happening.

2. Increase access to knowledge. The new TwoBrain TV project will kick off next week. It's just for TwoBrain clients: they'll be able to sit in the interviewer chair with me, and ask questions of my guests. But everyone will benefit: even if you're not in the TwoBrain family, you'll still hear these interviews and discussions on TwoBrain Radio (our podcast.)

3. Elevate the level of discussion. "Talk to the smart kids. They'll tell everyone else" is a mantra given to me by Greg years ago. The private Facebook group for TwoBrain family members is clear proof this concept works: we're talking about profit percentages, not
floor sweepers. In 2017, we'll host monthly Book Reviews for group members, where we talk about the big concepts learned outside the gym industry.

4. Increase #action. As Jim Rohn says, knowledge without action makes you educated. Knowledge with action makes you a success. Accountability partners, completion updates, and new feedback tools will give TwoBrain gyms the motivation to do the hard stuff.

The evolution of the gym industry has begun. Becoming the largest mentorship practice in the fitness industry has given us the mantle of responsibility. We don't take it lightly or without gratitude.

Whether an Incubator client, Growth Phase entrepreneur, or simply someone who pays attention to our free daily content, thanks. Growth and action in 2017!

The Cyclical Nature of Business

Every business goes through cycles.

First, growth. The tree expands outward. The business grows its revenues through new clients, new products, or higher rates. It reaches new levels of profit.

Second, consolidation. The business stabilizes at one level--hopefully a higher one.

What triggers the "growth" phase? Marketing, introduction to new people, new service offerings, heightened awareness, improved interest, removal of a barrier...many things can trigger a period of growth. However, every growth period will eventually end.

And when it DOES end, the business will drop to its level of consolidation.

Here's an example: a gym has space, equipment and coaches for 50 athletes. Classes start when everyone arrives, because the owner and coaches know everyone's name and schedule. All the clients know to take off their boots at the front door. New clients don't do an OnRamp program of any type, because there's plenty of 1-on-1 attention in a class of three people. There's no option for personal training, because none of the original 50 members asked for it.

Now let's drop 50 NEW members onto this platform.

First, class size doubles. Newcomers aren't taught to arrive on time, so they trickle in...and class starts late. There's a scramble for equipment. New kids get all the attention,
because their technique is poor compared to the veterans. They break a thousand little
unwritten rules, like wearing wet shoes into the gym, because they don't know better.
Some quickly leave because they don't feel ready for CrossFit. To help, veterans start
coaching the newcomers.

The coaches aren't sure how to enforce the rules. The clients don't know how to behave,
because they've never been told. The owner might be making more money, but they're
definitely doing more work, and stress has gone through the roof...and then things start to
go really wrong.

A new member objects to the gangsta rap at the 6am class. The 3 people who have been
coming at 6am have always listened to the same music. The coach can't please everyone.
He has to choose, because there's no written rule about music. Then a few newcomers
quit because they "can't do the workouts". So the owner reconsiders his programming.
The veterans start to talk about going elsewhere, and the coaches are sympathetic. The
owner tries to slap a new rule on everyone...and they all get mad.

Quickly, the box is back to 50 members. And many of the originals are probably gone.
They said, "my schedule changed at work" but it didn't.

The gym has sunk back to its highest level of consolidation. It's prepared for 50 specific
members. It's simply not a 100-member business, and will always fall back to 50 until it's
ready for 100.

Call it "turning my hobby into a business" or anything you like. Talk about "emotional
bank accounts" or focus on recruiting new people to replace the old. Tell me you're
"hitting a ceiling" but don't know why. I'll tell you: the reason you can't get past 50
members is because you're running a 50-member business.

Every box owner thinks about growth. Most boxes ARE growing...and then shrinking
right back down to their original size. They gain 4 members, and lose 3. Or 5. And it's not
just the small boxes.

Consider a 300-member box with a 10% loss rate each month. They need to recruit 30
new people every MONTH to keep the fires lit. So that's where they focus, instead of
standardizing the client experience, building a retention system and improving their
coaching. They get stuck on the growth/consolidation treadmill.

Every period of sustainable growth must be preceded by a period of consolidation. (This
is why the Incubation Stage precedes the Growth Stage in our mentoring practice.)

If you don't improve your client experience, consistency in delivery and processes, there's
no sense improving your marketing.

Growing your business isn't the same as growing your client base.
Could you take 50 new members today...and keep everyone? If not, it's time to build a gym that can.

**How To Sublease Your Space**

You've taken a big leap: committed to rent, and loans, and time. You've dedicated yourself to attracting people to one little spot. You've painted the walls, assembled a desk, plugged into the Internet.

You haven't built a gym. You've built a platform.

On this platform, you'll build your living. Every square inch exists to buy your groceries. It might not be a blank slate--you put up that big rig, after all--but every little corner should be used to generate revenue. One way to leverage unused space is to sub-lease to a massage therapist, dietitian or other pro.

**Here's what you offer:**
Physical location - heat, lights, cleanliness, parking, snowplowing (maybe that one's just me)
Business costs - lights, insurance (maybe), internet access, transaction setup (debit machines,) booking and billing automation
Business processes - cleaning is covered, staff can book appointments, Prescriptive Model includes multiple services
Branding - access to a pool of trusting, high-earning clientele
Space - furnished or unfurnished.
The opportunity you're presenting is FAR more than just space. It's practically a turnkey business. All those business setup headaches that YOU'VE already figured out have been solved in advance for your tenant. That's very valuable. Keep those in mind for the next step.

**Here's what you charge:**

Start with the bare-bones math to determine the minimum value of the space. I'll use an example from the TwoBrain Group this morning.

Gym size: 4160sqft at $10.96 per square foot (includes NNN)  
Rental room size: 108sqft  
Rental rate to break even: $1183.68 per year ($98.64 per month).

But the room is part of your business platform. You're not renting it to break even.

According to our 4/9 model, you need to cover your fixed costs (2/9, including all Physical Location and Business Costs listed above) AND protect your profit margin (3/9). The only thing you're NOT providing is the labor.

Your base rent is $98.64 plus 5/9 - that's the opportunity cost to use the space. Minimum. Because you could always use it for something else.

That gives us **$153.44 per month**, plus transaction fees (usually 2.5-3% of VISA, M/C transactions, assuming they're using your debit machine.)

We could stop there. Draw up a lease (TwoBrain mentoring clients get a sample version, and help filling it in) and announce your new tenant.

But there's something ELSE of tremendous value to offer the new tenant. What's the scariest part of starting a business? It's not choosing the paint color…it's RISK. What if you took on some of the risk for them?

Let's say, for the first three months, the new tenant had the option to build their business at no risk. You simply took a percentage of their earnings in return for a higher cap. It looks like this:

Base rent: $153.44 per month  
- OR -  
55% of earnings up to a cap of $250 per month.

You're taking the risk back, so the reward increases. This isn't greed: you're leveraging your cash resources to help them. It's an investment. You're still motivated to get them to profitability, and so are they. If they hit the $250 cap in the first month, they can lock in to $153.44 anytime. But if they don't, they haven't lost a cent; you're paying the lease on the space until they do.
This has been a great system for me in the past. The tenant gets risk-free time to build their company in a warm, stress-free environment. And every time, they hit the cap in their first month with my help, and choose to lock into the rental rate.

But wait...there's MORE!

As many TwoBrain gym owners have realized, you know WAY more about business than most people in your town. This CrossFit journey has meant firing-line lessons. You've had to learn FAST. Most people in your town aren't even using Facebook pages, let alone ad targeting and retargeting. They don't have staff handbooks or written policies. They've never negotiated a credit card rate. You, my friend, have a LOT of knowledge that will save them a LOT of money. So offer it.

If you're paying a staff person to handle your social media, for example, they can easily add the new Massage Therapist's social media vehicles to their workload. If they're collecting your receipts for the bookkeeper, they can collect the therapist's receipts too. If they're writing Christmas cards or newsletters or blog posts...you get it. That's worth something.

You could even negotiate a two-business rate with your bookkeeper, or save money on transaction volume with your bank...there are many ways to make this work out even better for both of you. Make sure that value translates to an increased rate, because your time (and mistakes and education) is worth a lot.

Done right, with a written lease and expectations, a tenant can build on your platform. But charging per-use rates, or trading for imaginary value ("They'll bring new clients through the door!") is worse than worthless...because you can always do something ELSE with that space.
In 2007, I faced what many would call a "good problem": my gym was full.

I owned a Personal Training facility, and we simply couldn't take any more clients.

We had people training in stairwells. At peak times, with 5 trainers and 5 clients in 4 PT rooms, we had huge lunge-a-thons up and down the hallway. At that point, we started to consider group training. Because we HAD to.

The same thing happened to Greg Glassman, remember? He started pairing people up because his book was full. Then he put them in small groups.

When I moved from 1:1 to small-group training, my revenue per hour went up. The value of my time increased.

So far, so good.

If you want to level up your personal income, fill yourself with 1:1 clients first. Make a living. Then add 2:1 training, and then small groups. Jump to group training ONLY when your client base is secure.

Here's how I screwed it all up in 2008:
I opened a second gym. Instead of starting with high-value use of my time, I sold Open Gym memberships to people who really needed coaching instead. I started working 16-hour days for a couple of bucks per hour. My landlord made more money. I didn't. The value of my time decreased. In fact, it bottomed out: I probably could have made more at a call center. I just kept working MORE until I couldn't.

And here's how I started to fix things again:

When we ditched Open Gym and regained our footing as a coaching business, the value of my time went back up. But I was still working a 16-hour day. And it was full: coaching, cleaning, writing blog posts. I had to climb back out of the hole. I was trying to do everything, but I simply couldn't fit everything in.

So I replaced myself in the cheapest possible role (cleaner, back then.) I used the time to increase my membership. The value for my time went up.

Then I replaced myself in some of the class times. The value for my time went up, because I used the time to build a retention strategy.

Then I replaced myself as Personal Trainer. I slept in until 5am (oh, the luxury!) and came home in time to tuck my kids into bed...

...eventually, I became a true owner, and spent my time doing things to make my business profitable. And working out. I now work ON my business instead of IN my business. I help others do the same.

To increase your earnings level in the service business, you have to take this approach:

1. Start with the smallest sustainable iteration of your service. In fitness, that's often Personal Training.
2. Fill your time.
3. Replace yourself in that role.
4. Broaden your audience to serve more people in the same time.
5. Fill your time.
6. Replace yourself in that role.
7. Broaden your audience to serve more people in the same time.
8. etc.

Don't start with the broadest possible audience and try to filter everyone into the broadest possible service offering. In other words, don't start with a 10,000 square foot facility, a $100,000 loan and no clients. Without the core from which to grow, you'll implode.

Here's a fantastic story of others who have done it both ways.

http://twobrainbusiness.com/episode-47-starting-from-scratch/
An update: Aaron has quit his full-time job. They've doubled their revenues--again--since this interview. I'm so proud of them!

If you're saying, "Whooooops....." right now, it's not too late. Book a free call to start building your core here.

What Are We Selling?

Two months ago, I was sitting in CrossFit Bolton with two primo gym owners and three HQ staff.

While the cameras were off, my friend Tyson Oldroyd was asking us about nutrition programs in our gyms. He had just successfully coached a client to lose over 100lbs with mostly dietary changes. He said something like, "We're in the results business."

It led me to ask, "Are we selling exercise here, or fitness? Can we really sell fitness WITHOUT a nutrition prescription?"

Yesterday on 2BTV (our private weekly webinar for TwoBrain mentoring clients) my guest was Nicole Aucoin, who helps gyms build nutrition programs. Most of us are adding a nutrition layer on top of the exercise program we sell. But Nicole is also in the process of opening her OWN CrossFit gym. And with a blank slate, she's making nutrition the base of the fitness pyramid...as we all should.
Starting from a blank slate, and selling fitness, let's consider these questions:

- If 80% of our clients (that was the statistic from my gym in 2016) are seeking some sort of aesthetic goal first and foremost, what’s the best way to get them there?
- What tools are available to us?
- How will we measure progress?
- What equipment will we need to deliver this service?
  How many clients can we help? What if some of them were in a group?
- What will our prices need to be to make a good living at this?
- Remember: blank slate. No sunk costs, like pre-existing equipment.

How will this change your perspective on business in 2017?

Are we selling fitness, or exercise?

What OTHER pieces are we possibly missing? - and -

What opportunities do those pieces create?

(You can hear Nicole's full interview on Monday's podcast.)

The "Opportunities" module and discussion in our Incubator helps gyms see the "big picture", add revenue streams, and help their clients get more fit.
Last year, Nicole Aucoin of Healthy Steps Nutrition was my guest. She was launching a program to help gym owners add a nutrition component in their gym with minimal work. Nicole, a Registered Dietitian, teaches staff how to run the program, provides the gym with templates to use (for challenges, restaurant partnerships, and even corporate groups) and mentors the coaches running the program. It’s an amazing value, and a year later, she has dozens of affiliate gyms.

NOW she’s opening a CrossFit affiliate, and with a blank slate, she’s making nutrition a key component to her service offering.

Adding a nutrition component in my gyms has done more than increase revenue. It’s given us a new perspective on value, and what a fitness prescription should include. It’s also opened the door to a larger stream of clientele than exercise has alone, because most people seeking weight loss will try a “diet” long before they’ll try exercise.

In this episode, you’ll:

Learn about how to set up a nutrition program at any CrossFit gym

Generate additional revenue totaling into the thousands of dollars annually

Add a critical piece to your coaching practice.
What we cover:

- The foundations of a solid nutrition program
- The prescriptive models relation to nutrition
- Hydration’s role in weight loss and performance
- Lifestyle changes for the long term

Plus:

- Is Coffee okay to drink regularly?
- How to avoid the drive through and learn to prep food
- Pre and Post workout nutrition
- First steps to starting a nutrition plan

About Nicole:

Nicole is the founder of **Healthy Steps Nutrition**. She realized at a young age how important nutrition was when her mom was diagnosed with cancer. She attended the University of Florida and was part of the cheerleading team. It was during this time that she realized nutrition was a field she wanted to pursue long term. She has worked in the nutrition and fitness business for over 10 years helping thousands of clients around the world. Her program is currently run at over 40 CrossFit gyms worldwide where she helps empower people to make healthy lifestyle changes.

Timeline:

1:30 – Nicole Aucoin Introduction
4:20 – Nicole’s background and how she became a dietician and got started with CrossFit
7:22 – The foundations of a solid nutrition program
9:30 – Accountability and consistency within a nutrition program
12:00 – The prescriptive model and its relation to nutrition
12:36 – Introducing nutrition to your CrossFit box members
15:12 – The Sugar Shocker. How much sugar is in your food?
15:43 – Hydrations role in weight loss and performance
16:24 – Is coffee okay? Well it depends.
16:54 – Lifestyle Changes for the long-term
17:32 – Avoiding the drive through and prepping food
18:19 – Tools for continued nutrition success
18:46 – Supplementing your nutrition
19:07 – Pre and Post workout nutrition
20:24 – Testing, working a plan, and coaching nutrition development
23:17 – Creating a challenge for your clients and tracking fairly
25:31 – Ongoing coaching and long-term nutrition for corporate clients
31:40 – Legality and what can a dietician and nutritionist legally advise
33:46 – First steps to starting a nutrition program
35:49 – The procedure for starting a new nutrition program
39:11 – How to work with a restaurant on nutrition
41:30 – First steps to take to become a nutrition expert

NOTE: In the last six minutes of this interview, a pesky little echo appears (I shouldn’t have taken out my earphones – whoopsie.) My artistic sense said, “Cut this section out” but it’s SO valuable that I left it in. My apologies.

42:38 – Common challenges to starting a nutrition program at their gym
43:48 – How to local with a local dietician or nutritionist
45:18 – Starting a CrossFit gym with a blank slate
48:56 – How to reach Nicole

Contact Nicole

http://www.healthystepsnutrition.com/
When I opened my CrossFit gym, I built it around what I liked.

I chose bars that were great for powerlifting. I put in two GHRs and a reverse hyperextension machine. I hung chains on all my cages and put a chalk bowl in the middle of the floor. I slid a Metallica disc in the machine and hit "repeat".

The first woman to walk in the door walked right back out again.

I love my clients. But they're not like me. At least, they're not much like the 28-year-old me.

The fourth layer of Affinity Marketing is the Avatar.

After finding your best clients; after helping their spouses, kids and friends; after helping their coworkers and neighbors and teammates; that's when it's time to ask, "Who ELSE is just like Jill?"

So you begin to think about Jill. What were her goals when she started at your gym? Why did she choose January to sign up? What was her greatest fear? What ELSE does Jill like?

Facebook has a lot of tools to help. You can say, "Mr. Zuckerberg, please find me more people just like Jill." And Mark's Amazing Machine will discover that Jill likes Garth Brooks, the Golden State Warriors, and the Cooking Channel. The powerful ad software
will search its local database for other women who like the same things, and build a "lookalike audience" of those names. We show our mentoring clients how to do these awesome tricks in our Marketing modules.

But Facebook isn't the point of this blog post. YOU are the point.

Are your "ideal" clients just like YOU?

Are your SEED clients your age? Do they have 3 hours every day to work out? Are they passionate about improving their snatch?

Do they earn what you earn?

One of the biggest turning points in my business came when I realized that my best clients weren't much like me at all:

They earned more They cared more about clean bathrooms They wanted 1:1 attention often They didn't like Megadeth They don't want to think about programming They care more about smiling than PRing their overhead squat three-rep max.

What did this mean?

I stopped projecting my budget onto their wallet I took the skulls off my website I stopped using the F word on social media I replaced that blinking light bulb I posted more pictures of people smiling I cleaned the blood off the bars (true story) I stopped yelling at them for chalk spills I stopped believing people just had to "want it bad enough". I cleaned up my grammar (top earners don't confuse "you're" with "your")

When I realized that I wasn't my ideal client, I started getting cooler clients with smaller egos and fewer problems. Go figure.

One of the best reasons to do the SEED Clients worksheets (in our Incubation phase) is to discover who your best clients REALLY are, and what THEY want. That makes coaching easy, and owning a coaching business much easier.

To Whom Are You Speaking?

Yesterday's post, "Are You Really Your Best Client?" was meant to spur questions like "Who IS my best client?", "Am I really like them?", and "What do THEY want - and am I just doing stuff that would appeal to people like me?"

My SEED clients are educated. They have high-paying jobs. They are experts in their field. They probably supervise others.

If they're looking for a coach, they have to trust the coach's authority.
What erodes that authority? Signals - overt or otherwise - that I'm less educated than they. Or less smart. Or lazy.

It's difficult to judge brainpower or intent online. We've all been misinterpreted, misread or misjudged. Facebook doesn't allow for much inflection; it's black-and-white. But spelling mistakes, grammatical errors and bad language stand out like red flags.

This is SO important that I've asked a close friend to prepare a module on grammar for TwoBrain gym owners. We spend our days asking people to reconsider their basic squat and gait - movements they've practiced since birth. It requires humility to reconsider your use of language. I suggest you do it anyway.

Here's a starting point:

- You're = You Are
- Your = It belongs to you
- They're = They Are
- There = A Place
- We're = We Are
- Were = Past tense of 'Are'
- Where = A Place
- Then = A point in time
- Than = A method of comparison
- Two = The number 2
- Too = Also
- To = Indicates motion

Of note: this blog post probably isn't perfect. There are "grammar nazis" out there who delight in finding mistakes. I'm not one. Don't allow the pursuit of perfection be the tripping-block of "good". But someone has to say this stuff!

A potential high-end client might not care about your grammar. She might overlook your misuse of "you're" and "they're". Or she might not. Is it worth the gamble?
Why I Started Reading “Tools For Titans” – And Why I Stopped

I love Tim Ferriss. There, I said it.

I love his podcast. “The Four-Hour Workweek” got me looking for ways to increase the value of my time. So I was really, really excited to get his book.

300 pages in, I still loved it. But I put it on the shelf. The interviews, commonalities and stories were good. But I wasn’t taking action on ANY of it.

“Knowledge without action makes you a fool. Knowledge with action makes you successful.” – Jim Rohn

It’s easy to become trapped in a web of great ideas. But as coaches, we know that our clients don’t need more IDEAS. They need more action.

They don’t need another “ripped abs” program from a magazine. They need to get protein at each meal. Starting today.

My clients (gym owners) don’t need to choose between FitAid and Kill Cliff. They need to write down how they run a CrossFit class. Today.
You probably don’t need more ideas. In fact, if you listened to the 2016 episode, and didn’t take action on any of those ideas, stop listening now and go write contracts for your coaches. Take action.

If, though, I haven’t talked you out of listening to this episode, then press “Play”.

Timeline:
2:49 – The Prescriptive Model
7:48 – Who can we coach?
13:16 – Corporate opportunities for CrossFit
17:23 – The Pre-OnRamp Program
24:26 – The Challenge Mindset
26:18 – SobrietyWOD
27:50 – Gym “hubs” to develop coaches and services
31:03 – Cobranding and helping other gym owners
34:26 – Gamification
37:31 – Overarching expertise
40:44 – The subscription model within healthcare

I struggled with recording this one. Last year’s episode was a very popular one (and a watershed moment for some listeners, who DID take action and saw some huge results.)

Many of the ideas that appear on this podcast are quickly copied and redistributed as fresh catch from other fishmongers. As a writer (albeit amateur) this really grates on me. As the founder of the largest mentoring practice in the fitness industry, it stirs up my legal soup.

BUT as a gym owner who was once struggling to pay himself, I know that one idea can mean the difference between buying groceries and going hungry. That’s why I’m going to keep this podcast going for another year.

It’s also the reason most of the content on the TwoBrainBusiness.com site has direct, actionable steps. Ideas are a beautiful web; but they’re so sticky that we’re sometimes caught.
It’s easy to get caught in a web of consumption.

**Why We Don't Take Every Client (And Neither Should You)**

If your primary goal is "make money", you look for ways to sell more stuff.


But if your primary goal is "help people win", you quickly realize you can't help everyone.

When I speak to gyms, I ask, "How many members can you serve?" Most give me a big number, like 300, because they haven't heard the question before. The REAL number of lives you can affect long-term is closer to 150 (Dunbar's number). It's an anthropological norm, but I've written about the 150-member point in several places.

But even if you plan to someday reach 500 members, it's helpful to ask yourself:

- What if I could only get 150 clients?
- What would I have to charge them to make a great living?
- How long would I have to keep them?
- How can I help them BEST?

The best gyms don't become the best by having the most members. The best gyms are the best because they help their members MOST.

Think about the followup questions to the above:

- How much space do I really need to service 150?
- Who can afford to pay the rates I need?
- If I'm starting a 30-year relationship, does it really matter if their first three months are spent focusing on their diet and NOT exercising?
- What can I do to help these people more now that I'm not worried about chasing down 100 others?

And, of course, the biggest question of all:

**What kind of client DOESN'T fit in these 150?**
As I said in **Millions or Myths?**, I want to save The Movement. CrossFit has given us all the entrepreneurial opportunity that we wouldn't get otherwise. But we need models of business success, and a fitness model isn't a business model.

At Two-Brain Business, our goal is to create those models: to sharpen the Tip of the Spear. To focus on the top 500 gyms, and let THEM demonstrate success to everyone else.

If our goal was to sell more, we'd take everyone and anyone into our mentorship practice. But that's NOT our goal: our goal is to save The Movement. And that means we can only take 500.

With that number in mind, I'm very particular about who we invite into our mentorship practice. I ask myself the same questions that I ask in my gyms (you just read them.) Sometimes, that means a good gym isn't invited. Sometimes it means an honest, salt-of-the-earth coach isn't asked to join. It's hard to get to know a person in a free 30-minute consultation, and I do make mistakes. But when I do, I err on the side of exclusion.

I don't compare each caller on our free consultations against an objective norm. I compare them against our best mentoring clients: "**How does this person's personality complement Rich's personality?**" "**How can his ideas trigger growth in Kaleda's gym, too?**" "**How can her drive push Tate even further?**"

This means our bar isn't set by revenues (plenty of gyms can't "afford" the program when they start.) The bar is set much higher: by the personalities of the TwoBrain family members.

We've turned down million-dollar-grossing gyms, but made way for gyms with less than $7000 in monthly sales. The million-dollar gyms in our program are led by exceptional humans.

If we didn't offer you a spot in our mentorship program, take heart: it doesn't mean we don't like you. It doesn't mean you don't deserve to succeed. It DOES mean we have to focus elsewhere. Sorry.

We produce blog posts, podcast episodes, webinars, free videos and inspirational social media content EVERY DAY. I've been doing it since 2009. For free. For everyone. Hours of work, every day, to help you win. And some exceptional personalities are invited to participate at a much deeper level. Thanks to everyone who reads, listens and acts on our advice, whether part of the TwoBrain family or not. Keep sharpening YOUR spear as we sharpen our own.

*(Want to increase your odds of getting an invite? Make sure you fill out our **Gym Checkup** before booking your free consultation. We find that people who will take the time to be thorough are far more likely to do the hard work ahead.)*
If you read the habits and tricks of very successful people, most of them say they start their day at the gym. Their readers ooh and aah at their dedication to exercise habits at 6am.

But what about the gym owner? Someone turns those lights on before Mr. GrowthHacker shows up, right? And in the CrossFit world, all too often, it’s the same person who turns the lights off at night.

Sherman Merricks is the founder of CrossFit Dynasty in Gainesville, Florida. Recently he has launched Notable Guidance, a life coaching service for entrepreneurs. Today we dive into all sorts of topics that are VERY relevant for gym owners. There’s a lot of GREAT practical advice in here.

Also of interest: *The Hustle Is A Lie*, by Chris Cooper.

In this Interview:

- Setting SMART goals and achieving them
- Attaining the confidence to be a leader
- Overcoming setbacks on a regular basis
- Balancing a busy schedule with personal life

Plus:
o How to boost positivity in your gym
o Getting your personal finances in order
o What is life coaching?
 o Overcoming the Imposter Syndrome

About Sherman:

Sherman is the founder and owner of both Dynasty CrossFit, in Gainsville, Florida, and Notable Guidance. He discovered his passion for sports growing up in Florida and excelled at basketball through high school and college. After graduating and feeling a huge competitive void, he realized CrossFit could fit the bill and he has never looked back. He has a passion for helping others be their best by improving their fitness and now their life. Sherman’s main focus is to help people reach their goals and still have fun doing it.

Timeline:

0:57 – Sherman Merricks introduction
2:14 – Sherman Merricks background
3:47 – Setting the right goals for your client as a coach
6:42 – Identifying areas of desired personal improvement
9:05 – Writing down your goals and keeping S.M.A.R.T
11:12 – Attaining the confidence to be the leader
12:05 – Setbacks are certain but you must keep moving
13:20 – A personal example of ignoring a setback
14:43 – Preventing clients from promoting negative thoughts within your gym
16:07 – Specific ways to promote positivity within the gym
18:10 – Pushing clients further with full support
20:55 – Balancing goals with life
22:03 – Combating the addictive hustle mindset
24:05 – Transitioning present in the moment at work and home
26:10 – Creating a buffer between work life and home life
27:53 – Tricks to transition between work and personal time
31:15 – Getting your business and personal finances in order
33:42 – How to start a conversation with your spouse on personal finance
36:28 – What is life coaching?
38:39 – Overcoming the imposter syndrome
40:44 – How much money does someone have to make to be happy?
42:03 – Outrunning the happiness index by avoiding personal problems
44:23 – Contacting Sherman

Contact Sherman:

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http://dynastycrossfit.com/
https://medium.com/@Trusted1
The road from a broke owner to successful entrepreneur has been a long, tough climb.

I learned things the hard way. I thought, "I'll just figure it out" and that cost me YEARS of my life, hundreds of thousands of dollars, and more sleep than I'll ever make up in my lifetime.

Worst of all, I was starting to lose my passion for it when I finally got a business mentor.

That's one of the reasons we mentor gyms now: to vault them over ALL of that.

But hard lessons are valuable, too.

Here are some I've learned:

1. "Heartily know, when demigods go, the gods arrive." - Emerson.
   People leave your gym (or life) for a reason. Usually it's to make way for better people.

2. "You wouldn't worry so much about what others think of you if you realized how seldom they do." - Eleanor Roosevelt.
   Seriously, you're the only one worrying about your programming and most of the "box drama". Your clients have lives outside the box.

3. "They're not your friends." - Big Nick
   Your clients are your clients. They pay you money in exchange for service. Your friends
do not. It's black and white, not gray. You don't do discounts for friends, or "cut them a deal." If they ask, they're not your friends.

4. "How will this affect your best clients?" - Mike Michalowicz
It's very tempting, sometimes, to make an exception to get the sale. When a big company asks for a corporate discount, ask yourself if it's fair for your new clients to pay less than your amazing existing clients.

5. "You can always afford to be generous." - OK, that was me.
You don't need money to help people. And you don't need to give them money - or discounts - to help them, either.
This week, I showed my financial planner how to set up a free seminar. I showed my accountant how to build a Facebook ad for tax season, and told a group of 14 millionaires how to write a book. They don't really need your money; they need your brain.

When you have to fire a client; when a coach sleeps with another coach; when you have a bad day, think on these 5 mantras.

I've leaned on them hundreds of times; they can bear your weight, too.

PODCAST EPISODE 61: PHYSIQUE FIRST, WITH BILL SHIFFLER
78% of new clients at Catalyst (my gym) in 2016 listed an aesthetic goal as their top priority.


If your clients want to look like bodybuilders, why NOT incorporate some bodybuilding movement into your programming?

The line between “functional movement” and “bodybuilding” has never been a clear one. What makes a biceps curl non-functional? What makes a bench press un-CrossFit?

No one is adding mirrors to CrossFit gyms here. But would adding a hypertrophy element to your programming address what people actually WANT when they come to your gym? Food for thought.

Most guys who walk in your door don’t want a better “Fran” time. They just want to look like Bill.

Bill Shiffler is the founder of CrossFit Renaissance, of Philadelphia. He’s a professional bodybuilder, and today he’ll answer questions about combining physique-specific work with CrossFit.

Bill’s program is Renaissance Physique. Today we dive into all sorts of topics about this program, how it works, and how you can start implementing the program at your gym.

Check out this two-week starter template for more information on how it works.

In this Interview:

- What is Renaissance Physique and Hyper Metabolic Training?
- Hypertrophy and its relation to CrossFit
- Getting bigger and building size with CrossFit

Plus:

- How to calculate a client’s basic metabolic rate (BMR)
- Endurance athletes and CrossFit
- Determining a safe rate of weight loss

About Bill:
Bill is the founder of CrossFit Renaissance and Renaissance Physique. Prior to CrossFit, Bill was a wrestler and body builder. He is a certified strength and conditioning specialist (CSCS), Level 2 CrossFit trainer, and natural pro bodybuilder. He is passionate about helping people reach their goals whatever they may be. His new program Renaissance Physique uses HMT (Hyper Metabolic Training). This program is based on cutting edge and science based techniques to maximize both hypertrophy and superior metabolic conditioning delivering maximum results.

Timeline:

1:31 – Bill Shiffler Introduction

2:32 – Renaissance Physique Introduction

4:25 – Bill Shiffler’s background and start with CrossFit and Body Building

6:52 – The Renaissance Physique training methodology

7:26 – Who is Renaissance Physique for?

8:18 – What is Renaissance Physique?

11:34 – Hypertrophy and its relation to CrossFit

13:11 – Getting bigger and building size while doing CrossFit

14:50 – Specific movement focus for someone wanting to gain weight with CrossFit

16:14 – How many reps should you be doing to build mass?

17:32 – Volume is key with hypertrophy training

17:53 – Preventing accidental weight gain

19:40 – Showing a desired physique picture during a consultation

21:29 – Addressing body aesthetic through nutrition

22:46 – Calculating a client’s BMR (Basic Metabolic Rate)

23:18 – Determining a safe rate of weight loss

24:00 – Setting up a client’s macronutrient partition

25:44 – Customizing a client’s nutrition and training program
STAYING FOCUSED

_There’s treasure everywhere!_

As you make more connections, more opportunities present themselves. With the “Help First” mindset, you’ll constantly find new ideas…but you can’t do all of them.

Most gym owners who book free consultations with us have PLENTY of ideas. The problem is a lack of time…and they’re trying to do five things at once, which means nothing is getting done.

Here’s how to stay focused on ONE goal at a time.

1. Get a mentor. I brought this question to one of my own last night. Most of this advice is his. If you want to hear more from Dan Martell, click [here](http://www.renaissancephysique.net/).

   **All of my success has come while under the tutelage and focused guidance of a mentor.** Seriously. It’s important. That’s why I do it for gym owners.
2. Set annual goals. Break those goals into monthly targets. Break the monthly targets down by revenue stream. Now you have Point B. Everything that doesn’t move you closer to Point B in a measurable way should be discarded from your daily business.

3. Calculate the value of your time. If you want to make $1,000,000 next year, you need to spend 2000 hours doing $500-per-hour work. You do NOT have extra hours. You can NOT be doing $15-per-hour work. If you want to make $100,000 next year, every hour of work must be worth at least $50. No one is paying you $50 to scroll through your Facebook feed. Or to work out, for that matter. Are you doing 40 hours of $50-per-hour work – NET – every week? What about that “class” of two people you’re running at 10am?

4. Know that “adding another thing from your cognitive overhead takes you away from your real goal.” That’s straight from Martell. Coach Ty talks about cognitive load in our UpCoach program (there’s a reason your clients are distracted in class!) but here’s the gist: You do NOT have unlimited bandwidth or focus. Every second you spend working on a task that doesn’t directly affect your goal adds steps to achieving your goal.

5. Most “side hustles” are really a mental “Plan B”. People start printing T-shirts in their gym because they don’t trust their ability to succeed at Plan A. If your net on shirts is $5 per shirt, and you have to invest $1000 in a heat press and 20 hours in design…isn’t it better to spend that time on Goal Reviews with members?

Martell: “People do this stuff because they don’t trust that their primary thing is going to be awesome. They lack trust in their own ability to execute on Plan A.”

6. Put it on your 2018 list. Write it down on a special “get to it next year” whiteboard. That way, you’re not trying to remember every opportunity, and you’re not turning exciting stuff down. You’re just saying, “Later.” It helps clear the junk out and focus on your current goals.

7. Measure the potential ROI of your primary activity, and compare everything else against that. A dollar invested in Catalyst in 2005 would be worth about $22 now. Why would I put that dollar in a mutual fund with a 7% return when I could make a 220% return by investing in myself? Time works the same way: why invest in “side projects” when your CORE business – fitness – can deliver SO much more?

You can do everything you want; you just can’t do it all right NOW.

If you believe 100% that your best ROI is going to be in your primary business, why would you invest time or money into anything else?
Here’s the good news: your gym CAN be profitable (wildly so.) If it’s not, something is wrong. That’s what mentorship means: an objective third eye floating above the business, looking for problems and guiding your focus.

I have a mentor. My mentors have mentors. Every successful business person knows they can save years and millions of dollars by NOT trying to “figure it out” as they go. We specialize in the fitness industry. That’s OUR focus.

PODCAST EPISODE 62: THE POWER OF STORIES

Today we talk about using the power of stories to help grow your business, help your clients, and help you live a better life. Today I share some personal stories and strategies for how to connect better with clients when telling a story. I also talk with Jason Cohen about how he is using the power of stories to help veterans with PTSD.

In this Interview:

- My first phone call with Greg Glassman
- The “Hero’s Journey” and how it applies to CrossFit
- How Jason Cohen is helping Veterans with PTSD
o Why stories are so effective for sales and marketing

Plus:

o Testimonials versus client stories
o The gamification of CrossFit and exercise
o Extrinsic versus intrinsic motivation

About Jason:

Jason Cohen is a former Marine where he was originally introduced to CrossFit. After five years he retired from the Marine Corps and got his degree at the college of Charleston. Jason then started coaching full time. He is now the founder of SemperFit Squad, a company that provides workout plans based around stories to help veterans with PTSD.

Timeline:

0:57 – The true power of great stories
1:56 – A personal story about Greg Glassman
3:20 – An introduction to telling great stories
4:09 – The hero’s journey within a great story
5:50 – The hero’s journey boiled down more simply and applied
7:33 – Why does the hero’s journey matter to you?
7:59 – Making Joe the hero of his own story
17:13 – The real happy ending for a client
17:39 – How does a coach fit into a story?
18:17 – Jason Cohen Introduction
19:03 – Jason Cohen’s Story
20:57 – How stories can help veterans diagnosed with PTSD
23:54 – Compelling someone with PTSD to get started exercising
25:43 – The gamification of exercise and CrossFit
27:06 – Moving people from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation

27:51 – Placing people into life like stories within a CrossFit gym

30:41 – Drawing people in to stories where they feel like the hero

31:14 – How does placing someone in a scene help someone with PTSD?

32:40 – Developing a platform for veterans in need with PTSD

33:35 – Where to find Jason’s scenarios to try them out

36:14 – Getting wrapped up in a story

37:05 – Where the mentor, or coach, in the hero’s journey comes in

39:36 – The first test for a client, the social test

41:44 – The second great test for a client, becoming injured

44:51 – The implementation of the prescriptive model by creating heroes

45:37 – Why are stories so effective for sales and marketing?

49:01 – Testimonials versus a client story

49:59 – A client’s primary barrier to signing up for CrossFit

50:20 – The 2017 Two Brain Summit Announcement

SAMPLE:

Today’s Mission:
It’s June 6th 1944: D-Day. You’re with the 101st Airborne flying high above the Douve River taking heavy anti-aircraft fire. Your unit’s mission is to destroy 2 bridges over the river so the soldiers on Utah beach can push forward. As you approach your jump window, your aircraft takes a hard hit and loses its #2 (starboard) engine. The time to jump is now or never…GO GO GO.

As you hit the ground you check your map and realize you’re over 1 click south of your drop zone. You’ve landed in thick marsh and walking through the mud is like dragging your feet through wet concrete. To make matters worse, you’ve got to get prone from time to time because enemy patrols saw your open chutes and are on the hunt for you and your men.

Your Mission:
Complete 5 Rounds of:
20 Meters Trudging through the marsh (walking lunge steps)
In January 2017, I traveled to San Diego with an elite mastermind group. The clever folks in this group are all owners of businesses worth $2-5 million, and we're all in the service sector (though some sell software as a service, or SaaS.)

We visited several companies who had scaled past the $5 million mark, including Classy.org, whose founders provided an insightful perspective on Sales vs. Marketing.

Classy provides a payment platform for charities. They bill clients (the charities) based on a recurring monthly fee, a percentage of revenues collected, or both.
Their service allows charities to scale without hiring software developers or negotiating payment rates with different processors. It's a great model, and they have some huge clients.

When Classy started, most of their sales were inbound. Charities heard about the platform, called for information, and signed up (or not) based on the pitch Classy gave them. This is SALES, and as Classy refined its process, more people signed up.

Our sales process is called a "No-Sweat Intro." It's the product of years of trial, tweaking and data tracking. We teach it verbatim in the Incubator. The goal of your sales process is a high integration (i.e. signup) rate.

There are two stages of client interaction before the Integration stage. These are Awareness and Interest, and they're MARKETING.

As Classy grew, they realized they could help more people by adding a Marketing team. The Sales team polished its Integration process while the Marketing team started their Awareness and Interest campaigns.

In the gym world, CrossFit affiliates benefit from massive awareness campaigns from HQ (Reebok, ESPN, the Games, the Open...) and our marketing should be primarily focused on Interest. That means our emails, newsletters, website, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, events, seminars, co-branding, and coffee talks should all have one goal: tell the future client how our service can help THEM.

If you want to improve your revenues, focus your attention here:
1) Sales - dial in your No-Sweat Intros. Do role-playing with your staff. Do a LOT of these. Read "Two Clicks To Book".
2) Marketing - spend all your time making connections between your service and its benefits to your potential client. For example, "Morning workouts help accountants think better", "Shift Workers should come to groups before going to bed" or "Here's how you stay accountable in your quest for fat loss."

Stay away from: 1) Free sample days, weeks (even months - yikes) 2) "Awareness" marketing, like flyers and FB ads to "like" your page

Finally, your biggest opportunity probably ISN'T marketing, but sales. If you consider the people who have visited your business in the past, or attended a free seminar, or indicated interest by downloading some of your content...you probably have an email list with hundreds or thousands of names on it. These people are already at the "Interest" stage, and just need one little barrier to fall away before signing up.

That barrier is usually best overcome through email, NOT social media. Owners in our Incubator program learn why.
This might all seem like theory. But knowing your intent at each marketing stage will help you meet more people, HELP more people, and enroll more people.

Go With Them

What To Do When They Say, "I'm Opening My Own Gym."

By Ken Andrukow and Chris Cooper

In 2005, I had my last confrontation with a boss.

Pinned down in the back hallway of his "personal training studio," he asked point-blank if I was leaving to start my own gym. He was uncharacteristically aggressive, and my back literally brushed up against the wall. I stuttered. "Uh..."

Until that point, opening my own gym had been a murky "maybe." True, I had spent that afternoon viewing a possible gym location, but it was far too expensive; it was on the second floor; and it was almost directly across the street from my current employer.

I had a full appointment book. I was earning around $23,000 per year, and my wife wanted to leave her career to stay with our nine-month-old daughter. The only way for me to make more money was to work longer than my 14-hour days. I had a client--and future partner--pushing me to go out on my own. But I hadn't decided to leave.

Until that second.
"Yes," I said. "I'm leaving."

I handled it badly. So did he. Neither of us had ever been on either side of this before. For the previous year, most clients coming in the door were asking for me; my articles were being published all over town; and it was me at local track meets and hockey arenas, not him. I was driving the business, and a lot of business was sure to leave with me. Back then, these things simply didn't happen.

Now they do. Very often. And as a community, we're STILL handling it badly. Here's WHY coaches leave, and what to do.

**Part I - Why Coaches Leave**

Like me, you probably opened a gym because you wanted a career in fitness, and couldn't see any way to make a living WITHOUT being an owner.

I first wrote about a "lack of horizons" in June 2012.

For many of us, CrossFit created the opportunity to get started as an entrepreneur. But it's OUR job to turn the gym into a business that sustains our family AND our staff.

If a coach can't see a way to make a living - own a house and car and pay for their kids' braces - they'll leave. And we can't blame them. Any employee making less than the "Happiness Index" level will pursue more money out of necessity.

But if they're making enough to afford their lifestyle, the next reason most staff quit their jobs is a DIFFERENT horizon: the opportunity to learn and explore new paths.

If they're not learning, they're leaving. What kind of continuing education program do you have in place?

Finally, no one wants to punch a clock and perform the same tasks for the next 30 years. How can your coaches explore their entrepreneurial side without all the risks YOU face? Do you have a model for coaches to build new programs, and directly benefit from their growth?

**Part II - How To Prevent It**
1. Every six months or so, ask coaches "What do you want NOW?"
2. Have them work through the "Perfect Day" exercise.
3. Ask which coaches want MORE opportunities: personal training, a nutrition specialty, or focused groups like Kids, Weightlifting or Sport-Specific training.
4. Finally, offer them roles that allow YOU to "level up" and build your business.

Some ideas:

- A 'Head Coach' position, responsible for the oversight of other Coaches; programming for your Box; running monthly training sessions for your Coaches; making decisions on Cert attendance and new programs;
- A 'General Manager' position, to replace you - as owner - when you feel like taking that long-overdue vacation time (or just staying home occasionally);
- A 'Case Manager' position, who oversees individual training plans AND customer retention, client satisfaction, and social media;
- An 'Events Coordinator,' who sets up your events and works for part of the gross;
- The developer of a brand new part of your business. Here's how we handled that one.
- A specialty coaching opportunity, to pursue one are of passion, like coaching Kids or Weightlifting.

Each of these positions should create the revenue - and more - to cover the increased wages that follow increased responsibility.

Not everyone wants to change. Don't force anyone; let people be happy. If you can't create a path of development and personal growth, though, don't expect them to stick around.

Owners in our Incubator program learn how to identify opportunities, help coaches find THEIR 'happy', price specialty programs and get clients to sign up.

Part III - What To Do When They're Leaving

For many, the siren song of ownership is just too strong. They want to roll the dice and answer to themselves, "Can I do better on my own?"

As my friend and mentor Jay Williams says, "Everyone thinks they want our job. But they don't actually want our job."

Of course, if a coach leaves to start their own gym, it's hard for them to come back...unless you go out of your way to make a return trip possible.

Think about it: how many times in the last three years have you wished for a parachute? We ALL do it. In those moments, if you knew there was a secure coaching job available
with a friendly former boss, would you take it? Many would. After talking with hundreds of box owners, I'm 100% certain many would happily give up ownership for a secure position coaching. They don't WANT the burden of ownership; they just want security in a coaching position. Many have bought themselves a job instead of a business, and now they regret it.

1. Keep the door open.

Sadly, many coaches - and owners - burn bridges HARD when they leave, and then stir the coals afterward. Fear of loss, confusion over emotional decisions and misplaced feelings of "trust" - they make for hard times.

2. If the coach is open about their intentions, offer to purchase a share of their business. After all, your counsel is very valuable: you can save them hundreds of hours of wasted time and thousands of dollars in wasted income. You know what they need and how to avoid many of the startup pitfalls they'll face. Why not offer to fund 20% of their box, and then take a monthly retainer as a consulting fee?

This will stop client poaching, protect membership rates in the area, and HELP the coach who wants to try it alone. It also gives them an out: if the box doesn't work, you'll be there with an escape route.

3. If the coach is cagey about their intentions but leaves quietly, announce their "retirement" and stick to the high road. You have nothing to gain from belittling their memory. Your feelings might be hurt; either get used to it, or stop having feelings (just kidding. It gets easier.) Try not to feel threatened. Amp up the energy in your classes and eliminate ALL reasons for clients to follow.

4. Oh, and during your exit interview, remind the coach of their duties under your non solicitation agreement. You have that, right?

(if you don't, download a sample contract here and get everyone on it. Now.)

TwoBrain mentoring clients get sample blog posts to help announce retirement and one-on-one guidance to get through the challenging time.

5. If the coach lights the plane on fire before diving out, that's a different issue.

It's hard to stick to the high road, but consider this: no one can "poach" a client. If one of your members is so attracted by a low price that they'll quit, they probably weren't a great member. If they're more attached to your coach than to your brand, you have the "Icon problem." And if your service is exactly the same as the coach's new service, but more expensive...you're selling a commodity, and people don't want to pay more for commodities. Move to a prescriptive model. Now.
All of these potential problems are avoidable IF you take action now (this is what our Incubator is built to fix.)

6. Let's say the worst happens: a coach leaves, it's a surprise, and they're messaging your members about lower rates and better service. You realize you could have prevented this problem with all of the above advice, but it's too late. What THEN?

- First, find bedrock. Who are the clients who won't leave, no matter WHAT?
- Find out what makes them stay. Listen to this podcast with Mike Michalowicz for the process.
- Start doing Goal Reviews. You're in the results business, not the sales business; if people are leaving because of a price war, get out of the sales business and start talking to them about their results. Right away.
- Don't go public. You can't win in a social media war, because you're on the back foot. Win in the face-to-face war. You have a huge advantage: most members are showing up at your gym TODAY. Talk to your seed clients, explain the situation and its impact on your gym family. Let the message trickle down from them (it will have more authority coming from them than from you.)
- Focus heavily on messages of Family, Tribe and Home. If you've read Chialdini's Pre-Suasion, you'll already know the value of these powerful terms for retention.

You can't go back in time. But you CAN take preventive steps to stop the otherwise inevitable:

1. Create horizons for your staff;
2. Give them continuing education and opportunities to explore under the safety of your umbrella;
3. Have every coach on a contract with a non-solicitation clause;
4. Continually ask coaches about their goals (TwoBrain mentoring clients actually have software set up to help with coach career goal-setting)
5. If a coach DOES leave, ask how you can be part of their new venture
6. Use our sample blog posts (TwoBrain mentoring clients only)
7. Lean on your professional peers for support (I hope you have some.)

It's never going to be a comfortable conversation. It's an emotional issue. If you stay in front of the problem, you can usually avoid it. But if you can't, go with them.
Seeing Red in Black And White

Reading Emotions Through The Written Word

by Josh Martin, TwoBrain Mentor

In the world of social interaction, humans have a multitude of different ways to communicate. Today, I want to highlight three of them:

• Written word (via emails and texts)

• Spoken word (via an audio medium such as a phone)

• Face-to-face

We are gym owners; business men and women.

At the end of the day, being in business is simply an excuse for being in relationship with people. But ours is rare in the sense that folks frequently get to interact with the CEO on a daily basis. This means that deep emotional bonds are often formed. I truly believe that this is important to ensure the success of your clients, as the better you get to know them, the better you can shepherd them along in their journey to fitness…or whatever reason it was that they came to see you.

But that deep relationship is a double edged sword at times.

Relationships are highly emotional, for better and for worse.

For instance, when someone makes the decision to leave your gym, no matter how many times it has happened, I’ll bet that it hits you on a deeply personal level. It should if you’re human.

Well rest assured that the same is true for the person leaving as well. It is just as tough for them, many times more than they lead on.

Last year, for the first time in our gyms five year history, we raised rates. I knew there would be some backlash; people rarely like change, especially when it comes to things costing more money.

I got a few texts and emails from folks. Most wanted clarification (lesson learned - be crystal clear about exactly how things would change), but some voiced their displeasure. Taken at face value on paper, these people were angry, called my character into question, and made it seem like this decision made me a pathetic human being.
But I knew that wasn’t their true message. I can say this with certainty because the relationships we had established with people gave me insight into their real intention: they wanted their voice to be heard.

Everybody, at some point or another, will have their “thing” that they feel passionate enough about to speak up. For these folks, it was a rate change.

For others, it might be the introduction of a new service offering or your programming, and how you could do it better.

Here’s the thing about the written word: it doesn’t offer much feedback for the receiver other than being words on a screen. If someone says ‘Yes’ in response to a lengthy question, does it mean they’re being short because they are annoyed with your lack of brevity? Not one bit. Even when folks try their best to get their point across in a way that mimics the “style” you might get in person, it never works out that way.

The very nature of the written word these days, at least when it comes to back and forth communication, is that you simply can’t assume to know the emotions of the sender.

One step past the written word in terms of more emotional, and thus effective, communication is the spoken word. In speaking with someone over the phone, you can capture their tonality, voice inflections, etc - basically little social cues that give more insight into their message. Are they joking? Are they angry? Audio allows for the answering of these questions.
Finally, at the most effective end of the spectrum is interacting face to face. With audio only, you can’t read body language or facial expressions. Face to face is the best way to really get a true feel for someone’s message.

Here’s my advice when you are the sender: use the communication medium that best matches the level of emotion you want to convey.

As for being on the receiving end? Don’t read into things (see what I did there?). Take them for what they are, at face value. If you have doubts, call the person. Or better yet, schedule a time to meet face to face.

When our rate change email went out, I got an email back from one lady that said: “Wow, this really doesn’t sound like you, but I know you well enough to know that the way I’m taking it is not your intention.” I invited her to come and have a face to face chat. She brought me coffee...

And she is still a member.
**You Teach Them How To Treat You**

If someone doesn't treat you right, it's not your fault.

But it IS your responsibility.

Human behavior is learned through repetition. As kids, we push boundaries because we're trying to FIND boundaries.

"Is mom REALLY mad that I'm not cleaning up my Legos...or is this like that time when she was SORTA mad, and then we got ice cream?"

"Is my curfew REALLY 10 o'clock, or will dad start looking for me at 10:30?"

Clear boundaries help kids make better decisions. And pets. And adults.

Tired of getting members' texts at 11pm? Don't respond to them.

Members' complaints grinding you down? Don't make yourself available for complaints.

Coaches texting in class? Tell them to stop. Have consequences.

Members showing up late? Start class without them. They'll be on time.

Late cancellations for your PT sessions? Charge them.

Clients won't pay for 1:1 training? Stop giving it to a few of them for free.

Changing behavior isn't about being a jerk. Behavior is a learned process of back-and-forth responses. If a client is complaining about prices, it's because you've taught them to complain about prices.

Want members to treat you as a professional? Stop treating THEM as your friends.

Everyone learns. Every second.

Teach them how to treat you.
"Gentlemen, this is a football." That was Lombardi.

"Gentlemen, this is how to put your socks on before a basketball game." This one was Wooden.

Your staff is highly-trained. If you're following our Staff Meeting Template, you're already choosing monthly focal points and study materials.

But every year, it's wise to review the very basics.

"Start the class on time."

"Wear a shirt that says 'coach' on it."

"Don't eat while you coach."

"Sign EVERYONE in."
"Give everyone 90 seconds of 1-on-1 time in every class."

"Teach the WHY of the workout."

Yes, your veterans should know all of it. They probably don't.

After hearing it once, they SHOULD deliver consistently every time. They probably don't.

You should do it the same way every time, too. But - well, I don't. And my staff follows my example, not my instructions.

As new staff members are added, it's easy to assume they know everything. We project OUR knowledge onto everyone else. Reinforce your foundation: take one monthly staff meeting each year and cover "common sense".

We have dozens of Staff Training modules in our program, so you don't have to teach all of these lessons yourself.

**PODCAST EPISODE 63: OPEX**

![OPEX Podcast](image)

Today we are joined by two very special guests from **OPEX**: James “OPT” Fitzgerald and Jim Crowell. James Fitzgerald was one of my primary motivators when I first started CrossFit. James started OPEX soon after moving to Arizona which has become one of the most popular training programs in the world. Now on the eve of the
rollout of the OPEX physical location gyms, James and Jim join me to discuss the OPEX model, how it works, program design, and flaws they see in the group model.

In this Interview:

- What IS the OPEX model?
- The value of 1:1 design and coaching
- Pros and Cons of group training, according to Fitzgerald
- How to get started with OPEX (click HERE for the Coach’s Toolkit)

Plus:

- The long term vision for OPEX
- OPEX marketing and outreach strategies.
- Assessment and Coaching Courses.

About James:

James is the founder of OPEX (Formerly OPT) and The International Center for Fitness. He is a husband, father, and fitness athlete with 20 years of experience in coaching and nutritional lifestyle balancing techniques. James found his desire and passion to understand fitness through assessment, testing, and research within the industry. He has had many years of experience as an athlete from childhood to adult where he was crowned “Fittest on Earth” as the winner of the 2007 CrossFit Games.

About Jim:

After a brief stint in the financial arena, Jim followed his heart and made his way back into the fitness business by managing several facilities in Pittsburgh. It was here where he spent hours learning and testing coaching and business principles that he still implements today. He has built his reputation around three main points: hard work, progress, and fulfillment. After his tenure in Pittsburgh he joined OPEX where he now has the privilege of working with business owners and coaches from all over the world.

Timeline:

1:31 – James OPT Fitzgerald & Jim Crowell Introduction

5:10 – Optimum Performance Training to OPEX. The Story.

7:47 – What do the day to day operation of the OPEX gym look like?

8:30 – Jim’s story and how he fits into OPEX
9:48 – What is the OPEX model and how is it different?

10:41 – What does the intake process look like for a new client in the OPEX gym?

12:24 – How does an absolute beginner learn when they are brand new?

13:17 – Movements for a brand new client post first assessment

15:15 – How to determine when a client is ready for more complex exercises?

18:32 – Is there a point where you restrict your clients from pushing further?

20:30 – OPEX gym marketing and outreach strategies

23:12 – How frequently is the ongoing prescription for a client?

25:27 – Helping clients realize that the gym is individualized

26:44 – Re assessing with clients and upping their training program

28:44 – How OPEX incorporates nutrition and broader lifestyle choices for clients

32:30 – An example of a burned out client and how to give them a break

34:18 – High intensity fitness and its effect on coaches

36:46 – Is there a place for individual and group training in the same gym.

39:03 – Ensuring that each client is receiving equal attention in a group workout session

41:03 – The important relationship between a coach and a client

42:01 – How to deal with a client that needs more attention than others

44:09 – The business model for brick and mortar OPEX gyms

46:28 – The long term vision for OPEX

48:50 – How to get your brand name out there to the masses

50:07 – Fine tuning the structure of OPEX for continued scaling in the future

52:48 – How is OPEX best positioned to meet emerging opportunities and join the tribe

54:45 – Certain things that OPEX used to recommend but no longer does
57:35 – What is retention like for brick and mortar OPEX locations

60:57 – Who determines the pricing model for each OPEX gym

64:05 – What systems come with the OPEX license?

67:24 – What is the coach’s compensation model in an OPEX facility?

69:01 – Who are the mentors to James and Jim?

73:56 – Best advice for entrepreneurs in the fitness industry

**PODCAST EPISODE 64: TRAINING THINK TANK**

Sometimes I invite a guest on the show because they are nowhere near as popular as they should be. This is the case with today’s guest, Max El-Hag. You will hear a lot of humility from Max in this episode but don’t mistake it as he has profound knowledge of the fitness industry. In this episode we talk about his company, Training Think Tank and how it is helping athletes of all sports connect with coaches who are able to advise and train them to the highest abilities. We talk strategy, methodology, and more related to his business and life!
In this Interview:

- What are the first steps to creating an online training program
- Testing Philosophy with remote clients
- Do athletes need an individual mindset to be successful?
- Plus:
  - Finding the right balance with the commoditization of intensity
  - The one message all CrossFit gyms need to hear
  - Building nutrition into remote training programs

About Max:

Max has had a long career as an athlete first being inspired by his father who was an Olympic fighter. After qualifying for the CrossFit games both as a team and making it to regionals as an individual, Max decided that coaching is what truly inspired him. At this point Max coached many clients from models and future NFL stars to ultra-runners and CrossFit athletes. He now runs Training Think Tank, a company that focuses on remote coaching, educational courses, and online programs for athletes and coaches.

Timeline:

0:58 – Training Think Tank introduction

2:41 – The lead up to Training Think Tank with Max

4:52 – Finding CrossFit for the first time

8:05 – Starting out as a personal training prior to CrossFit

9:18 – CrossFit principles mixing into training for fighters

11:10 – How Training Think Tank has grown to where it is today

14:07 – Training Think Tank from a global perspective in today’s world

16:45 – What are the first steps to starting an online training program?

19:09 – Tools needed to start a remote coaching program

20:30 – Testing Philosophy with remote clients according to their goals
23:56 – How often should you be retesting clients on their progress?
25:27 – Building nutrition into a remote training program
28:18 – Keeping workouts nontraditional leading up to the CrossFit Games
32:41 – Different training programs for games athlete’s vs non games athletes
37:00 – Finding the right balance with the commoditization of intensity
41:00 – The top solutions gym owners take away from Max’s program
45:03 – Recommending group training to individual clients
46:20 – Do games athletes have to have an individual mindset to be successful
47:50 – Firing individual clients when it’s not working out
49:43 – Keeping clients compliant with the program
51:06 – Giving athletes a win when you know they are down
54:49 – Creating a template for your clients leading up to the CrossFit Open
56:10 – Establishing a format of training for your gym
59:18 – Where should a client look to do individual training in a group training gym?
61:03 – How to implement a culture of one on one training in your gym
63:16 – The one message all CrossFit gyms need to hear

Contact Max:

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I am always fascinated by the mechanics and emotions of the entrepreneurial brain. There are a lot of highs and lows that you need to buffer against. I am also really into the tools that we can use to be better at it by avoiding shiny objects; dealing with stressors, lawsuits, copy cats; how we can meet people with confidence; and avoid feeling like a salesman. Instead of just one guest, we have four for this episode!

We talk to Sherman Merricks of CrossFit Dynasty, Tommy Hackebruck of Ute CrossFit, Craig Hysell of Conviction Training, and Josh Price of Loco CrossFit all about the entrepreneurial mindset and the tools and skills they use keep their eyes on the prize, keep from being derailed, and avoid stress. Join us for this action packed interview and be sure to take notes!

In this Interview:

- The importance of Focus and its role in the entrepreneurial mindset
- Why you should have an emotional reason to succeed
- Moving on from anger and focusing on what you can control

Plus:
o When to bypass diplomacy and put your foot down
o Achieving success by avoiding cognitive overload
o The importance of discipline for the entrepreneurial mindset
o What IS success?

Today’s Guests:

Sherman Merricks of Dynasty CrossFit

Tommy Hackenbruck of Ute CrossFit

Craig Hysell of Conviction Training

Josh Price of Loco CrossFit

Timeline:

1:31 – An introduction to the entrepreneurial mindset
4:24 – The first component of the entrepreneurial mindset is focus
6:46 – How to deal with too many opportunities to choose from
7:39 – Having an emotional reason to succeed
9:07 – Sherman Merricks on setting goals and staying focused
10:31 – An example of an emotional goal to keep you on track and keep you motivated
12:45 – What to do next after hitting an emotional goal?
13:52 – Achieving success with cognitive overload
15:34 – Learning to focus on what’s important the hard way
18:08 – Tommy Hackenbruck on focus and obsession despite the circumstances
20:24 – Channeling the inherit skill of focus in the right direction
23:02 – The importance of discipline for the entrepreneurial mindset
26:44 – Dealing with the extraordinary stress of copiers
31:38 – Being pissed for five minutes and then moving on
34:59 – Spending $170,000 training coaches before learning how to filter
36:18 – Josh Price of Loco CrossFit introduction
40:37 – Is help more powerful than anger?
44:11 – A practical way to get into a steady mindset from a state of anger
47:43 – The art of practicing not to be your first thought
48:39 – Having success is necessary for motivation
51:22 – Can motivation occur after being discouraged?
52:24 – Flipping the tables on success
56:46 – Being at rock bottom is a huge advantage
57:51 – The romantic notion of the entrepreneurial grind is false
58:27 – Craig Hysell on how people should define success in the CrossFit industry
59:53 – What are the steps to determine what success is
62:01 – Ineffective leadership by asking the wrong questions
64:04 – When to bypass diplomacy and put your foot down.
65:10 – The best favor you can do for people is to tell them what you want them to do
70:14 – How to choose which ideas to focus on as an entrepreneur
72:44 – The process of saying hell yes or no

Books mentioned during this episode:

Extreme Ownership – U.S. Navy Seals by Jocko Willink

Good to Great by Jim Collins

Gates of Fire by Steven Pressfield

The War of Art by Steven Pressfield

Turning Pro by Steven Pressfield
How To Charge What You're Worth

They need more money to live a healthy lifestyle; run a sustainable gym; and keep their members healthy for the next 30 years.

On the other hand, they're worried about what clients will pay for their service. This is usually unfounded. But if a coach underprices her value, she won't be teaching the air squat for long.

Here's how to charge what you're worth:

1. Be worth it.

This sounds a bit backhanded, but the top reason many coaches can't charge more is because they're not worth more.
Your value to a client doesn't come from what you know; it comes from how you make them feel.
Give every client 1:1 attention at every class. You're coaching a room full of individuals, not one entity with multiple parts.

Review their goals in person several times per year. If you don't know where they're going, you can't lead them anywhere.

Look like a professional. Dress better than your clients are dressed. Wear a "staff" shirt. Don't sip coffee while coaching. Run to fetch equipment. Smile, whether you feel like it or not.

Give them your undivided attention. Stay off your phone. Don't carry on a conversation with others while coaching a 1:1 client. Don't coach "the room", but each person within the room.

Establish your expertise...but don't barf all over them.
Give them a taste of future knowledge every session. Use 1-2 technical terms every class...no more, but no less. Teach them to know more than any other coach in town, and they won't have a reason to leave.

2. Don't give discounts or "sales".
Price fluctuations erode trust and encourage price-shopping. Consistency is more important than anything else.
Your current clients are more important than any future clients. Everyone deserves the same excellent service; they should pay the same rate for it.

3. **Base your rate off your service...not your competition.**
After over 1000 one-on-one gym evaluations, I can promise you this: the other guy probably had no idea how to price his membership. Why place YOUR business on the same shaky foundation by copying—or worse, pricing yourself cheaper? The TwoBrain Family is FULL of stories of gyms who are the most expensive in their area. Read "Twofer Night At The Discount Steakhouse" in the CrossFit Journal.

4. **Know who your clients are.**
You are probably not your best client. Your best clients come from the top 10% of professionals in your area. They make more than you do, but have different constraints (schedule, family, stress.) Your best clients have different goals (fat loss, stress reduction, "turn off my brain") than you do.
The "average" household income in your area is irrelevant.
To determine who your BEST clients are, and what THEY want, use the "Pumpkin Plan" formula outlined in this podcast.

5. **Stop projecting your own budget onto your clients.**
They make more than you do (for now).
They will pay more than you would (for now).

6. **Know what establishes value and what erodes value.**
Price anchors establish value.
Classes starting on time establishes value.
Professional coaches establish value.
Clear, attractive branding establishes value.
A good website establishes value.
Shiny equipment and floors establish value.
Dirty bathrooms erode value. But they don't CREATE value: they're just essential. No one looks for the gym with the cleanest bathrooms, but they'll quit the gym with the dirty bathrooms.
The same goes for not answering the phone or returning emails. These aren't bonuses; they're foundations.

7. **Set a limit.**
The law of supply and demand applies to your business.
You have limited supplies of attention, time and space.
Know your limit. Don't chase infinity.
Build your prices, staff needs, and purchases with that limit in mind.
Recruit and reject clients and staff with that limit in mind, too.

8. **Live up to it every second.**
A client's experience is only as good as their last exposure.
You're not married. You probably won't enforce the contract they signed (if you're still using contracts.) They're not trapped.
What you know doesn't matter. How you make them feel DOES.
Fifteen minutes before an appointment or class, you're on stage.
Put down the shaker bottle.
Put your Coach shirt on.
Smile.

We mathematically determine your optimal rate in our Incubator. Most of the time, it's a higher number than the owner has been charging. Visit our FREE HELP Center to watch some free videos and learn what to charge; how to charge it; and how to fix it if you made a mistake.

PODCAST EPISODE 66: TOP 10 HABITS OF EXCELLENT COACHES

Ray Gowlett leads our UpCoach program. He is a former MMA fighter and motocross rider. In addition to this he is a big questioner of authority specifically within the education system. Ray in many ways is a shit disturber and what he doesn’t like is dogma, fake research, and unqualified opinion. If you are part of our UpCoach program you’ve spoken to Ray and you know he bounces around a lot. Today we are talking about the ten basic habits that every coach should have. The UpCoach program develops these qualities as he has learned himself so if you are looking for help within your gym be sure to reach out. Ray’s lectures at the Two Brain Summit this summer will be amazing. If you have not already register do it now!

Top 10 Habits Every Coach Should Adopt:
- Limit your coaching cues when working with clients
- Be an expert in personality types so that you can relate to clients effectively
- Adapt your coaching style to each client and personality
- Give clients what they want and not what you want
- See the big picture for your business and your client
- Eliminate arrogance within your coaching style
- Be wary of the “next big thing”
- Learn and become educated to understand evidence and research
- Understand the different needs and positions of your clients
- Learn the “bend, don’t break” principles relation to exercise

About Ray:

Ray Gowlett is a former professional MMA fighter, motocross racer and current research skeptic. His lab contains almost 600 subjects (it’s a high school) and Ray is constantly seeking new ways to teach and coach. Many of these kids are high-level athletes; just as many don’t want to be in the class at all. He’s always trying new things, but this cross-pollination of students means every innovation has to satisfy two standards:

1. It has to make people fitter;
2. It has to make people happier.

Ray coined the phrase we repeat at Catalyst often: “Exercise until you’re happy.” It’s the base of the hierarchy he teaches students. He also teaches research skepticism: how to read and rank the value of “research.” Imagine a generation of people who believe what they read on Facebook: that’s what’s coming, except for the students in Ray’s classes.

Timeline:

1:33 – Ray Gowlett Introduction
2:44 – The top ten really simple coaching habits every coach should adopt
4:02 – The importance of having mentors and coaches throughout your life
4:46 – Coaching Habit 1: Keeping your coaching cues to three or less
9:26 – Coaching Habit 2: Learn about personality types to effectively adapt to clients
11:03 – Personality tools to determine your personality type
12:33 – Coaching Habit 3: Being a different coach for every person
15:23 – Coaching Habit 4: Give clients what they want and not what you want

17:25 – Coaching Habit 5: See the big picture for your business and clients

19:58 – Coaching Habit 6: Eliminate arrogant coaching

22:52 – Ridiculous and arrogant posts from CrossFit box owners

23:35 – Coaching Habit 7: Be weary of the next big thing

25:35 – Cyclical knowledge and trends within the fitness industry

26:23 – Coaching Habit 8: Learning about understanding evidence and research

29:49 – Coaching Habit 9: Sharpening the saw and being critical of new ideas

31:38 – Coaching Habit 10: Understand all the different needs and positions of your clients

33:20 – Understanding projection bias within your program

35:41 – Coaching Habit 11: Be the voice your client wants to hear

38:38 – The way in which you should talk to your clients

39:46 – Coaching Habit 12: Bend don’t break principle

41:26 – The many types of conjugated periodization

45:04 – Two Brain Business Summit Registration

Links from the episode:

https://www.16personalities.com/

http://sportforlife.ca/qualitysport/stages/

http://twobrainbusiness.com/product/upcoach/
If you want something done, give it to a busy person.

We all dream of a blank slate; an unscheduled day; a weekend with nothing on our calendar. But we've all spent a Sunday evening looking back and thinking, "Where did the time GO?" and wondering how we frittered away 48 hours without accomplishing anything.

When my gyms were new, I'd spend 15 hours there every day. I was "busy" - but didn't make any progress for the first three years. People came and went. I didn't do any marketing, or planning, or budgeting. I just let business happen to me. I wasn't in control of my business.

When I got a mentor and started to TAKE control of my gyms, I wondered, "How will I do all this extra work?" And clients in our Incubator sometimes ask the same question: "How can I give Chris one hour per day when my days are already FULL?"

My mentor gave me a deadline and a clear path. Accountability and clarity are the best gifts I ever got (and now, that's what I provide to other gym owners.)

Ironically, those are exactly what I sell in my gym business. But EVERYONE needs a coach.

If I say, "Add a Facebook retargeting pixel to your landing page," you'll say, "That's amazing. Sounds super powerful. Gotta do that." And I guarantee you won't do it.
It's effective. It's important. I can even make it easy for you (there's a full walkthrough video in the Incubator.) But you STILL won't do it...unless I say, "I'll check on your progress tomorrow, and we'll be using this on our call next Tuesday."

Deadlines are a positive constraint. But a budget can be one, too.

For example, if you can only afford one rower, you look at programming differently:

"I want to alternate steady-state aerobic work with higher-intensity intervals. What tools are at my disposal?"

Space can also be a positive constraint.

When we started playing with CrossFit, our gym was above a ladies' clothing store. Not the fun kind of clothing...and definitely not the fun kind of lady. On our first day, a client dropped a 75lbs snatch...and we knocked out all their light fixtures.

After that, we had to figure out how to achieve maximal explosive potential without using technical lifts. So we did, and our programming has been better since.

Many people benefit from having a dog, because it gets them out of bed on the weekend, or outside after dinner.

The beauty of positive constraints: you don't have to wait for them to appear. You can create them to better leverage your time, money and energy.

You can put the new rowers on the 2018 shopping list, and diversify your programming.

You can get a mentor and get some trACTION.

You can get a PLAN and follow it, instead of reading about ideas on Facebook.

You can choose the smaller space, and get people REALLY fit.

Get a deadline, and get busy. If you're working a 12-hour day and NOT moving your business forward, lack of freedom isn't the problem: too much freedom IS.

Knowing Your Clients' "Why"
We all love seeing a new face walk into our business. We'll find the first opportunity to go over and say hi, and probably ask, “how can I help?”

Often, the new face will answer that they're looking to learn about CrossFit. We happily tell them all about how fantastic CF is. Then we introduce them to their new community, and point them toward a lifelong path of optimal health.

That new face might be interested. They might even come back and sign up for an introductory class. They could stay for six months. Then they leave.

When this happens, we wonder what we did wrong. The problem is that we were so focused on the "what" of CF, we forgot to ask the new face the single most important question:

"Why?"

I'm always seeking out my clients' "why". Why did they start at my gym? Why do they stay? Why do they work so hard? Why do they come at the same time, five days a week? And if we haven't done our job right, why did they leave?

If I can answer these kinds of questions, I can not only put my clients on a path to achieving their goals, but I can keep them engaged in my business for years rather than months. Knowing my clients' real motivations allows me to develop new services and opportunities to meet their needs.
Here's an example. I have a client, let's call her "Jean," who has a history of knee osteoarthritis. In the past, she competed in collegiate-level sports. In the three years she's been at the gym, I've learned that Jean's "why" is all about functionality. She's committed to regaining mobility and movement so she can continue to play sports recreationally and perform ordinary activities like running up and down stairs, and sitting and standing comfortably.

I initially had Jean on a modified individual program that addressed her mobility issues. After several months I videoed her accomplishing her first squat to parallel depth in years, reinforcing her achievement at meeting her goal. Jean's doing regular programming now, and my coaches do a great job paying attention to her challenges. They support her in working towards her next goal of a 20" box jump, something she says she couldn't have imagined trying before finding my gym.

From a business perspective, I realised I can provide services for Jean and many other clients like her who are getting older and dealing with bodies that need rebuilding after years of poor functioning. Modalities such as naturopathy, osteopathy, chiropractic and massage therapy are all potentially valuable treatments that can improve an athlete's performance and overall health. By sub-leasing space at my gym to health service providers, I present clients like Jean another tool to address her "why", and further strengthen her relationship with my gym.

Asking "Why?" is as important on Day 365 as it is on Day 1. Members can lose sight of their goals over time and only continue attending "because of the community." It's our job to help them remember why they started, and continually assist them by setting and achieving new goals. Pursuing and realising their targets will keep your clients engaged with you and your staff, cause them to identify their success with you, and be less likely to leave.

I have members that have been with me since I opened the gym 15 years ago. I learned their "why" and continue to ask them for a new "why" to refresh their engagement. The lifetime value of these clients is over $40,000 each. What is the value of "why" at your gym?
Today we are staying warm by the fire and doing a long overdue Q+A session.

We have a pretty long list of emails that we get after every show and I want to make sure that I give my attention to some of these because they are really good! I won’t be addressing questions addressed on previous Q & A episodes as those have already been talked about however, be sure to check out **Episode 30** for more great questions and answers:

If you need help, you can watch our free videos that will help you [transform your business here](#).

Be sure to check out **Two Brain Business 2.0** on Audible.com!

In this Question and Answer Session:

- What are the things I wish I had updated in the original Two Brain Business audiobook?
- Is adding an “open gym” service to your CrossFit box a mistake? When is it the right move?
- The “employee vs contractor” debate for a CrossFit box
- Why do I always say, “Ask your clients what they want” instead of “How to give your clients what they need.”
What are my top tips for content marketing?

Why should you pay for the mentoring program when I publish so much stuff for free?

How do I fill CrossFit Kids classes?

Who are my mentors and why is having a mentor important?

Why do I want to be a landlord instead of coach?

What should you follow the intramural open with?

Why do I talk about profit so much? Isn’t that secondary to how many clients you have?

Why does Help First talk about other service industry businesses?

Timeline:

0:57 – Question and answer session introduction

2:11 – What are the things I wish I had updated in the Two Brain Business audiobook?

2:58 – Is adding an open gym service to your CrossFit box a mistake? When is it a good idea?

5:28 – The “employee vs contractor” debate for a CrossFit box

6:53 – Why do I always say “ask your clients what they want” instead of “Here’s how to give your clients what they need.”

10:33 – Why it is important to also ask your staff what THEY want in their job

11:15 – My top tips for content marketing

12:16 – The first rule for content marketing: don’t wait

13:25 – The second rule of content production: don’t repeat yourself.

13:49 – The third rule of content production: treat all of your content as fishing nets

15:53 – The number four rule of content production: repeat yourself

16:58 – The number five rule of content production: it doesn’t have to be perfect

18:09 – The number six rule of content production: be a storyteller

19:33 – The seventh rule of content marketing: keep it simple

20:02 – Why should you pay for the mentoring program when I publish so much for free?
21:56 – How do you fill CrossFit Kids classes?

24:55 – Helping parents overcome their fear of CrossFit for their kids

25:38 – Who are my mentors and how do they help?

28:30 – Two Brain Summit and modeling’s place in the mentorship process

30:20 – Why do I want to be a landlord instead of coach?

32:26 – What do you follow the intramural open with to keep that momentum going?

34:45 – Why do I talk about profit so much?

36:45 – Why does Help First talk about other service industry businesses?

Get Out Of Your Own Way

It’s 5 a.m. on Monday morning, and you’ve decided this is going to be a Productive Day - maybe even an all-caps PRODUCTIVE DAY.

You’re whipping the ghee into your coffee, going through the mental checklist of all the business development tasks you’re going to work on today once you get to the gym and get things going. You’ve got a cool idea for a member contest and need to sort out the details and get it announced on your website, newsletter and blasted on social media. There’s also the issue of your lease coming up for renewal in a year, and you’re considering expanding by moving to a new space.

You arrive at the gym as your trusted 6 a.m. coach is transcribing the WOD on the whiteboard and looking after the early birds doing their mobility work. You sit down in your office and listen to the voicemail, making a note to get back to the two potential new clients and the juice supplier who needs your credit card for this month’s order. You open the gym’s “info@” email account and start sorting through the spam and answering the customer information questions. Soon you’re interrupted by a client who pokes their head in to let you know there’s a leaky tap in the men's locker room. After dealing with that, you notice that the towel bin is full again and the soap needs refilling. You’re right there, so you take care of it. On the way back to the office a client pulls you aside to ask if they can upgrade their membership, so you happily bring them into the office to process their payment.

It's time for your morning meeting with your two managers, and it takes a little longer than you'd like explaining to them what next month's programming is going to entail. While the meeting was going on your Facebook page blew up with alerts, so you grab the assistant manager who helps with social media and describe how to moderate a discussion between members about shaving reps that is getting a little too heated for your liking.
You look up at the clock: it's almost noon and you haven't even started on that contest, never mind called the landlord about the lease.

Sound familiar?

If it does, you're not alone. Research suggests only 30% of managers believe they are good at delegation (1), which is a critical obstacle blocking your path to real leadership and taking your business to the next level.

Delegating is more than just giving tasks to your staff; it's empowering them to make decisions and execute the business plan. Not only does this free you as an owner to devote your energy to high-level directing that will grow your business, but it also develops leadership skills in your people and strengthens the whole team.

EIGHT LEVELS OF DELEGATION

1. "Do it like this."

Instructing your staff this way makes sure it's "done right," which satisfies the perfectionist in you, but leaves no freedom for your delegatee to make decisions themselves.

2. "Look into this and tell me the situation. I'll decide."

Your staff is empowered to give you analysis but not recommend action. You've still kept the responsibility of evaluating the options and making the decision.

3. "Look into this and tell me the situation. We'll decide together."

It's a subtle difference, but here you're enabling the decision-making process to be shared, which promotes development in your staff.

4. "Tell me the situation and what help you need from me in assessing and handling it, after which we'll decide."

Here, your staff has the extra responsibility to ask themselves questions you would have posed at the previous level of delegation, combined with shared decision-making.

5. "Give me your analysis of the situation and the pros and cons of your recommendation. I'll let you know whether you can go ahead."

You're acting as a check on your staff's discretion but show trust in their ability to make sound decisions and implement solutions. Be careful that your approval doesn't delay the process, which can create frustration.
6. "Make your decision and inform me of it, then go ahead unless I say not to."

By default you're in agreement with your staff member, which empowers them even further. It also removes barriers to action if they know that they can act unless they hear otherwise by a certain deadline.

7. "Decide and implement the solution, then let me know what happened."

You save even more time with this level of responsibility while building in follow-up and feedback. This coaching method builds confidence and develops big-picture decision-making skills that align with your business values.

8. "Decide and take action - it's all you!"

This level moves entirely into the realm of mentorship. You provide feedback on a more periodic basis and grant strategic responsibility. Your staff defines projects, tasks, implementation and analysis, making the necessary decisions in their area of responsibility. This highest level of delegation is appropriate for training a successor, co-owner, or someone preparing to strike out on their own and build their own gym!

Your challenge is to push yourself to progress from a do-everything or a level 1 delegator to levels 5 and beyond. You've hired great people who you want to be challenged and grow, just like your clients challenge themselves and grow in your gym. It's time to build their strengths, get out of your own way and free yourself to lead your business into the future you envision.

**Abundance**

The greatest lesson I ever learned from Dave Tate had nothing to do with a barbell.

In November 2015, I mustered every powerlifting connection I could find to get me an interview with Dave. I set up my recording equipment, made a long list of questions, and paced for a half hour before starting the call.

**The podcast interview** was recorded and published here. But then I made the podcaster's biggest error: I stopped recording before we hung up.

After saying my thanks, the conversation continued. Dave asked ME a few questions, and we chatted a bit about TwoBrain. I asked him a question about how he protected his intellectual property: Dave publishes a LOT of content online, and I've seen verbatim copies of his blog posts everywhere. In 2015, that was already happening to me. So I asked, "How do you stop the copycats?"

He said, "I don't."
And that's when I should have hit "record" again. But I was too enthralled by what he said next.

"The best people will find you, Chris. They're going to try other mentoring programs first, and that's okay. The top ten percent will jump from coach to coach until they find you, and then they'll stick."

This way of thinking is called the Abundance Mentality, and it's common among all the mentors I've had in my life. Here are the main points:

1. You don't need everyone.
2. Excellence is your baseline, but it's not enough.
3. People are smart.
4. The best will find you.

This has been a hard lesson. Every few weeks, I get a friendly message from a friend:

"This guy is copying you. See this screen shot."

Or this:

To those who care enough to mention it, thank you for your diligence. You already know this lesson, though I struggle to learn it daily--and have been for years.

When I opened my first CrossFit gym, it was actually my second location. Our PT studio was doing really well. But our "box" was slow to grow.

I thought the usual niche clients would jump all over the CrossFit idea. Firemen, in particular, seemed to form a large portion of box clientele everywhere else. But our local firemen were all fans of P90X.

So I wrote a bunch of blog posts telling them how wrong they were.

Anyone visiting the Catalyst site around 2008 would have seen them: "Stop Wasting Your Time", "You need a REAL coach, not a DVD"...and worse. The message, to the readers: "You're dumb. I'm smarter than you. Stop being dumb and pay me instead." Of course, that didn't work, and I missed a massive opportunity: firemen quickly got bored of P90X, and instead of seeing CrossFit as the next logical step, they looked for someone who made them feel smart.
That last story is a prime example of the Scarcity Mindset: the opposite of Abundance. Scarcity tells us:

1. We're playing a zero-sum game (there are only so many people who want our service)

2. People aren't smart enough to see the difference between our service and another inferior one

3. No one will ever change their mind.

4. We need to fight to get (and keep) everyone we can.

Dave was right: over the last decade, many people in Sault Ste. Marie have "graduated" from bootcamps or P90X to our gym. Many have started with a diet or "cleanse" before they started CrossFit. We weren't the first step in their journey; but we didn't need to be.

And we now have members of the TwoBrain family who have been through virtually every consulting platform, business system and marketing plan on the planet. When the best join our group, it makes us stronger.

This is why I don't send legal letters for IP theft: readers of copied blog posts eventually find their way to the source, even if it takes them years. Clients of local "bootcamps" eventually want more novelty and challenge than burpees alone can provide. And some actually NEED bariatric surgery to gain the courage to join my gym.

Emerson said, "Heartily know, when demigods go, the gods arrive." To me, this means it's okay to pass on some good clients, because they're probably stopping the perfect clients from joining.

Dan Martell told me, "Five years from now, these other guys will be gone. They're not the best, so they won't be around unless you want them to be." He was buying shares in a CrossFit gym at the time.

Denis Turcotte (my first business mentor) asked, "Do you want to spend your time helping people, or spend your time in court?"

And Tate said it best of all: "The best will always find the best."
This is an encore performance of TwoBrain Radio.

Here’s why: every week or so, we host a private webinar for those in the TwoBrain mentoring group. This week, we’re talking with a Facebook Conversions Expert, for example. Members of the TwoBrain family can watch his how-to, ask questions, and build their retargeting campaigns at home.

Many of these private webinars are later released as podcast episodes. But some—like today’s—have a huge visual component, because we’re showing actionable steps instead of just talking about Facebook advertising. Some are very high-level, and require the level of business fluency we teach in the Incubator program.

Jeff Burlingame is owner of Friction CrossFit in MI. But he spent most of his career managing GloboGyms, where he taught staff how to do more Personal Training business. At one point, he had 160 trainers working under him.

Jeff studied sales techniques for a decade, but after reading “Help First”, he realized the best path was to simply help his clients by recommending the best option for them. Now he combines an objection-based approach with the TwoBrain “No-Sweat Intro” and the results are staggering: he’s already hit 250% of his 2015 revenue in 2016, and he still has a month to go.
Jeff mentions his “WhyNot” sheet, and walks through each question in the podcast. He’s sharing the sheet with TwoBrain mentoring clients for free.

In this Interview:

- Jeff’s CrossFit story
- Learn how to sell more personal training sessions at your box
- Different types of personal training sessions and how to tailor these to your clients
- Breakdown of a proper client assessment and needs analysis
- Jeff’s “WhyNot List” is covered in depth

Plus:

- Balancing family and business
- Selling Treadmills and badmouthing CrossFit
- Birth of Friction CrossFit

About Jeff Burlingame:

Jeff Burlingame started out playing Rugby at Michigan State where he received his B.S. in Exercise Science and Fitness Leadership. Wanting to continue with sports and athletics, he became a sales director and personal trainer director for many leading gyms throughout the country.

As Jeff’s career advanced and time spent at home with the family became less and less, he was ready for a change. It was at this time that he decided to open Friction CrossFit. Through many ups and downs Friction CrossFit is now a successful CrossFit affiliate based out of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Jeff’s Why Not List, for overcoming rejection from new clients is available to members of the Two Brain Business Family exclusively. Be sure to check it out!

Remember to fill out the 2016 affiliate survey. This important survey allows us to better serve affiliates and also allows some time for reflection on where your business has been and where it is headed.

Timeline:

1:32 Jeff Burlingame Introduction

3:14 The Jeff Burlingame Story

4:40 First Personal Training Experience

7:28 Finding CrossFit
As business owners, we focus on competitive advantages. These are attributes, what I would categorise as "things" inside your business model. Price point is an obvious competitive ground on which gyms try to attract more customers. Other competitive advantages could include towel service, free parking, or the newest equipment.

The problem with competing on these "things" is that you're always chasing. There will always be a gym who prices their onboarding program lower than you. Someone will always offer a fancier reception area, have a better URL for their website, or have a cooler gym swag to buy.
But only you can be you, and show your clients they matter - speaking from the heart with your client in mind. Every person craves connection, and this starts with you and your coaches. Authenticity is a strategic advantage you will never have to chase.

CrossFit, like many fitness industries, can come across as elitist and intimidating for many of our potential customers. Our coaches, the faces of our business, are often dedicated athletes with years of coaching education, experience and training behind them - after all, these are attributes we look to hire. Contrast that with those who occupy the largest market for our services: people who may never have done a push-up in their lives, or are battling illness or chronic dysfunction. How can our coaches connect authentically with them?

When you think about how we truly connect with others, the "things" I spoke about earlier are irrelevant. Sharing towel service or a new set of Concept rowers won't build connection with your members. Community one of the most powerful reasons CrossFitters stay with their training because within their community, an athlete shares the emotional experience of pushing through their particular limits or learning new skills.

Every one of us has felt the fear of trying a new physical skill that we saw others master, and we worried we couldn't accomplish the same. Every one of us has been injured and felt the frustration of being unable to do basic physical movements and the vulnerability of having our egos exposed. We've all made bad life choices that have led to holes that we had to dig ourselves out of and recover from the negative consequences.

These are the imperfections we can all own and share with our members. We don't need to be perfect to be successful gym owners. We don't need our coaches to be perfect to be great coaches. Our imperfections form the basis of our ability to empathise with every single person who walks into our gym. When your members see that your gym is a place where you, your staff and the membership can be authentic and connect more strongly, they will trust and feel loyal to the gym - a loyalty that can't be beaten with towel service.

Moreover, decisions about your business become more clear when you're coming from an authentic place. If it doesn't fit with your values, you're not going to waste your time. You have a clear picture of what makes you a better solution for more clients looking for fitness and health and every decision to make aligns with those goals.

The power of your authenticity will connect with the people you employ and the people you serve, inspiring trust: this is your biggest strategic advantage.
Dan Martell is one of my OWN mentors.
Last September, I traveled to the Archangel summit in Toronto, Canada to listen to Seth Godin, Gary Vaynerchuk and Robin Sharma. As lunchtime rolled around, I wanted to leave and get a sandwich; but then Dan Martell was introduced.
His talk was so compelling in the first TWO minutes that I stopped short of the door and sat back down.
When I finally DID go for lunch, my phone died. I didn’t check my messages for six hours. When I did, I discovered several missed text messages from Dan himself.
Dan is a CrossFitter. His coach saw my post about attending Archangel, and texted Dan to meet “the CrossFit business guy.”
I’m now part of Dan’s mastermind group—15 entrepreneurs from all over North America who are growing their business from the $2 to $5 million mark.
On the podcast today, Dan is going to be talking about how he helps entrepreneurs obtain better focus, scale their business, and maintain their entrepreneurial confidence.
This is not my typical “how-to” episode, but there are almost a dozen strategies you can use TODAY to become better at business, relationships and life.
Like me, Dan prioritizes “perfect day” thinking instead of “just do more work”. After all, more work isn’t the goal: a better life IS.

Make time to watch the video below before you get too deep here.

In this Interview:

- Dan’s story from juvenile trouble to business success
- How to break down problems and create value for your business and community
- How to determine whether a business is scalable or not
- Ways to signal really high value when attracting big clients

Plus:

- Why it is easier to 10X a business than to 2X a business
- How Dan is helping his 20 year old cousin scale his tree trimming business
- The true essence of business and creating a better world

About Dan:

Dan Martell is an accomplished entrepreneur from Canada and founder of Clarity, a venture backed startup that makes it easy to connect with top business minds over the phone. It was recently acquired by Startups.co.

He previously is the co-founder of Flowtown, a San Fransisco based social marketing product which raised funding and grew to over 50,000 small business customers and was eventually acquired by Demandforce in 2011.

In 2012 he was named Canada’s top angel investor having completed over 33 investments with companies like Udemy, Intercom, and Unbounce.
He believes “You can only keep what you give away” and is heavily involved in many charitable organizations and community events.

Timeline:
2:45 – Dan Martell Introduction
6:16 – Dan’s story from juvenile trouble to business success
8:02 – The path to success after facing both jail and a long stint in rehab
9:42 – Breaking down problems and creating value for your business and community
11:25 – Why is it easier to 10X a business than to 2X a business
14:04 – Forcing yourself to consider whether a business is scalable
15:30 – The number one thing you need to scale a business
16:50 – How to stop just being busy and start growing your business
20:00 – Staying focused and ignoring the side projects
22:54 – Bright and shiny objects effects on cognitive overload
26:14 – A great way to look at growing and dealing with bigger problems
27:34 – Dan Martell’s Manifesto
28:43 – How do you determine your why and maintain connection with your purpose
31:57 – How to handle firing a client without being afraid
35:52 – Don’t let your marketing get in the way of attracting bigger and better customers
38:44 – How Dan is helping build his cousins tree trimming business
41:37 – What are some ways to signal really high value when attracting big clients?
44:54 – How to maintain confidence as an entrepreneur when your making big moves
48:34 – The true value of surrounding yourself with successful mentors
The true essence of business and creating a world that is better

You must be aware of who you are inspiring

Contact Dan:

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https://www.facebook.com/Danmartell/

Do you manage your day, or does your day manage you?

If you're like most entrepreneurs, you go through your day like a cowboy: guns blazing, reacting to everything that happens in your business. You get busy being busy.

When you have some time to actually sit down and get some work done, you are either too tired or forgot what you need to work on. Your brain isn't sharp. That's when procrastination sets in.

The deadly, “I’ll get to it tomorrow” conversation begins in your head. You go to sleep with the best intentions and then wake up and it happens again: the day happens to you. The day manages you.

Sound familiar?

At TwoBrain Business we teach the 10 hour CEO method: setting aside a certain number of hours each week to move your business forward. Gym owners start with one dedicated hour on their business, then a second--working up to a minimum of 10 per week.

In this article, I'll teach you how to divide your day into blocks, and have specific times
to focus on the things that matter most. Below is an example of how I block my day and how it works when I am wearing different hats at different times. I block off family time, CEO time, time to workout, time for TBB mentoring calls etc..

**Step 1: Create Blocks for your day**

Using a typical week from my calendar as an example, I clearly outline what I am to be doing and when I am to be doing it. Time to train/workout, family time, CEO time, self development, mentoring calls, and goal setting/intros are all clearly laid out. All of my calendars and scheduling apps align and my entire team has access to this calendar to see what I am doing and when I am doing it.

After you have created blocks for your day we can begin to develop a workflow. If you are anything like me, you most likely have 100 things that you could work on; how do you prioritize what to work on first? What potential problems need your immediate attention? What work will have the greatest leverage?

Let’s get our “To-do” list organized. For this we are going to use the Kanban Method which is a project management method developed by Toyota in the 1940’s.

The Kanban Method divides your “To-do” list into 3 columns: To-Do, Doing, and Done.
1. Using a whiteboard (if you are a tech geek, you can use Asana or Trello), create 3 columns. You are going to use sticky notes and write down anything and everything that needs to be done.

Column 1. To-Do
Column 2. Doing
Column 3. Done

Some important things to note with the Kanban Method:

**Visualize:**
First, take stock of everything that needs to be done. This is a never-ending, ongoing process if you own a business. You must constantly be evolving, changing and creating. You can have all of your “To-do’s” in your head or in a spreadsheet, but the reality is that if they are not right in front of you, many will fall through the cracks.

**Focus on 3:**
For any system to work, you must stay disciplined to it. You should only allow yourself to have 3 “Doings” active at one time. Multitasking is the quickest way to get nothing done. Stay focused on those 3 items and watch your To-Do list shrink.
Assess, adjust, reassess:
This will be a learning process for you and your team. Measure your progress objectively. Make adjustments to your day, and make adjustments to your approach. Constantly refine your processes, and you'll become more efficient, get more done and feel better about yourself. Go from feeling like life is "owning" you to feeling like you are "owning" life.

Implement this simple, effective and proven way to get more done, in less time. Try it out, tag me on a post and let me know how it is working for you.

Need FREE help with action steps? Click here: www.twobrainbusiness.com/help

Brian Alexander
Two Brain Business Mentor
Owner/CIO (Chief Inspirational Officer) - CrossFit Illumine & Illumine North

Why Are They Here?

By Ken Andrukow, TwoBrain Mentor

Previously, I talked about the importance of “Knowing Your Client’s Why” from the big-picture perspective of services you can offer to address their needs and keep them
engaged in your gym for a lifetime. Today we'll look at your client’s “why” from a core business step you may be missing: your new client intake.

How do you bring in or process new clients into your community and get them started with the services you offer? Do you have them fill out a standard form, tell them about your Foundations class, sign them up for their five introductory sessions and then push them into regular WOD programming?

Probably. But how does this address your client’s “why”? It’s time to ditch the one-size-fits-all approach and give your new clients what they need.

Here are two typical examples of new prospects you want to see walking into your gym.

The first is a 42-year-old woman with two kids and is 45 pounds overweight, who tells you she hasn’t been in a gym since her teens. Your first step should be to ask why she walked into your gym. Maybe she’s looking to have more energy to do activities with her kids and wants to look better in her clothes, rather than deadlift 275 pounds and do a rope climb.

Next, find out what she does well already. Perhaps she brought a dog into the family three months ago the kids aren’t looking after, so she takes it for a 45-minute walk every day. These walks will serve as building blocks for her confidence as well as the program you're going to design for her.

The wrong solution would be to put her in your Foundations program for five classes and move her into regular WODs. She’ll hang in for two months only to quit because it’s overwhelming and not geared to her needs right now.

First, you could introduce her to your nutrition program and give her manageable changes that improve how she feels immediately. Second, you could recommend she increases her dog walks to 1 hour every day, broken into 30 minutes in both the morning and evening. After 3-4 weeks of improved activity levels and eating habits that can sustain the next phase of changes, she could start 1-on-1 training sessions with one of your coaches and complete a baseline body fat analysis. Additionally, you could ask her to increase the amount of activity she’s doing at home and up the complexity of the nutritional changes, building on what she’s already achieved and feels good about.

As she progresses in meeting her goals with your help, she'll get closer to being ready for regular classes. Her "why" will shift as she's ready for new challenges, confident that your gym is where she can get the support she needs going forward.

Another prospective client you may see is a 55-year-old male with a history of knee issues. He’s a former high-level athlete who loves competition but has fallen off regular training and participating in sports because of the pain it causes him. When you ask for his "why", he tells you he wants to enjoy playing sports again and be able to train pain-free.
The danger here is that CrossFit is very appealing to his competitive nature and his ego will push him to do more than he should, too soon. Instead, the right solution could be a personal training program that focuses on rehabilitation and addresses the dysfunction that has been causing his knee issues. Once he’s pain-free, he’ll be able to move into regular programming and stay with it for life—in your gym.

If you don't have the overall focus on the client's "why", you'll miss the opportunity to build success in your clients' terms. Sometimes, finding that "why" takes some work. Don't be afraid to dig down and continue asking questions to get to the real heart of their motivation. When that focus permeates every facet of your business, your clients' success naturally becomes your success.

**BE RELENTLESS WITH YOUR VISION**

*by Jeff Burlingame*

In January, I was at the end of my rope with one of my coaches. She was calling off classes with short notice; paying attention to only one or two athletes in a class (later determined to be “her crew”); had bombed a nutrition challenge and the New You Program; and overall was dropping the ball.

Six months earlier, she was gung-ho and asking for more responsibility. I was excited for her. Around this time, she also started to get serious about competing at the Regional level in CrossFit. She was even recruited by a top-level coach. I was pumped for her… until she started to fail at her responsibilities at the gym.

Training for competition is very demanding. But my responsibility to my clients and family meant that I had to get her on track with her gym responsibilities.

Finally I met with her and we discussed her Perfect Day. She said she wanted to focus on being an athlete, so we agreed that the best plan of action was to pull her off 70% of her classes, cut back on her nutrition coaching and focus on training. She agreed, and that was the end of it. Or so I thought.

A week later I found out that she was working at another box down the street, a blatant infraction on her non-compete agreement. This time I knew that I had dropped the ball.

Finally I had to make a REAL decision. So I referred to my VISION and CORE VALUES. I asked myself “Am I adding value for my members by keeping this coach?” The answer, of course, was NO. Plain and simple, no gray area, just NO.
The next day I called her in, fired her on the spot, and the weight of the world lifted from my shoulders.

The following week I caught wind that “her crew”, the 7:30 AM class (2 people), were saying some “things” about me. They were upset about the coach being let go and blamed me for her situation.

Again I referred to my VISION and VALUES, and I promptly met with and fired both members, referring them to other gyms that more closely met their goals. Then I cancelled the 7:30 class due to low attendance.

I had asked myself “By keeping these members and a low attendance class, am I adding value to my members and community?” Again the answer was no, so I took action. We even found a Groupon to the other box for them, and now they train with that coach over there. Good.

Your VISION should come from the heart. Start with WHY? Why are we here, what are we here to do? How will we do that? Think of it as you mission statement except far more profound.

Next, your CORE VALUES are a set of values or beliefs that support the infrastructure of your business. These values will support every decision you make. We start our Incubator program with a Values exercise, but non-TwoBrain clients can see also Immutable laws from Mike Michalowicz.

If a member is causing drama; if a coach is showing up late; if members are doing their own programming during open gym time; or your new specialty course is a flop, don’t get down on yourself and mope… HANDLE IT.

Refer to your Vision Statement and Core Values and make a call. If this situation is leading you away from them, and away from your perfect day, then change it.

PODCAST EPISODE 69: CONVERSIONS EXPERT RAPHAEL PAULIN-DAIGLE OF SPLITBASE

Today’s guest is Raphael Paulin-Daigle of SplitBase.com. He is a conversions expert who is extremely passionate about helping businesses grow. He’ll teach us not just about website and Facebook marketing conversions, but also about the first impressions clients receive when they come through the door and how to follow up with people.

With Facebook ads in particular, many business owners Boost a Post or build an ad, hoping for an immediate payback. What they SHOULD do is plan the result they want to get; create a solid offer; target the exact people they can help MOST; then build the ad. And then test, test, and test again.
For example, a common problem many people report is a high response rate (lots of views, shares and comments) with no action. This is conversion: do your “leads” from your ads take action, or not? You can have a fantastic ad leading to a very poor landing page, and get zero results. If so, you’re not bad at marketing; you’re bad at converting. Raphael is very, very GOOD at converting.

Marketing is all about helping people and building a relationship. Be sure to follow along and take good notes on all the strategies presented today!

In this Interview:

- The process behind improving your business marketing
- The hidden roadblocks that are losing you sales
- How often should you be surveying your customers
- The importance of placing testimonials on your landing page

Plus:

- How many questions should be on a customer survey
- Applying data to your business to help it grow
- How to use persuasive copy to overcome and avoid objections

About Raphael:

Raphael became involved in digital marketing through his first startup about seven years ago. It is no surprise conversion optimization was the first thing to catch his attention. His creativity and admiration for good design, combined with his interest in psychology, human behaviors and growth made conversion optimization the perfect match.

It was at this moment that SplitBase was born. Raphael assembled a team of conversion analysis, copywriters, and designers to deploy and execute his full conversion methodology within his client’s promises. A methodology that has continually produced millions of dollars of growth for SplitBase clients.

Raphael has given keynotes and workshops to marketers, bank executives, and CMOs of Fortune 500 companies around the world. He now oversees conversion strategy and operations as the CEO of SplitBase.

Timeline:

2:40 – Raphael Paulin-Daigle Introduction

7:00 – Raphael in his own words

8:01 – The process behind improving your business marketing
10:14 – A practical case study on business marketing
12:16 – The mistake of projecting what you like onto your customers
14:29 – Doing the conversion research to inform your customers with what they want
15:57 – The importance of customer surveys and what not to ask
19:26 – What are some great questions to ask on a customer survey
24:14 – A concrete example of implementing a survey and analyzing results
27:11 – Are clients willing to answer questions? How to incentivize taking a survey
28:52 – Simple changes you can make to your checkout button for massive results
30:35 – What is losing you sales in your business that you don’t know about
31:28 – How often should you be surveying your customers
33:05 – How many questions should be on a customer survey?
34:47 – Using analytics to tell how many people are getting to your landing page but not buying
37:19 – Applying data to your business to help it grow
39:12 – Practical examples of applying insights to your business
44:50 – Using copy to overcome and avoid objections
48:13 – Ways to overcome the price objection when marketing to customers
49:43 – The two make or break components of your sales funnel.
52:46 – How to implement retargeting with the new Facebook pixel feature
56:15 – How important are testimonials on your landing page?
57:26 – How do you know your landing page is working?

Contact Raphael:
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Gyms owners enrolled in the TwoBrain Business mentorship program are dedicated to excellence.

They spend months working on systems to make your experience better; perfecting ‘best practices’; and collaborating on ideas that will improve your experience.

We celebrate their attention to detail (the “left brain”) and care (the “right brain”) in their fitness practice with our annual TwoBrain Awards Ceremony.

Each year at our annual Summit, we present awards to top-performing gym owners in our 7 Areas of Excellence. Many of these can be measured objectively through data collection and tracking. But one especially—Gym Culture—is beyond the limits of a spreadsheet.

So we turn to you: the client. YOU are the reason the gym owner wakes up at 4am. YOU are their pride, their passion and their purpose. Their gym exists to serve YOU.

How’s YOUR gym doing? Is it the best gym in the universe? Let us know!

Nominate the owner of YOUR gym for the prestigious 2017 TwoBrain Clients’ Choice Award:
If you've spent any time on Facebook over the past six months, you've seen the video entitled "A Valuable Lesson For A Happier Life." In it, a professor shows his students that when you fill your jar of life first with the most important elements of life (family, friends, health, and passions), there is room for the more mundane tasks and priorities around them. However, if you fill up a jar with small, menial tasks, your jar is too full to fit in the large commitments that provide you with the most happiness.

Make sure you take a little time out to watch the video again because I believe the analogy applies just as much to happiness as it does to your flow state as a gym owner.

I want you to imagine that the jar represents the bandwidth of energy you have to devote to your business activities. It's a finite space, and if you fill it with the wrong things first, you have no room for the tasks that provide you with the biggest return on investment.

Imagine the sand in the jar are all the little tasks that you can spend time on in the gym like taking out the trash, repairing equipment or even coaching classes. These are necessary tasks that make a gym run, but should you fill up your jar with them?

Coaching is a great example of a sandy activity. You feel that by coaching classes you’re keeping in touch with your clients and keeping your skills sharp. But much like sand, coaching spreads everywhere and gets into your shoes, your ears and your swimsuit (and that stuff chafes!). A one-hour class means one hour beforehand prepping and greeting athletes, one hour leading the workout, 10 minutes after to cheer on the last finishers, and another 30 minutes saying goodbye as people walk out the door. Not only has your time slipped away but you’ve paid a high opportunity cost, and the momentum you’ve lost is far too great. Now that sand fills up the jar, there is no room for golf balls!

As a gym owner, you need to keep your focus on filling that jar first with golf balls, not sand. Your golf balls are the big picture, monumental tasks that require real momentum and flow state to complete. It could be finding a new coach who can develop, market and run a new kid’s CrossFit program. It could be rebranding a morning beginners’ onboarding program into a masters’ class to match the demographics of the athletes signing up. It could be finding new product partners to improve the deliverability of your nutrition program.

These diversifying and expanding activities are what will strengthen your gym and create real growth that gives you the revenue to support more coaches, new marketing efforts and equipment upgrades.
If you are infatuated with a project you are working on or making incredible ground on solving a problem, you must devote your bandwidth to these big return items. Give them the uninterrupted blocks of time that allow you to leverage the flow state for maximum creativity and productivity.

What’s more, filling your bandwidth with 10,000-foot tasks first gives you the ability to break your momentum only when you choose to, and leaves room to pour some sand around the golf balls. You can spend 15 minutes of a class walking around and connecting with athletes when you’re taking a break and recharging your flow, instead of it taking up a 3-hour chunk of your day.

This is the power of understanding your bandwidth. Fill up your jar with the big-ticket items first, blocking out the right times in your day to accomplish these tasks. Leaving yourself gaps for the little things when it's right for you. When you're filling your jar with the essential items first, you give yourself the ability to reach your flow state and attain your goals.

www.twobrainbusiness.com/help

Brian Alexander

Two Brain Business Mentor
Owner/CIO (Chief Inspirational Officer) -CrossFit Illumine & Illumine North

Lead.

“For this reason, they must believe in the cause for which they are fighting. They must believe in the plan they are asked to execute, and most important, they must believe in and trust the leader they are asked to follow.”
— Jocko Willink, Extreme Ownership: How U.S. Navy Seals Lead and Win

In the effort to be a better mentor, I study leadership a lot. I learn from my own mentors; read the biographies of leaders; listen to their words while training or driving my truck. Here are the things common to successful leaders:

1. They model the behavior they want from others.
2. They give clear directions, with no missing steps
3. They fall back on daily routines
4. They make a lot of mistakes, but never the same one twice.
5. They’re not confident all the time, but know it's more important to appear confident than ambivalent.
6. They create other leaders.
To break these down for business owners:

1. Modelling
In college, I had a nutrition professor who was a walking textbook. She could recite data and draw tables about glycemic load and macronutrient profiles. But she also ate McDonald's in her office after class. I can't recall a single lecture she gave, but I can recall the smell of her desk area perfectly.

This is sometimes an inconvenient truth, but "do as I say, not as I do" is ineffective. If you're a parent, you already know it won't work. But it's easy to fool yourself into believing your clients don't care about what YOU do.

If you're a hairdresser, your hair should look great every day.
If you're a personal trainer, you should work out.
If you're selling stocks and bonds, you should wear something expensive.

Your staff will follow the example you set at your worst. Your adherence to your own rules will cue them to follow. If you break your own rules occasionally, they'll break them often. Your lowest standard of care will become their best standard of care, because after all, that's what you show them. You are the example, not the exception.

For example, my gym has a "back door" we don't want clients to use. Clients should use the front door, where the check-in kiosk sits. But the back door is close to the parking lot, and one day I slipped out and back to grab my wallet from my truck. Another coach saw me do it, and despite my instructions to never use the door, she began to use it as her main entrance. The door has a "Do Not Enter" sign on it. Our staff handbook tells our coaches to park in back, and enter through the front. But she saw ME do it, and that made it okay. You can guess what happened next: clients saw her using it, and started to do the same.

If your accountant's desk is crammed with loose paper and receipts, will you show up at the tax deadline with a shoebox crammed full of random paper? Of course, because you think it's okay. After all, your model of bookkeeping responsibility does it this way.

2. Clear Directions With No Missing Steps
You can't proofread your own writing, because your brain automatically fills in the gaps.
For the same reason, it's hard to write processes for your staff to follow because you already know how things should be done.

We don't need you to tell us. We need you to lead us.

Some resources I recommend:

- Leaders Eat Last, by Simon Sinek
- The Heart and The Fist, by Eric Greitens
- Extreme Ownership, by Jocko Willing
- "Make Your Bed", with Admiral McRaven
- The 5 Levels of Leadership, by John Maxwell

**PODCAST EPISODE 70: SERVANT LEADERSHIP, WITH TATE STEWART**

On today’s podcast we are joined by Tate Stewart of CrossFit 1420. Tate is a former college football player and strength and conditioning coach from Houston, Texas. Today we talk about leadership in the service industry. Tate is an accomplished gym owner, and he’s about to complete the TwoBrain mentor-in-training program.

Read more about The Path to Mentorship here.

In this Interview:
A unique story about service to others from Chris
The process of raising your gym’s rates
The TwoBrain mentoring philosophy

Plus:

How Tate started with CrossFit
Learning from mentors and the important role they play
Is a Lion Untested a Lion At All?

About Tate:

Tate is a former college football player at the University of Houston. After suffering from a bad injury he transitioned into a college strength and conditioning coach and helped athletes prepare for the NFL draft. Tate was introduced to CrossFit and while initially hesitant became hooked very quickly. With the motivation to provide a better life for his family, he opened a CrossFit gym, CrossFit 1420.

Tate is a selfless leader, constantly putting others before himself. This can be credited largely to his mentors throughout his life. The importance of good mentorship is invaluable and something Tate believes strongly in.

Timeline:

2:47 – A unique story about service to others
8:33 – Tate Stewart introduction and how he got started in CrossFit
10:27 – Tate’s start as a college football strength and conditioning coach
11:37 – The first impression of the CrossFit world
13:48 – Making big changes to open a gym and provide for a family
15:58 – Turning to others to find help, how to find a mentor
20:53 – Tate’s introduction to the TwoBrain Family
23:15 – What is the greatest lesson Tate ever learned from his father?
26:50 – The mentorship of legendary coach Lee Hayes
28:57 – The personnel structure of Tate’s gym and keeping everyone on the same page
35:18 – The process of raising rates by exhibiting authoritative and servant leadership
39:57 – The response from clients after raising rates
44:04 – Grandfather Rates and how to implement them and deal with inconsistent rates
54:03 – How important is it for a mentor to have gone through struggles in their own life
61:56 – The process of being trained as a TwoBrain mentor
68:36 – The mentoring process under the TwoBrain philosophy

Books we mention in this episode:

**Three Kings: A Study in Brokenness**, by Gene Edwards

**The Power of One**, by Bryce Courtenay

**Silence**, by Shusaku Endo

Contact Tate:

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**Why Gym Owners Need Business Mentors**

*By Ken Andrukow, TwoBrain Mentor and owner of Reebok CrossFit Ramsay*

If you don't have a mentor, it can be difficult to understand the value of hiring one. Luckily, the industry we’re in gives us the perfect analogy with which to work. Replace “mentor” with “CrossFit coach”, and “business owner” with “athlete”, and now things make sense.
We’re in the business of coaching athletes in functional fitness. The tools we use—burpees and box jumps, snatches and squats—they’re not secrets. But athletes come into our gyms to get coached on how to get the most out of their time doing these exercises. In one hour, they get the most efficient combination of metabolic conditioning, strength work, mobility, mental skills, so on and so on—this the core value we provide to our clients.

Moreover, a CrossFit coach explains how to perform an exercise safely, helping the athlete avoid mistakes which cause injuries or prevent performance gains due to poor form.

Some athletes would be able to figure these things out for themselves over the course of several months, maybe years. However, they see the value in putting themselves in the hands of someone who already has made the mistakes and will put them straight on the path to success.

In the same way, our Two-Brain Business approach is systematic, just like CrossFit programming, but is personalized to your business and your strengths and weakness. What do you need to scale (hire the right person who has this strength)? Where should you push harder (devote your creative energy)? Are you addressing all of the areas you need to promote revenue growth? Mentors will show you how to get the most out of your business in the least amount of time, how to effectively apply your skills, and get you doing the right work to see gains in your business.

**WHEN DO YOU NEED A MENTOR?**

Going back to the athlete analogy, clients come in at various points of their lives. However, there are two themes we see most often: when an athlete is just starting out on their path to fitness and health, or they’ve plateaued in their progress.

The first category of people are the smart ones. They have the self-awareness to identify right off the bat they don’t know enough and are willing to get the help. They don’t necessarily know what they don’t know but know they don’t know it. When they commit to the plan, attend classes regularly, make small changes to their diet and lifestyle as they go, they see amazing transformations.

The same thing applies to business mentorship. For some gym owners, the right time to seek out mentorship is right at the beginning. You know you want to be successful, you know you don’t know how to go about it, and you’re willing to put yourself in the hands of a mentor sincerely interested in the growth of your business. The business transformations are just as incredible as those we see in regularly see in our new athletes.

The second type of new clients in a gym are those who have plateaued. Injury problems, boredom, and lack of measurable change are all examples athletes cite for wanting to try CrossFit. You see the athletes who have been doing three sets of 15 reps on the lat pull-down machine at the same weight for the last five years, run for 45 minutes at a steady...
pace on the treadmill three times a week, and eat a scone with their Starbucks latte every morning. They’re come to CrossFit to get a plan for the shake-up they need.

By the same token, gym owners often get caught in a cycle of doing things the same way that pays the bills and puts out all the fires. If you’re still restocking the bathroom supplies every Monday morning, teaching 15 classes a week while your employees look on, and writing the monthly email campaigns to the membership, you’re in the rut that prevents your business from growing. A mentor challenges your assumptions of how you apply yourself to running the gym.

**THE RETURNS**

We see it every day. Our athletes are stronger, healthier, happier, more functional and more successful having made the investment with CrossFit coaches. The return on investment is a no-brainer, and the same applies with mentorship. Quantifiably, you will likely see a ten-fold return on the money you invest with a Two-Brain mentor. Moreover, you will be more effective, happier, and achieve your goals. Ready to get started?

**Setting Expectations**

*Danielle Brown, TwoBrain Mentor*

I opened my own gym because, like you, I am passionate about helping people and I believe CrossFit is one of the best ways to accomplish that. I thought that, to be a success, I would need to make every athlete who walked through my doors happy. In going above and beyond, I’d earn their loyalty and, just as importantly, their business for the long term.

I’m sure this sounds very familiar to you. Some time ago, I learned a valuable lesson about the cost of doing too much for individuals, and why as business owners our focus needs to be on providing scalable services to the whole membership: one for all, not all for one.

In the early days, I enjoyed being within arm’s reach of each client; taking in their input and responding whenever I could. As you know, as coaches we’re often approached by clients with limitations caused by current or past injuries, and the standard scaling and progressions that our coaches provide in every class don’t work for them. Instead, they need outright substitutions.

I had one client in particular who I had gotten to know well. She attended WODs consistently and worked hard; we even had a couple of coffee dates where we talked business, workouts, and kids. When an old injury flared up on her, she began asking me and the other coaches for typical scaling for stressor movements. Of course, this was the norm for all of our clients and something that we were proud to accommodate.
Those worked for a while. Then, as even the scaled movements still aggravated the injury, she began asking for different exercises she could do during the WOD in their place. Then I realized that we were scaling entire workouts for her daily, and personally spending more than 10 minutes with her in any given class. My husband Jason decided to write up a scaling guide she could use for every WOD that worked just for her. I think this is when things really went south.

At some point not long after that, she began complaining about another body part that was bothering her. Jason started giving her extra programming to do outside of the WODs, and a version of every strength and metcon component was scaled entirely according to her needs.

THEN came the kicker: she asked for nutritional advice. No big deal—except she wanted it for free. At this point, I had been preparing a nutrition program to roll out to the entire gym which would naturally be available for additional cost. When I offered the same plan to her as I was offering to the rest of the membership—with the attached price tag—she was outraged.

In my effort to make her happy, I had set an expectation with this client that she could receive all of the value of individualized programming and nutrition included in the cost of basic membership. Obviously, this isn’t sustainable on many levels. I should have stopped this snowball when we were in class with her, and offered her a personal training package. But I didn’t, and the situation only escalated. The quote from her that is seared into my mind forever is, “shouldn’t there be a cap on how much I pay at your gym?”

Clients pay reasonable rates to receive the value of our programming, which is carefully designed to provide variety, progress and improvement for a huge majority of people. It’s good value for the athletes, and it scales for us. That’s a sustainable business model. If I spend hours on each and every athlete customizing that programming and providing them with meal plans and shopping lists, I am multiplying the hours I’m working for each person and not receiving a dime of compensation in return. That’s the opposite of sustainable—that’s just crazy.

Just recently my husband Jason and I were discussing this particular client, and he dropped this precious nugget of wisdom he had learned from this experience:

"One of the greatest gifts that I ever gave myself was never doing for one person what I can’t do for them all."

He called it a GIFT. Profound, right? If you can’t give every athlete in your gym individualized programming and nutritional guidance for the price of a basic membership, don’t do it for one athlete. At that moment I decided I would never feel guilty for charging for my services again.
This approach doesn’t mean that you can’t respond to an individual client. Instead, it’s an opportunity to meet their needs while building out your business and revenue stream.

One for all, not all for one.

**TWOBRAIN RADIO REPLAY: AFFINITY MARKETING**

F your Funnel. Why start your marketing plan with the people LEAST likely to want your service, and then try to filter out 90% of your audience? It's like cutting down a whole tree to find the right twig. Instead, start from a seed. Build a tree on which EVERY branch bears fruit. That's Affinity Marketing. Affinity marketing starts with your SEED clients: those perfect members who are most tightly connected to your brand. Then we move outward from the center: helping those people who are most tightly connected to your perfect client. Then, ring by ring, we identify the spheres of influence owned by the client. I give a few examples in this podcast, and then diverge into psychological and behavioral retention strategies.
Online marketing sure is sexy. We teach Facebook marketing, Instagram, Twitter in our Incubator. We teach you how to build landing pages, email campaigns, and even run podcasts or webinars.

But the BEST new clients will ALWAYS come from your current clients. The people most like your favorites are probably their families. Or their coworkers. Or their best friends.

But most “marketing plans” in the fitness world start with the people LEAST likely to want your service, and then try to filter out those who don’t fit. It’s like cutting down a whole tree to find the right twig.

Instead, start from a seed. Build a tree on which EVERY branch bears fruit. That’s Affinity Marketing.

Want real, one-on-one mentorship to take you from building a more solid foundation right through growth? You need the Incubator.

Affinity marketing starts with your SEED clients: those perfect members who are most tightly connected to your brand. Then we move outward from the center: helping those people who are most tightly connected to your perfect client. Then, ring by ring, we identify the spheres of influence owned by the client.

I give a few examples in this podcast, and then diverge into psychological and behavioral retention strategies.

Affinity marketing is one of 9 recurring marketing strategies I teach as part of a monthly marketing plan.

Specific examples and strategies are outlined in my book, Help First: Sell Less. Profit More.

Recorded on April 10, 2016 in front of a fire under my rig at home.
Why Do You Own A Gym?

By Ken Andrukow, TwoBrain Mentor

To make a quick buck? To be surrounded by beautiful, fit people? So your friends will pay to work out with you?

There are probably thousands of fitness trends that, if you were to invest in them as a business owner, would provide you with a means to these goals. CrossFit is different.

We build a community based on shared values: health, being physically prepared for the real world, and personal growth. As a CrossFit gym owner, you are in the enviable position of being able to make a career sharing your passion for these values with others. With this privilege comes great responsibility.

On one level, you are responsible for the success or failure of your gym and with that accountability comes the need to be exceptionally productive—a concept your mentor will help you manifest in your earliest days with Two-Brain Business.
However, authentic leadership goes deeper than that. You are leading a community based on shared values, so HOW you live needs to be a reflection of these values. Nobody wants to follow a leader who is struggling and suffering. People want you to lead and be an example for which they will pay the appropriate value. Living a pied piper’s life is not something that people aspire to or are inspired by.

Leadership through pursuing your values requires you to continually ask yourself the question: why do I own a gym?

I built a company so that I would be able to help others and then to be able to help others help others. I see exponential growth in everyone around me because it’s part of my core values and I make sure in my perfect day as a gym owner, I’m investing in others.

For example, I could coach 10 classes a day of 20 athletes and positively impact their growth. That seems like a step in the right direction, but what if I aim higher? Instead, I could teach my staff to be high-functioning coaches and business people so they can influence those athletes. Then I can leverage my time to move up another level to influence more coaches who influence athletes, and business owners who then influence more coaches, who then influence more athletes. This is a more powerful investment and pays much richer dividends.

Moreover, I built a company so that I can grow my influence outside of just my gym, my city or even my country. This year I will travel to Africa, Spain, Columbia, Vancouver, Toronto, Chicago, Las Vegas, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia. On these travels, I will open myself to new influences—new cultures, personalities, languages, customs, and beliefs.

By teaching others how to influence and empowering them to do the same, I’m walking the walk, living my values and extending greater and greater factors of influence. In turn, your community wants you to live your perfect day so you can support their efforts towards their perfect day. Remind yourself of your purpose daily to push your leadership forwards.

PODCAST EPISODE 71: REMOTE CONTROL, WITH BRIAN LELLI

It’s 8am in Rochester, NY. Brian Lelli sits and waits for the moving van to arrive at his house.

On Thursday, Brian said goodbye to his CrossFit community. He’s moving his young family to Florida and leaving his gym in the capable hands of his GM.
I talk a LOT on this podcast about the ability to walk away from your business for days, weeks or months. Maybe you just need a few hours each day to work ON the business instead of IN the business. Or maybe you’re like me, and have other businesses to group. Maybe you just need a damn nap. Brian is an outlier, running his gym completely remotely. But his experience shows us what’s REALLY possible.

The people who I want to talk to on this podcast are the gym owners pushing the limits. The guy netting a million dollars is interesting. So is the guy who can leave his gym, move five states away, still own it, and still make a profit.

Listen and play close attention to the infrastructure and systems Brian discusses to run his box smooth and efficiently – they’re the SAME systems, with the same feedback loop, you’ll need to take ANY time off from your business.

The 2017 Two Brian Summit is coming this June 3rd and 4th. Be sure to register here for this event!

In this Interview:

Which systems are necessary for a gym to run independently
How much communication is necessary when running a gym from afar
How to grow staff from low levels of responsibility to FULL responsibility
The icon problem with small business owners, and how to beat it

Plus:

How much money will Brian be making while working remotely
Key characteristics of a general manager
Implementing feedback loops and accountability amongst staff

About Brian:

Brian first got into fitness back in college while at the Rochester Institute of Technology where he started a weightlifting club with some friends. This was Brian’s first chance to learn coaching from others. For the next decade Brian trained and competed as a power lifter until in 2011 he decided to create a better healthier body for himself. At first a CrossFit denier, he quickly found his home training CrossFit and opened his own box in his garage. Brian is super helpful and a very experienced coach who is always available for questions!

Timeline:

3:29 – Brian Lelli Introduction
5:11 – Brian’s story of how he got into CrossFit
7:34 – Does training or working at another CrossFit gym help before starting your own?
8:39 – Moving to Florida and leaving the CrossFit gym behind independently
IS CASH FLOW THE MOST IMPORTANT THING?

(originally published on DontBuyAds.com, Oct. 28 2010.)

Cash Flow Trumps Revenue

The worst 30 minutes I've ever experienced in this industry wasn't in a gym. It was on a comfortable couch in a shareholder's office. I was there to ask for money.

Three years in. Beyond the original investment - only $16,000 - I'd never asked for money from these guys. My goal, only a few months before, had been to buy their shares back, and take 100% control of the company where I was spending 80 hours every week. And here I was, hat in hand, asking for a cash contribution to make payroll.

Even worse, the share structure meant a leveraged short-term loan: for every $250 contributed by the shareholders, I'd have to come up with $750 myself. All I could pry from my partners was $500, because I didn't have the cash to match their piece of the pie.

"How are sales?" they asked, sympathetic. "Strong," I said, "but we have huge accounts receivable." To the tune of around $12,000, I didn't add. In fact, if even one or two of the larger accounts paid their bill, I wouldn't have had a problem at all.

"Have you been paid this week?" one asked. "No." I quickly replied. They knew they were unlikely to make their commission that month, too.
An hour later, after discussing a few ideas that I didn't want to pursue - calling clients to demand payment, offering a discount for immediate payment, adding an interest charge to accounts, selling the debt for 20% of its actual value - they gave me $500 between them, and I left, broke and doubting my future in business.

A week later, I was sitting at a buddy's kitchen table. Nick owns an auto body. He's fifty-five, had two heart attacks, and put two daughters through school. I was bemoaning my credit problems.

"Yeah, I know a guy who had the same problem," Nick said. "You don't need that. Tell everyone that they have to pay up front."

"I can't do that," I said. "They're all great customers."

"That's exactly what this other guy said. He was busy as hell but couldn't pay his own bills. Lots of friends, though."

"So how did he fix it?" I asked.

"Went broke and sold his garage to me. You want another beer?"

The next Monday, we started selling training packages.

**THE DRIVE-BY**

*By Jonathan de Friess*

*Owner/Coach*

*CrossFit Eta*

*Justin, Texas*

*TwoBrain Family member*

A few weeks back, I was driving to my gym. On one of the back road routes, someone is building a training facility. The building is brand new and there is massive amounts of turf outside of the building. I noticed medballs and a few other pieces of equipment when the doors were open on a previous day, which sparked my interest.

Over the next two weeks, I eagerly peered into this new place, sometimes turning around to drive back, just to see what I would be competing against. I wondered how this would affect my business and which clients would have the greatest propensity to move to a place like this.

Then, this past Friday, I was on my way to the gym again. Before reaching this back road, I made a mental note to peek at this new facility. But just before I reached the exit to the back road, I began to think about how to utilize social media to leverage awareness
for my gym. I began to connect dots between hashtags, Facebook ads, and retargeting campaigns.

Before I knew it, I was clearly past this potential competitor, and I had completely forgotten to look. But I did not care. I was too busy thinking about what I needed to do. I had no time to pay attention to what someone else was doing.

I lose sight so easily sometimes. I get caught up with everyone else and forget my mission, my purpose, and why my gym is unique. In the Incubator, this is called “Strategic Advantages.” We easily miss “Strategic Advantages” if we are looking at everyone else. But when we define “Strategic Advantages,” we have created leverage for our brand.

What are your “Strategic Advantages?” If you have some, good! Go emphasize them. If you don’t know them, then write out the things that make you unique, and every time you get caught up with competition, read them again.

Personally,

Jonathan de Friess  
Owner/Coach  
CrossFit Eta  
Justin, Texas
Today’s guests are Kaleda Connell and Tammy Friedt. Both are CrossFit gym owners who have grown their businesses through the help first mentality. These two really personify the spirit of help first and they have been successful by co-branding and working with other businesses within their community. In this episode, we talk about how they approach those businesses, what their relationships look like, and how they are helping them.

It is very easy to open a CrossFit gym, but it’s hard to keep one running. CrossFit gym owners must learn fast and develop their skills in areas like Facebook marketing and email lists. But what’s MORE important is developing in-person relationships with the people around you, including other businesses with overlapping target markets.

Many entrepreneurs don’t possess the skills or mindset to develop a solid cross-referral program. But Tammy and Kaleda do, and in this episode they’ll share how to approach other businesses, how to use the “help first” mindset to start a referral program, and even how to mentor others to be more successful.
Tammy and Kaleda are provide many actionable steps you can take starting today. I also hope that you realize how much you know and how great of a position you are in to help those in your community do better. Entrepreneurship is the lynchpin of our economy and it is necessary to save not only my local economy but yours too!

The 2017 Two Brian Summit is coming this June 3rd and 4th. Be sure to register here for this event!

In this Interview:

- What does forming partnerships with a local business look like?
- How to form a business group within your CrossFit gym
- What knowledge are other businesses missing out on?

Plus:

- The “help first” principle and how to implement it
- Being rewarded for helping other businesses in your community
- Going out of the way to help a competitor

About Kaleda:

Kaleda is from Palmerston, Ontario where she grew up on her family’s farm. She has been training using the CrossFit method since 2012 and before that was an avid hockey and soccer player. After realizing there was nowhere to work out within in her town, she started Degree CrossFit Seaforth. She began by working out of her own garage but now she owns her own affiliate and is a successful box owner!

About Tammy:
Tammy is an experienced coach having trained others in spinning, kickboxing, metabolic conditioning, boot camps, and yoga. After participating in her first WOD she was instantly hooked to CrossFit. She now own CrossFit TPA near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She is focused on helping her clients get healthier and obtain the results that they desire!

Timeline:

2:49 – Thinking Outside the Box introduction
6:17 – Kaleda’s story and how she got her start with CrossFit
8:53 – Tammy’s story and how she got hers tart with CrossFit
13:06 – What does forming partnerships with local businesses look like? – Kaleda
14:30 – Starting a conversation with a local business and forming partnerships – Kaleda
16:32 – Forming a business group within your CrossFit gym – Tammy
21:21 – What are the lessons you have learned that you can teach other business owners – Kaleda
25:00 – What knowledge is passed on most often to other business owners – Tammy
30:47 – How often do tech related problems come up when helping other businesses – Kaleda
32:53 – Why videos are more impactful than a regular post on social media -Tammy
36:31 – Revitalizing old machines by creating posts on Facebook
37:13 – How has implementing the help first principle come back to you -Kaleda
39:18 – Are other businesses providing active referrals for helping them first? – Kaleda
40:42 – What rewards have you seen from partnering with other businesses? -Tammy
44:46 – Taking time to help another gym owner within your community – Kaleda
47:02 – Going out of your way to help someone open a nearby CrossFit gym -Tammy
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Are You Treating the Symptoms and Not The Cause?

Your affiliate gym has been open for twelve months. The initial launch went well, but after the first wave of memberships had come in, you’re still catching up to the capital investments you made just to open your doors. What’s more, is the spending isn’t slowing down. There are things you didn’t take into account that are just now revealing themselves. In looking at your membership numbers, you’re bleeding a little bit, and you need to start turning a profit or the savings you’ve been using to fund the business are going to run out soon.

What’s the solution?

Are you an affiliate owner who thinks “if I can just only get 50 more members, everything will be ok?”

More members equal more money in the bank account, right? So you may be tempted to run some aggressive promotions, maybe a Groupon or similar to bring in new people. However, have you considered how this can affect your gym?

Can you accommodate the new members in your existing classes, or will you have to add more classes outside your current blocks? Will members use these workout times, or will you have to cap attendance in the cornerstone 6 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. WODs and leave your loyal members frustrated with the crowds? How will your long-time members feel about
working out alongside new additions who are paying half of what they are? Will you have to hire more coaches to provide the same quality of attention and care your members deserve? Will you have to work longer hours to administer the large numbers of people coming in for a fraction of what they should be?

The symptom of your problem is that your profits are too low, but increasing incoming cash flow while also increasing your expenses in cash and time is just chasing the dragon.

You need to stop applying a band-aid to your business and treat the cause. That is where the real healing begins.

What is holding your business back from being profitable in the first place? Are you making a living doing what you are doing? Are you creating opportunities for growth for your coaches so they never feel the need to go off and open their own gyms?

At Two-Brain Business we teach you the "Road to 33%.” That's right, 33% profit. Profit is not a dirty word, it is a necessary objective in order to build the business you have always wanted to build. If you can revamp your gym’s business model to make it more profitable, you will be able to provide the highest level service, buy nice equipment and have the lifestyle you want, all while helping hundreds of people change their lives.

Moreover, if you as the affiliate owner are miserable and unhappy, you won’t be around long enough to make others happy. When an affiliate fails it doesn’t just mean the end of your dream, you’re letting down an entire community who looked to you to for leadership in their journeys towards amazing health.

We know how much of an impact you can have on these hundreds of lives and how much growth you can promote in others. When we talk to you, over your shoulder we can see all of the people you directly and indirectly support. When you can fix the underlying cause of your business malaise, your business grows healthy and strong, just like your customers.

Are you ready to get healthy?

www.twobrainbusiness.com/help

Brian Alexander
Two Brain Business Mentor
Owner/CIO (Chief Inspirational Officer) - CrossFit Illumine & Illumine North
For years, I’ve been surprised at how quickly CrossFit gyms have embraced yoga but ignored Pilates. Mobility is a virtue, true; but stability is a necessity. Mobility and stability are the yin and yang of every joint’s function. Getting really, really bendy might put you in better positions…but won’t help you hold weight there. Pilates can.

Yoga is great. But it’s hard to introduce into a CrossFit gym, as hundreds have discovered. Doing yoga requires more than a soft mat on your black rubber flooring; it requires an environment that’s very different from the “just get it done” setup of a typical box. At least in my own gyms, yoga and mobility programs are usually met with excitement when introduced, but fade to zero within two months.
But Pilates was built from the misfit mindset, like CrossFit. You don’t have to embrace a 3,000-year-old culture or religion to do Pilates. And you can teach the basics very quickly.

Today’s guest is Sara Benson of BoxPilates.com and CrossFit Reanimated. She has been a Pilates instructor for years, but only when her husband Dan got a back injury did he start incorporating Pilates into his CrossFit routine. Now they are starting a course online to teach you how to incorporate Pilates into your own CrossFit gym, how to put together a specialty group, and how to incorporate Pilates into regular stability work.

Sarah will be presenting at the TwoBrain Summit on June 3-4, but if you can’t make it, reach out to her with any questions you may have!

In this Interview:

- What it’s like to quit your corporate job and start a CrossFit gym
- Comparing and contrasting CrossFit with Pilates
- The importance of pelvic control and how Pilates can help with this issue

Plus:

- Finding the right balance between Stability and Mobility
- Integrating BoxPilates into your own gym
- Gaining control and stability within the transverse abdominal region

About Sara:

Athletics, health and fitness have always been a major part of Sara’s life. Prior to becoming a CrossFit level one trainer, Sara pursued her passion for fitness and helping people improve strength and stability through Pilates. After injuring herself in 2008, discovering Pilates became a blessing and enabled her to return to her chosen sports and make drastic improvements in performance. It was soon after that she discovered CrossFit and the many similarities between the two that complemented each other.

It is now Sara’s passion to help people become more active and live healthier lifestyles. She teaches both CrossFit and Pilates and is helping other gyms integrate Pilates into their workout routines and programs.
Timeline:

2:45 – Box Pilates Introduction
6:09 – Sarah Benson’s story and how she got her start with Pilates and CrossFit
9:10 – Opening CrossFit reanimated along with a Pilates studio
10:29 – Quitting a corporate job to start a CrossFit gym
11:07 – The difference between mat Pilates and Pilates with equipment
12:49 – What is the difference between Yoga and Pilates?
15:01 – Joseph Pilates and the founding of Pilates
18:24 – Working through full range of motion with CrossFit and Pilates
19:49 – Comparing and contrasting CrossFit and Pilates
22:16 – How does on ramp work for an integrated gym that includes CrossFit and Pilates
25:11 – Stability versus Mobility
27:16 – Lack of stability and how to address it
30:33 – Gaining control and stability within the transverse abdominal region
34:45 – What is the point of improving stability and posture?
36:40 – The importance of pelvic control and how Pilates can help
38:04 – Success stories from Pilates
44:43 – What are the biggest challenges that clients face within the gym
47:10 – How can you start using the Pilates methods in your own gym
48:34 – Box Pilates training program for other gyms to use
49:55 – What is the target user for the Box Pilates training program
51:12 – How to contact Sarah
Coach vs Owner: Mindset

*By Ken Andrukow, TwoBrain Mentor*

Opening your own affiliate is an amazing way to get paid doing work you love, helping your clients realize their goals, and changing lives. In your own gym, you can craft the dream job you’ve always been looking for.

Loving your work is great, and there’s absolutely nothing wrong with that. But understand that the best self-employment scenario is just that: you’re employing yourself in a job role, and your goals need to align with that approach. That’s the self-employed coach mindset.

However, what you may be finding is that there’s a gap between having the best job of your life, and other goals that you’ve realized are important to you: having more time to spend with family, travelling, contributing to your community, and building a team of leaders.

If you want the ability to set your schedule, work less and earn more, and earn passive income, you need to change your mindset from that of a self-employed coach to one of an entrepreneur.

You may be asking yourself, "why can't I do both?" You're probably trying to do that right now, in fact. Which is why you're here, reading this post: it doesn't work.
Have you ever tried to coach someone through their squat technique and then ask them to pay their current month of dues when they're on the way out the door after class? That painful clash of roles is one absolutely no one can manage gracefully. To be effective as an owner you need to be free to do the hard tasks like money collection, and let your coaches be supportive and kind to your athletes.

Shifting your mindset may be a challenge, but here's a start. If you’re frequently asking yourself what you need to do to get better at something that needs to be done in your affiliate, whether that's marketing, coaching or bookkeeping, then you’re seeking to fill that job role yourself. Instead, you need to recognize that others can do those tasks better than you already, and that means they should be doing them for you. The question isn’t “what” you need to do better, but “who” can do this better for you?

The net result of this decision is that you are no longer increasing your responsibilities in your job role, but building your business.

From another angle, think about profit. You might be excited about the idea of running a profitable affiliate, but how does that look? If it’s just paying yourself a great salary to coach, then that’s a job that involves the standard time-for-money trap, regardless of the fact that your boss is really great.

Profit is actually beyond coaching revenue; it’s the true value your business is creating aside from paying for your time. It requires your attention to find the right people to hire who will expand your affiliate beyond your own knowledge, values, and capacity. The owner mindset changes how your affiliate delivers value.

If you're struggling to make this change, we’ve all been there. The team at Two-Brain Business will help you get on the road to meeting your goals by shedding your coaching mindset and moving forward to being a true owner!

3 Reasons You Should Love Orange Theory and Other HIIT Trends

If you've been around the mentors at Two-Brain Business, you've heard us discuss the importance of moving from a mindset of scarcity to the Abundance Mentality. This thinking isn't some woo-woo hippie view of the universe, but a practical understanding of the fitness market and the position that CrossFit occupies within it.

One way applying the Abundance Mentality is looking at the five-mile radius of opportunity around a gym and refraining from fighting over the same couple hundred fitness enthusiasts within that area. Instead, we should focus on the other 40,000 people in those five miles still sitting on the couch--now that's an abundant market!

We should apply the same thinking to franchises like Orangetheory Fitness and other HIIT programs which we see growing in popularity across North America. These gyms and systems are fantastic for CrossFit, and here are three reasons why we love them:
1. They are introducing masses of people to high-intensity interval training. Their marketing machine is effective at getting more people off of the couch and through their doors because they have made HIIT trendy, sexy and non-threatening. The "jump" to CrossFit (which we know isn't a jump at all, but bear with me here) looks a lot more manageable after an athlete has some experience with other methodology.

2. These gyms have introduced a higher price point to the market at about $30/class. CrossFit used to boast the most expensive price tag in the group fitness category, but now, millions of people have been conditioned to see the value in paying $150-$250/month to pursue their fitness goals.

3. There is a built-in limitation and proverbial ceiling to their fitness precisely because they are replicable: athletes often reach a plateau with their results or experience monotony and boredom. We often hear how well P90x and Insanity work the first time, but on the second or third time through the tapes, people are less inclined to push themselves as hard because they know what's coming. The mental stimulation and novelty have worn off, leaving them looking for the next fitness movement to try.

There is no need to look at Orangetheory, HIIT Gym, Bodytek or even P90X as competition at all. Instead, they're excellent starting points for all of those 40,000 couch-bound potential CrossFitters within our five-mile radius. You can only run on a treadmill so many times, row 500m so many times, and do so many burpees before you begin to ask yourself if this the rest of your fitness life. We are the next logical step. We are the “What’s next?”

CrossFit is and has always been very grass-roots. No high-budget marketing campaigns, fancy equipment, saunas or jacuzzis. What we do have are good people who provide a platform for their clients to achieve some amazing results through physical preparedness and functional fitness. People who are ready to find us will do so at the right time; and we will be ready as their final fitness destination.

www.twobrainbusiness.com/help

**Brian Alexander**
Two Brain Business Mentor
Owner/CIO (Chief Inspirational Officer) - CrossFit Illumine & Illumine North
Today’s guest, Gretchen Bredemeier joins us on the show and she is here to talk about coaching kids. I have been coaching kids since 1996 and I have learned a lot about what it takes to motivate kids. Why do I say motivate kids instead of train kids? Because there are already a lot of programs out there on how to train kids, however the kids must want to be there. The parent has to bring them but if the kid doesn’t like the class they won’t stay and Gretchen is an expert in this area.

Even more so with kids than with adult’s, success is important for motivation. While Gretchen frequently asks kids to create their own games she doesn’t necessarily let them run wild the entire hour. On the other hand, she doesn’t burn herself out by trying to have full control over every second of a Kids class.
Gretchen in this episode talks about how they get more kids, keep more kids, price their programs, and grow their programs. Gretchen’s personality is also a big takeaway for this episode. If you can find someone like Gretchen to embrace interpreneurship and grow their own kids program under your umbrella, this can be a win for both of you. Be sure to take good notes and reach out to Gretchen with any questions you may have at the conclusion of the episode!

In this Interview:

- What to charge for a Kids Program?
- How to teach kids that it is okay to be emotional in front of peers?
- How to deal with difficult parents when handling progression of young athletes

Plus:

- Where can current box owners find a person like Gretchen to start a kids program?
- Growing a sports team program at your gym
- What is an appropriate coach to athlete ratio with the kids program?

About Gretchen:

Gretchen has been at Loco for almost four years and coaching since 2015. In addition to coaching regular classes she is the coordinator for the youth programs at Loco and hopes to expand into classes to include the elderly, those in detention centers, and shelters. She is an expert in bodyweight movements and has a background in deaf education and also works as an interpreter. Originally from Indiana, she currently lives in Leesburg, VA with her husband Brian.

Timeline:

0:57 – Gretchen Bredemeier Introduction
4:03 – What brought Gretchen to coaching kids and to coaching CrossFit?
5:36 – First start at coaching kids at Loco
6:53 – What does a well-run Kids program look like?
8:58 – Implementing an on-ramp program for a kid’s program

10:32 – What to charge for a Kids program session?

10:52 – How exposing kids to a group environment can create a barrier?

11:53 – Recognizing kids who demonstrate leadership ability through a weekend workout

15:08 – Teaching kids that is okay to be emotional in front of peers

16:52 – How does progression happen within the Kids program?

18:31 – Dealing with parents who feel their kid needs to be at a higher level

20:03 – When to host Kids classes that is most convenient to kids and parents?

22:25 – Letting kids be kids and eliminating too many rules

26:20 – Getting kids to take nutrition seriously within the Kids program

28:42 – What is an appropriate coach to athlete ratio within a Kids class?

31:37 – Interpreneurship and how much ownership Gretchen has of the Kids program?

34:54 – Where can current box owners finds a person like Gretchen to help with Kids?

36:18 – How to prepare for a Kids class and psych yourself up

39:19 – What authority does Gretchen have over financial decisions for the kids program?

41:26 – Can kid involvement within bleed over and encourage parents to be involved?

42:12 – All about the Loco sports program

46:44 – How did the sports team program start and how big is it now at Loco?

51:34 – How to grow a sports team program at your gym

53:04 – How to contact Gretchen

Contact Gretchen/Links:

Garage Games Junior Tour
Defining the roles and responsibilities of your staff is a critical piece of building a business that can run without your presence.

I’m going to be honest with you: this isn’t a fun project. But, it might be the most important thing you ever do if you plan to be a successful business owner.

If you haven’t seen it, you should watch the movie The Founder. In a nutshell, it’s about the rise of McDonalds from a single restaurant into the empire that it is today. The success of McDonalds was based on the “Speedee Service System,” which broke all of
the elements of making a hamburger into simple steps and assigned one simple task to each employee.

Every employee knew the part they had to play in executing the mission, which was to deliver a perfect hamburger in 45 seconds. McDonalds grew from one restaurant in 1955 to 5000 restaurants by 1978. Without the “Speedee Service System,” that growth would not have been possible.

McDonald’s isn’t paleo, but there’s a lot to be learned from their approach to employee training. As you grow your business, you need to ensure that standards are met without you having your eyes on every single class and sale.

As you, the owner, move up in value you will need to devote time to higher value activities: networking, sales, management of employees, and hopefully also some time away from the gym. You need to make sure your employees are able to consistently perform the tasks you used to do.

“Scaling up” means creating freedom for yourself, but many owners find the quality of their members’ experience declines when they aren’t present.

This isn’t a problem with your coaches. It’s a problem with how you communicate with your coaches.

People aren’t mind readers. If you want a class to go a certain way, you need to take the time to write down the process from start to finish, in detail, and give your coaches the opportunity to be successful by following the plan. Keep it as simple as possible, and as specific as possible. Don’t assume anything.

You need to do this for all of the roles and responsibilities in your gym: Social Media. Joy Girl. General Manager. Cleaner. Everyone needs to have specific and measurable responsibilities so that they can be successful at their job, and so that you can move up to higher value activities like growing your business.

Not everyone is an entrepreneur or a “self-starter,” and that’s fine. Odds are if you’re the owner, you’re more of a self-starter personality who is good at identifying tasks and getting them done. Your staff may not share the same qualities, and they don’t have to. What they need is clear communication from you and a step-by-step process to follow.

If you find yourself frustrated by an inconsistent member experience in your gym, or having the same conversations with staff, or with people not executing your vision of how things should be done, ask yourself: have I taken the time to write down every step that it takes to be successful in their job? If not, go and do it now.

The hard part of this task is just getting started. In our Incubator, you’ll get templates and the accountability from mentors like Ken to make sure you do.
You and I have a lot in common.

One of these commonalities is that we both suck at “selling”. We’re in this to SERVE, not sell. Right?

Unfortunately, if you’ve been in business for longer than a day, you know you need sales. To help people, you have to pay the rent.

But you keep stopping short of actually signing people up. You don’t have conversations with partners, or ask for referrals? WHY?
In this episode, I talk you through some of the methods we use to help gym owners increase their clientele, keep people longer and make more money.

1. The difference between Sales and Marketing
2. Getting people off “maybe”
3. Knowing what people actually WANT
4. Seeking opportunities to help
5. How to ask for referrals by “thanking up”

There are tactics in this short episode that you can use TODAY to grow your business. Enjoy!

5 TIPS TO NOT SUCK AT SALES

To Sell = To Solve a Problem

The sooner we think about selling as problem solving and not pressuring someone into something they don't want, the better.

Think about it this way, every person you meet with has a problem (nobody is perfect). We offer a service that could solve most of those problems. Start by listening to them to understand the problem, then find the solution in your service. It’s simple, but it’s not easy.

Try these 5 tips in your next No Sweat Intro:

1. Use good body language to convey trust and confidence

Look people in the eye from time to time, sit up straight, nod your head, try not to fidget/look around/check your phone/talk to other people.

2. Find out the emotion behind their goals

A goal is not enough to make a sale. Find out WHY they are here.

3. Ask “YES Questions”

Typically “YES Questions” end in the contraction n’t, and elicit a YES answer. I.E. Wouldn’t you agree? It is socially awkward to say NO, so most people won’t.

4. Pre-Objection Handle
Sick of getting objections and smoke screens? We like to get them out of the way early in the appointment, before the $$$ shows up. At Two Brain Business we use the “Why Not” sheet to do this. Contact us for more info on this. This sheet helps solve the spousal, time and other objections.

5. Option Close

Presenting 2-3 options at the point of sale, along with the question “Which option works best for you?” can be powerful. If they don’t just buy off of that, it at least opens the conversation to find the right fit in your services.

If you need more help, we are here for you.

www.twobrainbusiness.com/help

Jeff Burlingame

Two-Brain Business Mentor
Owner – Friction CrossFit

THE UNEXPECTED STRATEGY FOR BUSINESS GROWTH: LEADERSHIP

Often times businesses fail to grow, not because of products or systems, but because the leader stops growing. So, what is the number 1 thing Gym owners are missing when it comes to leadership?

The #1 Thing Gym Owners Are Missing When it Comes to Leadership
While there are a lot of great leadership models, it is hard to overlook the leadership model of the United States Army. It is simple, yet brutally effective, a lot like good programming at your gym.

From the official leadership manual of the U.S. Army

- **Direct**—direct leaders use face-to-face continuous contact with those under their command.
- **Organizational**—organizational leaders influence a team of sub-teams, without direct contact with the majority of their down-line employees.
- **Strategic**—strategic leaders must influence a team of organizations, often geographically dispersed, with little direct contact with most team members.

As the micro gym market evolves, many gym owners find themselves moving into higher value roles. This is a key concept of the TwoBrain Mentoring Process. With high value roles, often comes less direct contact with team members.

Let's quickly define these levels as they relate to our business model.

**Direct** - This is the customer service level of our business, at this level of leadership, the business owner is coaching most classes and has constant day to day contact with all members and employees.

**Organizational** - At this stage of leadership, the business owner is spending more time developing coaches and working on basic systems like their website, client retention software, Facebook groups, and other marketing.

**Strategic** - At this level of leadership, the owner is developing new ideas to move the business forward. New programs, new revenue streams, new marketing engagements, partnerships, continuing education, and developing strategic relationships within the community. A General Manager and/or Head Coach is in place as the organizational leader, developing the staff to deliver on the direct leadership level.

A good friend of mine recently identified that a lot of gym owners who have had success at the organizational level, are finding themselves missing one key element that will help them make the leap to successful Strategic Leadership, and continue to influence their teams to perform while they spend their time working in higher value roles.

That key element is the ability to cast vision. With out a clear, concise vision that captivates and inspires, a team will always regress when the key leaders take on new tasks.

**How to cast a vision for your team...**

Vision should be clear, concise, convicting, compelling, courageous and the list of C words goes on. But what does it look like to actually put that vision in front of others.
1. Have visual aids - Few people can verbally cast something that is in its very nature visual! Pictures of buildings, land, groups of people, equipment, and websites, etc. will help people SEE the vision.

2. Practice - You should practice casting your vision to individuals that have little or no association with your business. Find mentors and friends from other areas of your life and tell them what you want to achieve. Hold nothing back! “The empires of the future, are empires of the mind” - Winston Churchill

If the people you have chosen love and respect you, they will identify holes and weak areas of your vision - do NOT be defensive, invite them into the conversation. You will need to be an expert at massaging these knots out each time you cast your vision.

3. Remain open minded - Through these conversations, your vision will begin to take shape as something that people can see and understand, your vision should be agile and easily shaped, but your convictions should remain strong.

4. Create buy in - Meet with key individuals on your team and invite them to share the vision with you. Ask for their input, tell them what their role will be. Let them contribute!

5. Team meeting - Invite your team to a meeting, be sure to set it apart from other meetings. You can do this by changing the location, having an agenda with your logo, buying lunch, or doing a fun team building activity.

In this final step, it is key that you listen to understand. It sounds simple but it is not, often we listen to answer, we feel attacked when people can't see the vision clearly! Listen to understand, and invite your team to contribute!

Finally, create a strategy, and empower your organizational leaders to make decisions and execute. If you need help refining your vision, or creating systems and strategy, check out The TwoBrain Incubator, it is hands down the best tool I have seen to help gym owners implement systems and strategies that are customized to the each individual business owners unique needs and vision.

DO YOU KNOW TOO MUCH?

I can't count the number of times I've been told, "I have self-diagnosed ADD".

I say it myself. But it's not true.

The problem isn't a lack of focus. It's not a condition or affliction. We simply have TOO MANY ideas.

Thinking of ways to solve problems is not the same as solving problems.
What's the difference? Action. You probably knew that already. So why aren't you taking action?

It's simple: you're paralyzed.

You're analyzing options. You're seeking input, data, and opinion from other gym owners. Maybe you're even writing a "pros vs cons" list. And NONE of it matters with ACTION.

In Jay Williams' closing address at the 2017 TwoBrain Summit, he walked the 180+ attendees through an exercise on action. Then we committed everyone to their action, and checked in with them all within days.

Most seminars, online courses and lectures focus on knowledge; we focus on action.

I used to travel around giving 4 seminars every year. For awhile, I sold courses online. But I stopped doing BOTH of these things when I realized this:

Lack of knowledge isn't the problem. Not anymore.

Lack of action is the problem.

Founding Two-Brain Business in 2016 allowed me to start from a blank slate, with years of mentoring gym owners under my belt. It gave me the chance to rebuild a program from scratch, instead of being married to old ideas like selling courses. So what did I build into the Incubator?

- Accountability.
- A one-on-one relationship with a real mentor, who is really successful in the gym industry.
- A mentoring platform that carries hundreds of NEW videos with updated ideas...and templates to make sure you can use them.
- An aggressive call schedule (the Incubator is a LOT of work. If you're not given a deadline, you'll stop doing the work.)
- Support. First from a mentor, then from an incredibly supportive group.
- Access. Our clients can message us through our private platform and get a response--not a "help desk".
- Clarity. Our clients ALWAYS know the next step, and what they're supposed to do every day.

Why did I see the value? Data. Experience. And my own personal flaws.

I know I love to have ideas. I love to chat, gossip and vent on Facebook. Sometimes I procrastinate - okay, I procrastinate a LOT. So I hire mentors to hold me accountable, untangle the web of possibilities and tell me where to plant my foot.
I hope you have a mentor in your life. If you don't, you can find one here.

PODCAST EPISODE 76: ACTION!

You probably have a great idea. I’ve never met an entrepreneur who didn’t have at least one.

You might even know the steps to get there.

So why aren’t you doing it?

If you’re a fan of this podcast, you probably own a business.

You probably have an idea to make your business better.

You might not know the first steps. Or (more likely) you’re probably chasing TEN ideas and finishing none.

This episode is dedicated to ACTION: doing the things that will make a difference. Knocking over the first domino. Shipping. Publishing.

When I started writing DontBuyAds in 2008, there was a severe lack of knowledge in the microgym community. We didn’t know what to charge, or how to sell our services. I was guilty. So as I learned from my first mentors, I published everything on that blog (and then in Two-Brain Business, yada yada.) But in the new age of abundant information, there’s a new problem: lack of filtering.
Believe it or not, you probably already know more than you need. The scope of opinion on how to run your business online is vast. Even when it’s backed by comparison and data, the sheer volume can be paralyzing. I wrote, “Do You Know TOO Much?” last week, if you want to read more.

There are two parts to the “success” equation: knowledge, and action.

In my first four years spent mentoring other gym owners, I focused on knowledge: my seminars were crazy-long lectures; I sold courses online of my talking head. I no longer do either, because both stopped working for people.

Gym owners would attend these 16-hour knowledge dumps, go home and—take zero action. Or they’d buy an online course, watch a few videos, get overwhelmed, and stop.

When I founded TwoBrainBusiness.com, I took the opportunity to build our programs around what WORKS: mentorship, accountability, AND knowledge. Anyone who compares the 2017 program with the model I used in 2012 (or even 2015) will immediately see a huge difference in the updated delivery…and the results.

Why are TwoBrain gyms so successful? They’re coached to take action.

How can I produce this much content, and still have time to take 5-6 phone calls lasting an hour every day? How did I write two books (Help First and Two-Brain Business 2.0) in 70 days? How do I focus on shipping when I have over 80 emails, 40 text messages, and hundreds of Facebook notifications every single day?

This is my strategy for Action.

I share this with TwoBrain gym owners on our regular calls, and I’m sharing it with you now. I know this will probably further the divide between gyms doing very, very well and gyms who aren’t going to make it. Gym owners who take action will pull even further ahead of gym owners who don’t, and this episode will make that divide even broader. I’m okay with that. To save The Movement, I believe some of us need to push even farther, and then model success for everyone else. Are there millionaire gym owners out there? You’d better believe it. Do they own multiple locations and have thousands of clients? Not most of them. What IS the difference between you and them?

Action.

Enjoy the podcast, and when you’re ready to take your OWN action, click here to kick off the Incubator.
HOW TO CHOOSE A MENTOR

The #1 thing most successful business owners have in common: they have a business mentor. But you already knew that.

When I started mentoring gym owners in 2012, I was drawing on my own experience in the gym AND what my own mentors had taught me. I got lucky: the first mentor I hired, way back in 2009, was exactly the right fit for my business at the time. He gave me clarity and accountability, and saved Catalyst.

Ten years and millions of dollars later, I still have mentors. They're more expensive (I commit to spending $100,000 per year in mentorship) but I'm saving YEARS by avoiding the "learn as I go" mistake.

My mentors in 2017 are quite different from Denis, my 2009 savior. But I still call Denis often; even though I'm now dealing with larger problems, his advice always grounds me.

Anyway...

After five years of mentoring gym owners, I know that not everyone is a perfect fit. We accept about 3 out of every 10 who apply for mentorship from TwoBrain.

For those who DO fit, I ask them to start with this exercise:

First, think back in your life. Who was one person who changed the course of your life--it could be a teacher, preacher, coach or creature--who influenced you enough to change your course? Maybe they gave you a new perspective; maybe they just gave you a kick in the pants. Who was it?

If you've had an influential mentor before, the answer should be obvious.

Next: what was their teaching style? Were they Socratic, asking you questions until you came up with the answer yourself? Or were they militaristic, telling you only the next step? How did they get you to change your mind?

Third question (and most important): How did they spur you to action? How did they hold you accountable?

We now have TWELVE mentors at TwoBrain. Each of us have a slightly different style. Mine is to say, "Here are the three things you have to complete before Tuesday. Here are the videos and here are the templates. You good?" but Ken will ask, "How do I know you're going to have this done before our next call?" and have his mentoring clients tell HIM how they're going to be held accountable. Both work.
Next, how do you learn best? Education is part of mentorship. Are you better to work through a scenario with a mentor, or watch a video, or both? Are you better to write a staff handbook from scratch, or to copy mine and then edit with your own preferences?

Finally, how much time do you have to actually do the hard work? That's pretty important. Years ago, I thought it would be enough to sell people "how-to" videos. There was a lot of knowledge (and about 100 hours of sweat on my part) in the videos. But people didn't ACT on the knowledge. So when I moved to found TwoBrainBusiness.com in early 2016, I knew 1:1 mentorship HAD to be the core of my practice.

Here's how I work best, as a mentee:

1. A quarterly review of my mission in life (to serve those who serve others)
2. Review of my wins and metrics
3. Prioritization of my annual goals
4. Clear steps to take this quarter
5. Clear steps to take this month
6. Metrics we'll use to track success
7. Accountability and milestones

If you're familiar with the TwoBrain process, that won't be a surprise: it's how we do our monthly mentoring calls after the **Incubator**. It's the process I've learned to be most effective after five years as a mentor and ten as a mentoree.

It's quite a bit different from just telling you "the answer" to a problem (I wrote about that more in [Consultants vs Mentors](http://www.twobrainbusiness.com/consultants-vs-mentors)).

Here's what I suggest: write your answers to the above questions on a clean white piece of paper. Take your time.

Here are the 5 questions again:

1. Who was one person who changed the course of your life?
2. What was their teaching style?
3. How did they spur you to action?
4. How do you learn best?
5. How much time can you invest in being mentored?

Then book a call with at least two established mentors in the gym industry. Here's a link to our free "Help First" call:


...you're welcome to start there. Go ahead, talk my ear off! I enjoy meeting new gym owners, because I know your desire to serve is true; you're in this for all the right reasons.
That's why I'm a mentor; it's also why I have mentors. Soon, you will too. You'll never regret it.

Hope this helps!

Chris

PS - there are very few "wrong" answers here. Don't worry.

KILLING THE CANARY

Even when things are amazing, it's very easy to focus on the "problem areas".

Our brains are wired to detect flaws. But we often get "false positives": cues or feedback that seems to knock all the good stuff off the table. We fixate on negative feedback even when it doesn't represent the average client. And when someone says they don't like a class time on our client surveys...well, we want to smash the whole puzzle and start from scratch! Right?
Brian just shared a fantastic message with his coaches (he oversees 30 of them between two gyms, and relies on his strong leadership style to inspire them to take the right action when they're out of his sight).

Brian's crew was starting to report that "some of the members" had problems with "some of the services" or "some of the class times". These are always hard to pin down (WHICH members? What EXACTLY did they say?) but Brian has been through this before.

Over a year ago, the rates at CrossFit Illumine rose. A small--but very vocal--minority of clients quit to make a point about the prices. Most have since come back, but at the time, Brian had to fight the temptation to back down from his core values and cave in to keep them.

This is how he got through it, and the lesson he shared with his staff today:

There will always be a small minority of people who complain about everything. For example, not including Spark in Unlimited memberships, or charging extra for speciality programs, or charging for nutrition advice, not having enough classes, CrossFit being too expensive etc… while we listen to everyone, we act according to our vision for the gym and don’t let the “Loud Minority” sway us because we understand that they don't see the big picture we do.

When I hear, “Everyone is complaining, or “Everyone thinks this….” I know that “everyone” is not “everyone” and it is just the “Loud minority”. That loud minority, while welcome at Illumine, aren’t our perfect clients. If we waivered on our position for every little complaint, we would have no direction. We'd have 100 different programs at 100 different prices and 100 concessions for each one.

We don’t do that. We deliver an amazing service and experience. For those who appreciate that will stay, and the “loud minority” will leave eventually. It’s a simple filter.

My personal Mission Statement is:

Relentless with your vision
Stoic in your actions
Empathetic in your interactions.

What Brian and I have learned is that following the minority is a disservice to the majority. Just as it's important to train your strengths, it's important to focus on your happy clients most of the time.
Let me give you another example:

The new Facebook Page Video cover looks really cool (you can see ours [here](#). Turn on the sound for the full effect.) Most people will love it. Gyms that use it will have a tiny bit more sway over gyms that don't. Facebook has data showing higher conversions on pages using a video cover. You can turn it into an ad, then a custom audience for viewers, and then a retargeting campaign...the possibilities abound.

But two or three people on my Facebook feed say, "I hate it when videos autoplay on my phone."

They can turn autoplay off, but probably don't know it. And frankly, some of these people invite me to play Candy Crush on a daily basis. But still...it's tempting to stop a massive action because a tiny minority says so.

Perfect is the enemy of good. Not everyone will like everything you do. That's fine. Your best clients will thank you for your consistency...and giving them what THEY love.

**HOW TO FIRE YOURSELF... THE RIGHT WAY**

By Jeff Burlingame, TwoBrain Mentor
So you don’t want to clean your gym anymore? Or run payments? Or deal with retail?

Whatever it is that you don’t want to do… How do you get out of doing it?

At Two Brain Business we guide our clients to higher value roles, eventually to the that of the CEO. This allows them to do more work ON their business and less work IN their business, thus making it more profitable. #emyth

Here is our step by step process to get there, no matter the role:

1. Do the job. And learn how to do it right. Find out what works and what doesn’t, so that another employee doesn’t end up doing things the wrong way.
2. Document EVERYTHING. Once you are happy with how the job is done, write it all down. This is an SOP (Standard Operating Process). It starts with how to do the job and ends with an employee contract, evaluation and pay structure. More HERE
3. Get the RIGHT person on the bus. This person should be excited to take on new responsibility and growth.
4. Test drive. Give them 1-3 months in the role to get traction. If they are unable to be successful by then, or anything else major goes wrong, fire them.
5. Keep OR Fire them.
6. Move on up that ladder to higher value roles

Think about all the hours in the day you could free up just by removing a few roles from yourself. What could you do with that time? Or better yet, What couldn’t you do with that time?

Sky is the limit, be relentless in your pursuit of success.

If you need more help, we are here for you.

www.twobrainbusiness.com/help

Jeff Burlingame
Two Brain Business Mentor
Owner – Friction CrossFit
Is the old model of “hiring a full-time admin person”—or even hiring a GM for your gym—obsolete?

If you’ve hired a GM before, you’ve probably broken out their task list in advance; then calculated the time necessary to do the work; then evaluated their ability to execute. Right?

(If you haven’t done this for all of your staff, including coaches, you need the Incubator.)

And you’ve probably read The Four-Hour Workweek, where author Tim Ferriss uses Virtual Assistants (VAs) to help him reduce his workload and automate replicable tasks. When I read it, the idea of using VAs to help in the service industry seemed like a pipe dream. After all, we’re not fulfilling orders: we’re greeting people at the door, calling them on Fridays, and writing them love notes.

The VA business has changed a LOT since Ferriss’ book. Virtual Assistants are everywhere, but the spectrum of help is broad—from highly-qualified freelancers to low-paid ESL speakers.
Ari Meisel’s company, GetLeverage.com, sits between highly-qualified VAs and your business. GetLeverage.com believes in two steps BEFORE hiring a VA:

Optimizing your processes

Automating your processes

THEN hiring a VA, where possible.

In this Interview:

○ How Ari battled Crohn’s disease and came out on the other side
○ Optimizing the 80/20 rule to get the best results possible
○ An example of how Get Leverage can take on a process and outsource it

Plus:

○ Prioritizing which ideas you want to take on in your business and personal life
○ What is most important when consider which tasks to outsource
○ The top ways that a virtual assistant can help a CrossFit Gym
○

About Ari:

Ari started his career back in 2006 in the real estate industry. After being diagnosed with Crohn’s disease: A highly debilitating digestive ailment, Ari was unable to lead a normal life. He lost weight, energy and the ability to work with any regularity. Through large amounts of trial and error, Ari was able to regain control of his life and beat this seemingly unbeatable disease and is now symptom free.

Ari now runs a virtual assistant company called Get Leverage. Less doing and more living are the results of Ari’s amazing journey back to health happiness and wellbeing. Ari currently lives in New York City, where he spends every ounce of free time with his wife and four kids.

Ari has written several books, including Idea to Execution and Less Doing, More Living.

Timeline:

0:58 – Ari Meisel Introduction
4:55 – What is an example of the type of work Get Leverage will do?

6:05 – Optimizing the 80/20 rule to get the best results

7:59 – Optimizing your time by creating processes

9:45 – An example of a weekly process and how it is handled at Ari’s company

11:19 – Optimizing processes outside of work within your personal life

14:01 – The manual of being you. Creating and documenting your steps

16:31 – Prioritizing which ideas you want to work on in your business and personal life

18:05 – What is most important to outsource to a virtual assistant?

21:44 – At what stage should you outsource your primary service?

25:25 – What are the concerns most people have with using virtual assistants?

26:58 – What are the top areas that virtual assistants can help CrossFit Gyms

29:07 – How much autonomy over money and time should we give to a virtual assistant?

31:21 – Why Get Leverage uses Slack instead of traditional email

33:00 – Thoughts on the freelance lifestyle and Ari’s service

Contact Ari:

https://getleverage.com/

https://twitter.com/arimeisel?lang=en

https://www.facebook.com/arimeisel

https://medium.com/@getleverage

Enjoy the podcast, and when you’re ready to take your OWN action, click here to kick off the Incubator.
Ready to take your revenue to the next level? Start with Personal Training!

PT is easily the best way for box owners to maximize both client value and revenue. By simply adding an option to work 1 on 1 with a coach for 30 or 60 minutes, you can add thousands in new revenue.

Here is how to start:

1. Find the staff
   1. It’s okay if you start the program yourself, BUT, have an exit plan. You can’t be the only one running PT. Also you wouldn’t believe how much of a time suck it can become, preventing you from working ON your business.
   2. Once you find the RIGHT person, interview them. Don’t sell them the golden goose. Make them show you why they are a good fit. Then have them shadow you, review roles and tasks for a PT and sign a contract. More HERE
   3. Pay them 4 / 9. We talk a lot about this with our Incubator and Growth stage clients.

2. Do you have the space?
   1. This space DOES NOT:
      1. Need to be huge
      2. Need to be private
3. Need to be fancy
4. Require new or SPECIAL equipment
2. This space DOES
   1. Need to be 100+ Square feet
   2. Need to have equipment nearby that is easily accessed without interrupting other programs

That’s it. If you have these two things dialed in, you have a PT program ready to launch. The next step is just to take #ACTION and start rolling.

Jeff Burlingame
Two Brain Business Mentor
Owner – Friction CrossFit

PODCAST EPISODE 78: BUILDING CASH FLOW ASSETS, WITH JEFF SMITH

Jeff Smith of Cannon CrossFit in Texas joins us on the show today. Before becoming involved with CrossFit, he was buying up buildings and holding them to develop cash flow assets. This is a super important episode as we discuss the keys to developing and growing your investments to include an array of options. Take notes and be sure to reach out to Jeff with any questions you may have!

Jeff and I both highly recommend Rich Dad, Poor Dad by Robert Kiyosaki.
In this Interview:

What is a cash flow asset?
   o The three ways that real estate investing makes you money
   o The benefiting of getting started with an SBA loan

Plus:

   o Understanding how cheap it is to own your own building – [this is the calculator tool](#) I use (make sure you choose “blended” under “payment types” to determine the real monthly payment).
   o Why you should buy and hold instead of buy and sell
   o Are mutual funds the best investment choice for my portfolio?
About Jeff:

Jeff grew up in Illinois playing just about every sport possible. Following his collegiate football career he enlisted in the U.S. Army where he served as part of the 75th Ranger Regiment.

Jeff was introduced to CrossFit by some of his buddies who were still in the military. It was an immediate fit for Jeff’s competitive drive and the community aspect allowed him to make numerous new friends following his move to Houston. When Jeff is not involved at his gym, he enjoys teaching and mentoring others for how to develop cash flow assets.

Timeline:

1:31 – Jeff Smith Introduction
4:41 – What is a cash flow asset?
7:34 – The three ways that real estate investing makes you money
9:08 – What is the first step to buy your first building?
11:48 – The benefit of starting with an SBA (Small Business Association) Loan
13:30 – Understanding how cheap it is to own your building rather than rent.
15:52 – The ability to sublease your building and create extra cash flow
17:22 – Splitting your business into two separate assets
19:39 – Why are we recommending to buy and hold instead of buy and sell
22:05 – What percentage of a portfolio should be in cash flow assets
23:40 – Why mutual funds may not be the best investment choice
28:19 – Jeff’s experience investing in residential and commercial real estate
31:40 – Deciding between investing in residential versus commercial real estate
33:21 – Where to find a real estate investment group
35:00 – Investing in a franchise. Is it worth it?

38:05 – Investing in others with peer to peer investing

40:00 – Investing in the stock market via index funds

42:05 – Is it possible to turn your business into a passive income business

43:27 – At what stage does your time become too valuable to coach a class

Contact Jeff:

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http://www.cannoncrossfit.com/

YOUR MINDSET IS THE OBSTACLE

PT Starter Kit: Your Mindset is the Obstacle

“You miss 100% of the shots you don’t take” -Wayne Gretzky

How can you land a large PT deal, if you never ask? Simple, YOU CAN’T.

By using a step down close approach you can open up opportunities that previously were unavailable to you or your clients.
Start thinking in terms of “What is best for this client”. Instead of “What can this client afford?” Try this type of close:

Close 1:

1. 5 x week PT – $1500 / month (60 / session)
2. 4 x week PT – $1040 / month (65 / session)
3. 3 x week PT – $840 / month (70 / session)

“Which option works best for you?”

If yes sign them up for that option. If they want to think about it (aka NO) or they just say no, “What is holding you back?” Handle the objection (easier with the WHY NOT sheet) and re-close.

Close 2.

1. 3 x week PT – $840 / month (70 / session) (yup, show it again, you’d be surprised how many go for it the second time)
2. 2 x week PT – $600 / month (75 / session)
3. 1 x week PT – $320 / month (80 / session)

“Which option works best for you?”

If yes, sign them up. If they want to think about it (aka NO) or they just say no, “What is holding you back?” Handle the objection (easier with the WHY NOT sheet) and re-close.

Close 3.

On Ramp options OR CrossFit.

“Which option works best for you?”

That’s it. You get 3 shots at most. And each close should have 3 or less options. We aren’t trying to overwhelm them and create paralysis by analysis.

The pre-requisite to this close would be evaluating the clients needs. I will always go this route if there is a strong emotional component to their goals. So be sure to ask WHY A LOT during your appointment.

Beyond that, be sure to present this confidently and then just WAIT. It is often said that the first one to speak loses. You lose a client, they lose a beneficial program. So do yourself a favor and shut up after presenting.
Be strong and give it a shot, the only thing holding you back is you.

**Jeff Burlingame**  
Two Brain Business Mentor  
Owner – Friction CrossFit

**PODCAST EPISODE 79: HOW TO GET UNSTUCK**

You have a LOT of opportunities.

You probably also have a lot of hard things that you NEED to do. And FOMO. And overwhelm. And maybe a family that would love to see your face in the daylight hours…

How do you take action on everything, or prioritize? Which thing do you do first? How do you overcome fear of possible outcomes and knock over the first domino?

In this short episode, I’ll tell you how.

If you’re a gym owner and haven’t read **Two-Brain Business**, you can get a copy here. My original blog, which started in 2009, was DontBuyAds.com (it hasn’t been updated in YEARS.)

A few resources to get you started:

- **Action!** – my podcast episode from last month
- **Seth Godin’s blog**
- **Whatcha Gonna Do with That Duck?** by Seth
- **The ShipIt Journal** (or I use **750words.com**. Two-Brain family members use the **2017 CEO Book**)

The **TwoBrain Incubator** is here.

The **Dan Martell episode** is here.

Find Gino Wickman’s books (**Traction and Get a Grip** here).

**UpCoach** will soon be available to everyone, not just TwoBrain Business clients.
WHAT THE CBS SPORTS DEAL MEANS FOR CROSSFIT AFFILIATES

Last year’s broadcast of the CrossFit Games on ESPN2 yielded an average of 336,361,000 live viewers. About 60% of those were age 18–49 (ESPN2’s target demographic—although that’s a pretty broad target.)

That’s about a fifth of the MLB Sunday night game. Pretty great for a niche sport like ours. Track and Field competitions, non-title boxing competitions and recap shows all ranked higher during the same week, but women’s tennis and arena football were both ranked lower. Replays of the Games boost those numbers even higher, while "mainstream" sports don’t usually enjoy the repeat viewership. This is interesting, because it suggests that we want to see the actual events unfold…not just catch the score. That’s great news for advertisers and a good sign for longevity.

The relationship with ESPN2 has helped push CrossFit into the public eye; added CrossFit to the list of possible fitness choices for a broader swath of viewers; and generally enhanced our profile from "cult" to "sport".

While ESPN boasts about its "broad portfolio" and total live broadcast hours, CBS Sports should actually be a better media opportunity for CrossFit AFFILIATES. Here's why:

- Demographic targeting is better.
- Mean household income is higher for CBS Sports than any other sports network. Since we're selling a premium coaching service, these are the folks we want to reach.
- CBS Sports ranks #1 among viewers in "Professional and Related Occupations" - in other words, high earners with daytime jobs - again, our target market.
- Over 63% of CBS Sports viewers has a college education or higher, which suggests (to me) a higher affinity for coaching and learning.
- CBS Sports also has a higher reported proportion of female viewers (23%) and the Games should boost that number even higher. Only the Olympics and Track and Field events showed Men's and Women's events in the same broadcast--until now.

Interestingly, CBS is promoting the show as "the single largest participatory sporting event in the world", NOT "The fittest on earth". That's a great start to placing the Games in the context of the everyman. As Greg Glassman said, "They are those that have climbed Everest, but we're all mountain climbers." This is borne out by the replay figures I mentioned earlier. Have you ever watched a baseball game more than once? How about a tennis match?

ESPN2 got a LOT of people to watch CrossFit on TV. I think CBS Sports will get more of the RIGHT people to watch it.

See you in Madison!

Chris

HOW TO BE A GOOD VISITING CROSSFITTER

I travel often. That means I get to drop into a LOT of CrossFit gyms.

I also own the largest CrossFit gym at the intersection of I-75 and Highway 17 -- one of the largest Interstates in the US and the coast-to-coast national Canadian highway. That means I'm lucky enough to have dozens of visitors every year.

Every CrossFit gym is different, and many have different rules around accepting guests. Some charge; some don't. Some give away free t-shirts to visitors; I don't. Some require a bit of advance warning, and others are fine with a spur-of-the-moment drive-through service.
All of those are fine. A gym owner can do anything they want; it's their business.

But WE, as guests, should still do our part to make visiting easy:

1. Expect to pay.
2. Remember that the coach's priority is her members, not visitors.
3. Check the gym's rules before you attend. Remember when you visited a friend's house as a kid, and you acted more politely than you did at home? Yeah, like that.
4. Have your coach email the gym owner in advance, with "care and treatment" advice. Your coach has figured out how to motivate you and give you effective cues. They can help the coach at your vacation destination do the same. And your host will WANT to provide you with the great coaching you get at home--but can't do so if you show up unannounced.
5. Don't show up unannounced. Register for classes early. Be flexible with your schedule (most gyms won't let you fill a spot that a member usually takes.)
7. Don't expect special treatment. If you're a Games athlete, you're a model to the CrossFit community...you're not the exception to the Community rules. Be the best STUDENT in the gym, not just the best athlete.

A lot of these sound like the advice Mom gave you before you slept over at a friend's house, right?

Be on your best behavior. Say "please" and "thank you". Wash your hands, and pass the peas.

How do you say "Thank you!" to your host? Leave a Google review and a five-star rating on their Facebook page.

Don't have anything nice to say? That's okay - don't say anything at all. Enjoy the rest of your vacation, do burpees on the beach, and thank your coach at home for building a better gym.

I love visitors. But I'm also quick to remove visitors who infringe on our hospitality. Visiting Games athletes abide by the same rules as my members, because I run this box for the Catalyst family...not the friends we invite over for dinner. Most boxes do the same.

Visit new cultures. Learn their language. The best part of the CrossFit Movement is not our sameness, but our differences.
EPISODE 80: HOW TO FIND AND HIRE NEW STAFF

Today we are talking about hiring staff. We are joined by two special guests: Two-Brain Mentor Danielle Brown, and Jay Augusta of BarbellJobs.com.

Hiring staff can be one of the most stressful and time consuming processes when it comes to running your gym. Danielle and Jay break down simple steps you can take to make this a painless process and get the right talent fast!

First, Danielle will first talk about the different places you’ll find the BEST staff: from stage 1 (build your own coaches from within your gym community) to stage 4 (post an ad.) That’s where Jay’s service, BarbellJobs.com, steps in.

Jay talk about his new website which is helping gym owners hire coaches and personal trainers online.

This episode is brought to you by Affiliate Guard. Affiliate Guard provides elite insurance coverage for affiliates. Visit their website at affiliateguard.info for more information!

In this Interview:

- Should you be hiring from within your gym or outside sources?
- What important traits should a potential coach or personal trainer have?
- What are some examples of bad hiring experiences?

Plus:

- What mistakes do people make when hiring coaches and personal trainers?
- What should the interview process look like when finding a candidate?
- How to screen online candidates effectively

About Danielle:

Dani grew up in a suburb just south of Boston, Massachusetts. As a kid she was always thinking big, as she contemplated growing up to become an anesthesiologist, an actor, or a marine biologist—but never a business owner, and certainly not a business owner in the fitness industry.

Nonetheless, Dani had an unquenchable thirst for self-help and self-development, and by the age of eighteen she had accumulated about 100 books on those subjects.
Fast forward to September of 2011 where Dani and her now-husband, Jason Brown, opened their gym CrossFit 781. Dani dove into learning anything and everything about business that she could, and found that she enjoyed it very much. A new passion was born. Her husband Jason brought 15 years of experience in strength and condition and practical application of training clients. It was truly a perfect complement.

Today Dani puts all she knows about self-improvement, self-development, and the law of attraction to use every day in her business and while mentoring clients. She truly believes that there are only boundaries where one places them on themselves; that with education comes confidence, and with confidence comes belief in oneself.

About Jay:

Jeremy (Jay) Augusta is the owner of Barton County Strength Club. Like me, Jay runs a multifaceted entrepreneurial vision: he has a coffee company, BarbellJobs.com, and even ran an insurance company for MMA gyms for awhile.

One of Jay’s greatest innovations within BCSC was The Joy Prom, a full-on prom night for the local special needs community. You have to love the guy’s heart; but his BRAIN is on full display in this episode, and his skill for identifying and solving problems is exceptional.

Timeline:

2:37 – Should you be hiring from within or are there other options?
3:38 – What traits do internal candidates exemplify for hiring from within
5:10 – The Advanced Theory Course and learning about what it’s like to be a trainer
6:08 – What if nobody in your gym meets the requirements you are looking for?
8:03 – Reaching out to other local gyms for help with coaches and personal trainers
9:50 – What happens if no internal or local gyms have any candidates?
12:36 – Looking online for coaching and personal training sites
14:19 – What is the worst hiring experience Danny has ever had?
16:10 – Jay Augusta of Barbell Jobs joins us on the call now
16:29 – Jay Augusta’s backstory and how he created Barbelljobs.com

18:28 – Jay’s experience with hiring from within and dealing with conflicts of interest

21:17 – What are some mistakes that people make when looking for coaches and trainers?

23:57 – How do you flush out the weaknesses of an online candidate

25:07 – What should the interview process look like after finding a candidate?

27:35 – What is the average lifespan of a typical coach

29:26 – Attracting and keeping coaches for the long term

31:54 – Introducing a new coach to your community in the right way

32:57 – How does Barbelljobs.com work?

36:17 – Success stories of Barbelljobs.com

37:39 – The importance of asking for a video from a qualified applicant

38:48 – Setting up your posting and profile the right way on Barbelljobs.com

Links – Danielle:

www.twobrainbusiness.com/mentors

Links – Jay

http://www.barbelljobs.com/

jayaugusta@gmail.com
5 WAYS TO GET YOUR MEMBERS BEHIND YOUR PROGRAMS

PT Starter Kit: Getting Your Staff Behind Your Programs

If you want a program to work, you need to get the gym behind it. This includes your staff and obviously your members. Staff is easy, mostly. Show the role/expectations to outline the gig. Show them the value to them ($$$). Show them how easy it is to run and make $$$ by doing the role yourself first and documenting the process.

Members might be more challenging. They don’t usually like change unless there is a huge benefit to them OR they see a ton of value in it OR they desire it too much not to have it.

Try the following:

1. Have your coaches train each other and document the process
   1. Use these videos / blogs / Instagram posts as content and share
   2. Offer a trial session/class to your Mavens/Seed Clients (Pumpkin Planning)
      1. These are your top paying MOST enthusiastic clients, basically just shy of waving a sign for you on the street.
      2. Let them try the product with your prospective coach. Get feedback afterwards. Did they like it? What did they like about it? Would they sign up? Would they refer a friend?
   3. Work the referrals. If a Seed client was up to refer, take the referral and do the same thing. This is Affinity Marketing. Start with their closest relationships (i.e. family, friends, co-workers)
   4. Change your On Ramp to 1 on 1
      1. The BEST way to change the gym philosophy on training is to have EVERYONE start with it
      2. Be sure to offer Personal Training after On Ramp ends, NOT JUST CrossFit
   5. Launch Skill Sessions at your gym
      1. Skill sessions are 30 minute sessions used to work on 1 particular skill
      2. charge for these
      3. take video analysis and run through progressions with the client to get them to accomplish this particular skill in 30-60 days. Proof is in the Pudding

We can all agree that the fastest and safest way for a client to go from point A to point B in terms of their fitness goals is 1 on 1. But how are you selling that idea at your gym? Foster the philosophy and harvest the results.

Jeff Burlingame
Do you REALLY need a partner?

I would describe CrossFit as an owner/operator model. But many of us need a little extra push or need money at start up; or a security blanket; or just a kick in the butt. So we take a partner.

Today we talk about how to start a partnership; when you actually need a partner; and how to get out of a partnership gone bad. Take good notes as this episode could save your sanity and your partnership!

Be sure to download the Two Brain Business Sample Shareholder’s Agreement. This will help your partnership get off to the right start!

Meet the needs of your growing membership base, outfit a new facility, or refresh existing inventory with Rigquipment!

In this Interview:

- My partnership experiences and lessons learned
What are the first steps to starting a partnership?
How to get out of a bad partnership?

Plus:

What role does the operating partner have within the partnership
Why you should use a thirds party to adjudicate the breakup of a partnership
How to define profit within your business and partnership agreement?

Timeline:

2:54 – Partnerships Introduction
3:37 – Chris Cooper’s partnership story and how he started his first gym
9:33 – First step to starting a partnership: Defining the roles and tasks of each partner
10:29 – Second step to starting a partnership: Assign a value to each item a partner brings
11:55 – Third step to starting a partnership: Defining what a perfect day for each partner is
13:11 – Fourth step to starting a partnership: Discuss how each partner is to be paid
13:42 – What is profit?
16:35 – Final step to starting a partnership: Defining how a partner exits the agreement
18:03 – Mapping out how decisions are made in a partnership in a fair manner
19:34 – Having a plan for everything that happens in advance
21:12 – Agreeing on pricing when engaged in a partnership
23:28 – Creating a feedback and accountability loop within your partnership
29:29 – The role of the operating partner within a partnership agreement
31:05 – Let’s say it’s time to get out. How to exit a partnership agreement.
34:57 – What to do when you have less money than your partner
37:42 – What to do when you have more money than your partner
41:23 – How to end a partnership when no agreement is in place
44:12 – Signing a separation agreement when ending a partnership
45:18 – Using a third party to adjudicate the breakup of a company

PODCAST EPISODE 82: DON'T CALL IT A BOOTCAMP

In the CrossFit world, Boot Camps can often have a bad name. However, today we are here to discuss how these can supplement your CrossFit gym and provide a non-threatening environment for new members to get their first start in the CrossFit world. Learn about how to setup a Boot Camp, what to price it at and much more!

Ryan Webber from CrossFit Eternal and Sherman Merricks from CrossFit Dynasty join me to discuss this topic on the show today.

In this Interview:

- Is Boot Camp just CrossFit Lite?
- What is the true difference between a Boot Camp and a full on CrossFit Program
- The secret to using Facebook ads effectively to drive sales for your Boot Camp

Plus:

- How to make sure CrossFit coaches are on board with a Boot Camp Program.
- How to pick the right name and differentiate a Boot Camp from true CrossFit
- How many sales can a Boot Camp generate?

Today’s Guests:

Ryan Webber is originally from Maine but now resides in Charlotte, NC where he runs and owns CrossFit Eternal. He began CrossFit after playing football in college and fell in love with the competitive nature of the sport. He founded CrossFit Eternal in 2010 out of his garage and has since grown it into a world class CrossFit gym.

Sherman is the founder and owner of both Dynamic CrossFit, in Gainsville, Florida, and Notable Guidance. He discovered his passion for sports growing up in Florida and
excelled at basketball through high school and college. After graduating and feeling a huge competitive void, he realized CrossFit could fit the bill and he has never looked back. He has a passion for helping others be their best by improving their fitness and now their life. Sherman’s main focus is to help people reach their goals and still have fun doing it.

Timeline:

2:11 – Bootcamp Introduction

4:30 – Is CrossFit the end all be all? Thinking about offering something different.

6:16 – Is Boot Camp just CrossFit Light?

8:19 – What is in a name? Differentiating a Boot Camp from CrossFit

9:14 – Can you transfer clients from Boot Camp into a full on CrossFit program

11:06 – The difference between CrossFit and Boot Camp programming

16:54 – Finding the right coach for Boot Camp and how they differ from a CrossFit coach.

20:44 – Offering Boot Camps as recurring classes instead of a one off challenge.

24:03 – How often and what schedule should a Boot Camp like class be run.

27:10 – What should a Boot Camp type program be priced at?

31:41 – How many sales can you expect within a Boot Camp program?

38:36 – What it takes on the backend in order to drive sales

41:53 – The secret to using Facebook ads effectively to drive sales for your Boot Camp

44:42 – The specific phrasing your Facebook ads need to have to be effective

46:01 – How to make sure your CrossFit coaches believe in the Boot Camp program as well
48:17 – How do you deal with weather issues when running a Boot Camp outside?

51:55 – Allowing members to perform an express version of CrossFit

**GUIDELINES TO EXPONENTIAL GROWTH**

PT Starter Kit: Want to CRUSH Personal Training Sales?

Here are some general guidelines to success

- Drop the Trial
  - Get them started sooner
  - Refine your intro so that new prospects are happy to start today, not “dipping their feet in the water”
- Make On Ramp 1 on 1 instead of group
  - Ask them “Would you feel more comfortable working with a coach 1 on 1 or in a group?”
  - If they answer 1 on 1, do you have an answer for them?
- Sell PT DURING On Ramp
  - Don’t wait until the end of On Ramp to ask for the sale
  - Talk about the benefits of 1 on 1 training
  - Better yet, show them
- Produce PT content weekly
  - Establish the expertise of your coaches
  - Let them know what you offer
  - How does it benefit them?
- Sell monthly plans instead of packages
  - Month to month packages are much easier to set up and require no maintenance
  - They are often worth much more long term
- Group your membership options instead of creating hybrids
  - Rather than creating a discounted service specific only to a few individuals, try grouping membership options
i.e. Ms. Jones does CrossFit, PT, Nutrition and a monthly InBody. Leave the memberships all separate so she can keep them all for as long as she wants, or drop 1 or 2 options instead of all of them.

This is the tip of the iceberg, but a great place to start nonetheless. Refine the process to maximize the results.

**Jeff Burlingame**  
Two Brain Business Mentor  
Owner – Friction CrossFit

**HOW TO BE A PRO**

Do you think Matt Fraser is learning how to air squat today?

Matt Fraser is a professional exerciser. He's awesome to watch (I hope you got to see him in Madison last weekend; I did.) He won the CrossFit Games and was crowned "Fittest on Earth" for the second year in a row.

If you're in his shoes this morning, do you go back to basics?

Tom Brady has a throwing coach. After every season, he starts from scratch with his coach: learning the forward pass, just like he did as a six-year-old.

Greg Glassman said: “Stick to the basics and when you feel you’ve mastered them it’s time to start all over again, begin anew – again with the basics – this time paying closer attention.”

Steven Pressfield wrote "The Legend of Baggar Vance" and "The War of Art". He also wrote "Turning Pro", a book about developing habits and committing to a higher level in life. Steven is ALSO a professional exerciser, even though it's not his career or even his passion. He's a pro because he turns up to meet his trainer at the gym every day, even when he doesn't feel like it.

He learned to be a pro exerciser by being a pro writer. He doesn't always feel like writing, but he does anyway. And on an interview this morning, he said:

"The defining feature of a professional is the willingness to go back to basics over and over again."

Sounds familiar, right?

When you finish OnRamp, you earn the right to call yourself a CrossFitter.
That doesn't mean you're a professional CrossFit athlete. Not yet.

You have a lifetime of learning ahead of you--and you'll have to practice the air squat all the time--but you get to wear the same badge as me. Welcome, friend!

When you take the CrossFit Level 1 course, you earn the right to call yourself a coach.

That doesn't mean you're a professional coach. Not yet.

You have a lifetime of learning ahead of you--and you have to practice the fundamentals of coaching all the time--but you get to wear the same badge as me. Thank you for your service.

When you open a CrossFit gym, you get to put on a NEW badge: owner.

That doesn't mean you're a professional owner. Not yet.

You have a lifetime of learning ahead of you--you'll go back to "Roles and Tasks" all the time--but you get to wear the same badge as me. Thank you for reshaping our world.

I used to think that being a "pro" meant showing up every day and trying really hard. But I don't think that anymore. As I look over the results of the best gyms in the TwoBrain family, I see other things in common: the willingness to revisit the basics, no matter how successful; the wisdom to seek a coach; and the humility to consider that their way--while good--might not be optimal.

Now, finally: I spent some time with the new CEO of CrossFit, Jeff Cain, this weekend. And I had some good talks with CrossFit's COO, Bruce Edwards, too. Greg Glassman is still the Chairman--and figurehead--of CrossFit, but there's certainly a shift at HQ, and it's a great one for Affiliates. I'll go through that more on my podcast in the next few weeks.

But I have a feeling CrossFit just turned pro, and I'm really excited for the future. So I'm booking calls with my business coach, doing my Roles and Tasks exercises. I'm practicing my air squat, in other words, because I want to be ready for the next level.
No matter how noble our mission, we ALL struggle with motivation.

After a great weekend like I just had, it’s tough to kick the sand out of my shoes (and between my ears) and get back to work at 4am. Even after 22 years as a coach and 12 as an owner, I still need to practice mindset techniques. In this episode, Craig is going to share three that have been extremely helpful.

Craig Hysell is a close friend, a firefighter, the founder of Conviction Training Facility (CrossFit Hilton Head) and the co-host of Conviction Strong Radio.

Craig is a mindset guy. I guess we’re all “mindset guys”—but Craig WORKS on it. While most of us are the victims of our brains, Craig works hard to take control over his emotions, thoughts and feelings. His gym is built on a different hierarchy than most of ours:

Mindset

Nutrition

Mobility and Recovery

Strength
Conditioning

Best Self.

When I say Craig is one of my favorite gym owners in the world, I’m not exaggerating. He’s been through everything with his gym, and his mindset pulls him through it all. He’s a leader in the TwoBrain group because of his philosophy instead of his profit margin.

“Opportunity breeds motivation, success feeds motivation.”

Craig talks about 3 tactics to consistent self-motivation.

“Consistency is the key to progress; progress is the key to happiness.”

“When you chose to become a leader as a coach or business owner, you forfeited your right to be a victim. You’re in charge now.”

Three great quotes out of dozens packed in this podcast.

This is a short episode, but VERY powerful.
Entrepreneurs in the TwoBrain Family spend December planning for the next year.

First, we review "Perfect Day". Then we choose their goals for the year that will lead to Perfect Day: income goals, time goals, lifestyle goals, and--maybe most important--service goals.

We work on the owner first, and then the business, because the business should be a path to the owner's perfect day. In other words, the business serves the owner...not the other way around.

When planning the business' year, I often use the "rocks in a glass" analogy.

[You know the one: you put the big items--or "rocks"--in a glass. Then you fill the holes between the rocks with pebbles. Then you fill the holes between the pebbles with sand. Then you fill the tiny air pockets with water.]

In the business, the "rocks" are service landmarks. They usually occur every quarter or so, but some businesses divide their year into 3, 5 or 6 sections. For the sake of example, we'll stick with four.

My service landmarks at Catalyst are the Intramural Open (beginning of March), the Catalyst Games (beginning of September), and The Gift (Christmas). Obviously, I need a fourth landmark, preferably in early summer. We have an incredible cycling community here; great swimming; and many people want to get out running after a long winter, so
I'm going to tentatively create an early-June event we'll call the Catalyst Duathlon. This is a placeholder; I might change the event later. But an endurance event is also a nice balance to the Gift in December, which is a combination of a weightlifting meet with a big charitable "give".

My calendar, divided into quarters, becomes: Intramural Open - March 1 Duathlon - June 1 Games - September 1 Gift - December 25

(all are approximate dates).

Next, I'll add the "pebbles" - the specialty programs to help my clients best prepare for each of the "rocks".

What can I do to help my clients best prepare for the CrossFit Games Open? Well, they'll need weightlifting groups. Maybe a competitive training cycle. So I'll schedule two eight-week specialty courses (one for each) in the weeks between January 1 and the Open. How can I help them be ready for the duathlon? Couch to 5k groups are always popular, and I can partner with a local bike store to run a cycling program in the weeks after the Open and before this event. How about the Games? Competitive group, obstacle course group or weightlifting program.

Next comes the "sand" in the glass: individualized tweaks I can make for specific clients to tailor my program. This means regular goal reviews, so I set a goal for 30 per month. They'll move in and out of Personal Training or our ID program and nutrition coaching as needed.

Finally, the ever-present, all-filling "water" in the glass: group training. This fills the gaps between everything else we do: the daily dose of constantly-varied functional movement delivered at high intensity. The general prescription that fills all voids.

Now, with my service calendar set, I can begin building my marketing and sales calendar.

"Marketing" is done to people who aren't already using your service, or haven't in the past.

"Sales" is the "Help First" process of guiding your current clients to the best possible service for their goals. It's really coaching, not selling.

"Rocks" require 3 months of marketing and sales. "Pebbles" require two months of marketing and sales. "Sand" requires constant sales (Goal Reviews) and marketing. "Water" requires constant sales and marketing.

When I'm planning the year, I'll also look for serendipitous overlap.
For example, the CrossFit Games in early August will really fire up my clients for novelty (cyclocross? obstacle courses? swimming? Awesome.) So I'll plan little outings around each of these, and usually partner with another community group for cobranding.

On the other hand, we also need to identify the valleys or hurdles to achieving monthly business goals. For example, if you're running a six-week challenge like New You, that won't be tied to any specific event at the gym. BUT you might tie it to a revenue gap, like mid-August. In that case, consider these groups "pebbles" and follow the marketing guidelines above.

When decisions are made in advance, stress is reduced to a huge degree. Micro-managing at the last minute isn't the same as effective planning. Walking through the broad strokes with your team means things are done on time, with focused intent. And that's how you best serve your clients.

THE PATH TO PERSONAL TRAINING

PT Starter Kit: Growing Your Personal Training Stream

By Jeff Burlingame, TwoBrain Mentor

If you are trying to grow your PT program, you first need to create a clear path for clients to get started.

Think about the following questions

- Do you offer a 1 on 1 Intro?
- Do you sell Personal Training and/or a 1 on 1 On Ramp option?
- Do you have a 1 on 1 or group On Ramp?
- Do your coaches sell Personal Training during/after On Ramp?
- Do you offer 30 minute “Skill Sessions”?
- How many coaches do you have offering PT?
- Do you create content to help grow interest?

If you answered no to any of these questions, you may want to re-evaluate your process. Take a step back and walk through your intro and On Ramp process as if you were a new prospect.
The only way to maximize results for your members AND your gym is by leading them. Create a clear path.

**Jeff Burlingame**  
Two Brain Business Mentor  
Owner – Friction CrossFit

**THE FIRST SIN OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

I write over 2000 words every day. Two-Brain Business publishes an article, a video or a podcast every single day (and usually at least two of these.) We’re very active on Facebook, pretty good on Instagram and just okay on Twitter. But I’m STILL guilty of the First Sin of Social: I assume everyone sees everything I do.

When I'm choosing a topic for the day, I sometimes catch myself thinking:

"Nah, I wrote about that in 2009."

...because if you're reading this, you've already read all 400 articles on DontBuyAds.com, plus my three books, plus the 350 articles on TwoBrainBusiness, and the 500 posts I've made on other sites...right?

Of course you haven't!

The first Sin of Social is assuming everyone reads or watches everything you do!

Gary Vaynerchuk's really big idea is to repurpose content. For example, shoot videos of your seminars. Then take your videos and have them transcribed. Publish the transcription as a series of blog posts. Then take the big ideas and quote them on social media.

I teach this to our mentoring team at TwoBrain. I teach it to business owners in our Authority Ladder program (a $40,000-per-year-partnership.) I've even mentioned it to the HQ media department once or twice: when you have powerful ideas, repeat them.

The first Sin of Social Media is the failure to say important things more than once.

Repeat the BIG stuff. We don't want to miss it.

What's the MOST important thing you've ever shared with your audience? Reply to this email and tell me!
THE SECOND SIN OF SOCIAL MEDIA (EVEN BIGGER!)

Yesterday, I wrote you a letter about the "First Sin of Social Media" (failure to repeat yourself.)

But the Second Sin of Social might be even BIGGER.

The Second Sin is putting the "Media" before the "Social".

My friend Sherman Merricks recently sold out his Revive program--an eight-week all-inclusive program, priced around $400--with 50 clients pre-registered...without using any social media ads. Sherman puts the SOCIAL in social media.

He might as well be the Mayor of Gainesville: he talks to EVERYONE. In his gym, outside his gym...he has a huge personality and works on it all the time.

On a recent podcast episode, I asked Sherman what he spent on Facebook ads. He said "nothing." But he does spend a LOT of time talking to people. He gets out from behind the screen and shakes hands.

Does he host Facebook Live videos? Absolutely. And who comments on them? Mostly the people he already knows.

Social media is a funnel that pulls everyone in. It's very easy to get "funnel vision" and forget that relationships are REALLY started and maintained outside the phone, through handshakes, hugs and eye contact.

At Catalyst, most of our "sales" come from Goal Reviews and No-Sweat Intros: in-person meetings where we ask, "What do YOU want?" instead of trying to push an idea through media.

Does that means Facebook and Instagram and Twitter are useless? Of course not. They amplify your message. They show your personality. But they don't replace either.

PODCAST EPISODE 84: Q+A WITH COOP

I get a LOT of questions.

Sometimes it’s from people who read my books. Sometimes it’s people who watch our videos on YouTube or Instagram. Sometimes it’s people who get an email from me--almost daily, lately.
Sometimes it’s from people listening to this podcast. If that’s you, thank you. Sometimes it’s even people who hear an idea on another podcast, or another website, or even the CrossFit Journal, trace it to the source, and find me that way. To those people, my deepest thanks for the extra work.

I’ve said before that some of my OLDER content is outdated. There are parts of Two-Brain Business that weren’t there in 2012, and there were parts in the original that are no longer in the new edition. New books are coming. And every few months, I’m tempted to pull Two-Brain Business— the bestselling fitness business book of all time—from the shelves, because things change.

Instead, I record this “Ask Coop” episode every year or so as an update.

The first question is one from a listener who pegged me on something I said a few months ago: that I see a polarization happening in the microgym community.

The second one is from a reader who pegged me even HARDER on the subject of seminars and online courses and mentorship.

I’m brutally honest in both questions, even though they might get me into trouble.

With those out of the way, I get into the BIG stuff:

- Where should affiliates concentrate their marketing?
- How do you create SO MUCH content?
- Why do you shoot your videos in that other building? Where’s your gym?
- How do I work with sports teams?
- I have a big idea—how do I promote it to the CF Community?
- Do you display your workouts on your site?
- Why does your site have so many membership options?
- How do I know when to hire a GM?
- How Do You choose Mentors for TwoBrain?

I get enough emails that I could literally do a Q&A on EVERY episode. But I like to connect you with big thinkers and big ideas instead of repeating myself all the time.

Got a question? Email chris@twobrainbusiness.com.
WHO DO YOU WANT TO HIRE?

By Jeff Burlingame, TwoBrain Mentor

When you’re looking to recruit employees for your gym, it’s hard to know which ones will be your best employees and which ones will just be good. That’s why I’ve broken potential employees down into 3 categories: good, better, and best.

A good potential employee may be someone who is a member and has been involved in your community for awhile. They’re open to going through something like the Advanced Theory Course that we include with our incubator to train coaches so that you don’t have to.

The problem with the good category of potential employees is that they don’t have a lot of time and likely have another job. They’re committed, but not as much as you’d like, and they often miss meetings due to their other commitments.

They may be able to cover some hours for you but they’re not going to go above and beyond to get involved in your community. They may be new to town and have their L1 and may have other experience and certifications but if they can’t commit to more hours, they’ll become a liability later down the line. Ideally, you want to hire slowly and fire fast so don’t rush to hire someone in this category if you don’t have to.

Better potential employees may be members who get involved through ATC (Advanced Theory Course) or other training with you and now can commit to 5-10 hours per week. These people are consistent, they never complain, and they show up to most of your events and get involved in your community. They likely come to most, but not all, of your employee meetings once a month. Interns and those fresh out of school fall into this category so long term they’re looking for what the next step is for them and that may be elsewhere.

The best category of potential employees are young, hungry, consistent, enthusiastic, and happy. They may be new to the industry or have spent a little bit of time within the industry but they’re not burnt out from previous bosses. These people are open to starting small and building a career so they’re eager to learn about opportunities to grow. These are the types of people who will show up for every event you have, all of your meetings, and never complain about having to go.

Start by profiling the individuals that you’re looking to hire. Do they fall into the good, better, or best category? None of them are bad, but some of them are better than others in the long run.

Jeff Burlingame
I’M REALLY BAD AT THIS…

...testimonials.

I write about social proof all the time. When considering any service, you ask yourself, "Does someone like me do something like this?"

Maybe it's my age (over 40) or maybe it's my shy Canadian breeding, or maybe it's my inner farmer, but I'm REALLY bad at trumpeting client success. After all, it's theirs--not mine--to share, or not share. I value confidentiality over anything else.

My web conversions expert, Raphael, gets so upset. Here's the stuff he writes to me:

"You have the best-selling book of all time. You've done over 1200 free calls to help gym owners. Over 330 have graduated from your program. Why isn't that on your website?!?"

I can almost hear him swearing (in French) from here.

Every Friday, I get over 80 gym owners sharing their weekly "bright spots". I could share these, but I don't, because the practice of gratitude is for THEIR benefit, not mine. Having a mentor is about the client; not the mentor.

Just yesterday, I got both of these:

"just got our draft year-end statements. Year over year, we added $61,000 in gross profit but only $22,000 in expenses. Overall, that generated a 300% increase in net profit"--plus his wife's salary on TOP of profit.

"Wanted to personally THANK-YOU for everything. [My wife] just emailed her nursing manager giving her notice to be casual (only "work" 2x month) starting Oct 2nd. Wouldn't have been possible if it wasn't for your help/guidance! I'm forever grateful - and so are 8 kids!!!"

Me: Wow! Congrats!!! I'm proud of you!

Him: "Dude - my wife don't work - I have $15k in savings - bought a newer pickup - and am planning a 3 day getaway for [my wife] and I while grandparents have kids. Last year at this time I had just [lost a coach] and was coaching 60 hours/week just making ends meet! Miracles happen if u trust the process."

My first instinct was to congratulate them, and then add their emails to my personal "bright spots" list. But today, I'm sharing them, because I'm bad at it.
I'm sharing these because I'm PROUD of the folks who wrote them. Success in business is infinitely harder than success in CrossFit competitions. The great news is that you don't need special genetics (or sponsors) to win.

The testimonials on the TwoBrain site were freely given, without request. That inspires me to write unsolicited testimonials for other small businesses--and I'll do so after I send you this letter.

Here's my big question: are you better at asking for testimonials than I am? I hope so...but I probably won't change.

THESEUS’ BOAT: MAINTAINING YOUR CULTURE AND REPLACING YOURSELF

After conquering Crete, Theseus and the young warriors of Athens journeyed home on a boat with 30 oars. Upon arrival, the boat was lifted up as a display of their triumph for hundreds of years.

Obviously, a wooden boat eventually rots. Over the years, each board was taken out and replaced as necessary, until eventually none of the original boards remained. But the boat
was still on display.
Plutarch asked, "Is it still Theseus' boat?"

How does your business survive change?

As you move to higher-value roles, you'll have to replace yourself in each area of your business. First, you'll stop mopping; then you might cut back on coaching, or posting pictures from your workouts. Members will eventually notice.

I remember one of my favorite members, Kath, asking me, "Why do you run and hide in your office all day instead of standing on the floor and chatting with people like you used to?"

The answer, of course, was that my business wasn't growing while I was standing around for 12 hours talking to people. But I couldn't share that with a client, because they wouldn't understand it (from her perspective, everything was great; from mine, I was dead-broke, exhausted and barely containing my constant anger. I was ready to fold the business.)

People notice when you replace the planks. Does that mean you should let the boat rot to preserve its authenticity? Of course not.

Here's another (more recent) example of the Theseus' Boat exercise:

A young Canadian boy inherits his grandfather's axe. He's inspired to become a lumberjack like his grandfather, so he starts chopping down a tree.

Halfway through the tree, the handle of the axe breaks. So the boy replaces the handle and continues to chop.

The axe head soon becomes dull. So the boy sharpens the head, and notices there's not much edge left. So he buys a new head and finishes cutting down the tree.

His father congratulates him for cutting down the tree with his grandfather's axe. But did he?

To the boy (and his father), he DID cut down the tree with grandfather's axe, even though both parts of the axe (the handle and the head) were new. In a literal sense, it wasn't grandfather's axe at all: grandpa had never touched that handle or sharpened that blade. But in a subjective sense, it was "grandfather's axe" the boy used, because the STORY made it so.

Your brand isn't your logo. Your brand is the feeling people get in your gym, and the story they tell about it.
When clients are welcomed to class, are they welcomed warmly by every coach—as you would do?

If a client's bill isn't paid on time, are they treated kindly, as YOU would treat them?

The story binds the boat together. Your policies, your pictures and your posts are all part of your story.

Do you replace yourself with systems that maintain your story, or with people who change the story?

If your staff don't know how to tell your story, they’ll tell THEIR story. Give them a system—here's how you greet people, here's how you start the class, here's how you lead the warmup—or the story will change.

John Maxwell wrote that you "can't reach the next level until you've completely replaced yourself at this level." He was talking about replacing planks in boats. But not every boat is Theseus' boat, worthy of celebration and display. For your legend to endure beyond its basic parts, make sure your story is consistent.

PODCAST EPISODE 85: THE PERFECT WORKOUT FOR ENTREPRENEURS

I love entrepreneurs.

Fitness led me to entrepreneurship. Now it’s time to help other entrepreneurs find fitness.

Why do business owners *really* need fitness? Sure, like the rest of us, they might need to lose a few pounds. And everyone knows that exercise relieves stress and improves focus.

But entrepreneurship requires more than resilience and focus: it requires a fit BRAIN.

One of my companies is IgniteGym. Our mission is to build cognitive fitness. These are the 10 elements of cognitive fitness:

- Memory
- Attention
- Motor Control
- Sensory Processing and Perception
o Organization, Planning and Logic
o Language
o Social, Emotional functioning
o Computation, calculation
o Motivation
o Creativity, imagination

ALL of these are critical for entrepreneurs. And they’re all enhanced by exercise. In fact, I’d argue they’re the REAL purpose of exercise for business owners.

But what KIND of exercise?

In this episode, I discuss each of the 10 cognitive domains, and how to build them with different types of exercise. I share my personal regimen, and how I get business owners at the TwoBrain Workshop to build workouts into their day.

Know a business owner? Share this episode with them.

The first step is BDNF: Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor. This is what John Ratey called “Miracle-Gro for the brain” in his book, “Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain”.

What triggers BDNF? Aerobic exercise.

In this episode, I talk about the necessity of developing BRAINpower for business owners. Then I tell you specifically WHAT to do; how I would build a perfect brain-training week for a business owner; and what I do every week to make me more effective at growing my businesses.

If you’re a gym owner, there are tips in this episode to help other entrepreneurs (and, let’s face it; yourself.) If you own another business, this episode will tell you what to do; how long to do it; and where to find a coach (because you’ll need one.)

I refer to my podcast episodes with Ari Meisel of GetLeverage and Nelson Dellis, four-time US Memory Champion.

I mention IgniteGym.com and Zecutive.com too. You’ll find some sample workouts and challenges on the latter site.
"When I ride alone, my wheel is always in front." - Greg Glassman

I don't remember when he said it, but the video stands out clearly. Because I love bikes, and so does Greg.

In the few times I visited the Scotts Valley home of CrossFit HQ, Greg always arrived by bike. He talks about riding bikes as a kid in his early videos, and CrossFit now has its own official bike for sale on the main site. But bikes aren't the point: comparison is.

The value of group exercise in a gym is the same as the value of a peloton: you can be pulled by the pack, or you can measure yourself against the leaders.

The Games shows us who the leaders are in fitness. Who are the leaders in the fitness business?

I'll introduce you to a few I know in a moment. But first, here's why we don't know who the leaders REALLY are:

No one is keeping score--there's no centralized ledger of which gyms are actually profitable.

Many are keeping the wrong data--it's easy to assume a box with 400 athletes is profitable. That's a red herring.
There's no formal definition of success. At TwoBrain, we use "perfect day" because the term encompasses more than money, but this is specific to the gym owner by definition.

To put this back into bike terms: we don't know the course, we don't know how fast anyone is going, and we haven't defined a finish line.

So who is winning?

Who should we be drafting?

I've been tracking data on affiliates since 2013. The Gym Checkup on the TwoBrain site, and our surveys, and thousands of month-end tracking sheets give me the start of a database. Others (like our partners, Incite Tax and ZenPlanner) have a broader but more general data set.

Here are two to follow:

Ken Andrukow - Reebok CrossFit Ramsay - close to 500 members in Calgary, he'll hit 2M in revenue long before the year ends. Profit margin is higher than our 33% prescription.

Jay Williams - owns the largest gym in the UK (Thames CrossFit). Visits once or twice each year. Runs his other gym (CrossFit Hale) from California, where he lives.

Yes, these are both senior mentors at TwoBrain.

Are there affiliates with more members? Absolutely.

Do those affiliates gross the same amount--and, FAR more importantly, do they have the same profit ratio and low turnover? Or are they scrambling to get 40 new clients every month because they HAVE to?

We'll never know, will we? And that's the point.

On a phone call with Nicole Carroll last week, I got really excited (who wouldn't?) about some new ideas coming out of HQ. Let me assure you: the focus really IS on affiliate growth and development--not just helping more people affiliate, but on helping affiliates more. I'm more optimistic about The Movement than I've ever been.

I was left with one hanging question, though. Nicole referred to "...some of our thriving Affiliates" as a testing-ground for a new coaching service. And later, I wondered, "Who are these thriving Affiliates, and what's the definition of 'thriving'?

I guess it's MY job to ask.
I do around two free calls every day now (over 1200 since I started!)

Around 20% of the callers really are thriving, and know they want mentorship because they can see the finish line. That's great. All successful business owners have mentors; I didn't invent mentorship.

But the other 80% of callers say they're NOT thriving, and can't put a finger on why. Without a clear definition of success, they don't know why their gym isn't making more money.

I was raised on a farm. Sometimes baby animals die without an obvious reason; we call this "failure to thrive." But even if the reason for their death isn't obvious, it exists; and if the reason for their peril is discovered in time, the animal usually survives. As a kid, I saw many young lambs fed warmed-up "Lamb-o Mix" out of a beer bottle after their mother had abandoned them. I saw odd objects pulled from calves' throats when their airways were obstructed. I learned that, by nature, we're BUILT to thrive; that if we're not thriving, there's usually a simple reason. It just requires experience to figure it out.

I like to surround myself with old farmers, fast cyclists and wealthy entrepreneurs. These are my mentors; they're why I thrive. I measure myself against them.

How will YOU know when you're thriving?

HOW TO SELL OUT ANY SPECIALTY PROGRAM

HOW TO SELL OUT ANY SPECIALTY COURSE

BY JEFF BURLINGAME
TWO-BRAIN MENTOR
By Jeff Burlingame, TwoBrain Mentor

Program Rollout

Filling programs can be difficult, especially if you don’t have a strategy or plan. In order to get the most involvement and the most signups for any program whether it be a barbell club, a 6 week course, seminars, or even personal training and nutrition programs, we follow this template.

6 WEEKS OUT

Host a 20 minute session with all of your coaches to test out pieces of your upcoming course. Be sure to record this session so that you can use clips from it as marketing content. Post the clips from this recording publically on your social media profiles at least once a week for the next 2 weeks.

4 WEEKS OUT

Host a free 30 minute clinic with your mavens (your seed clients). If you’re not sure how to identify your mavens, click here for more information on that.

You’ll want to record the free 30 minute clinic and ideally get some good photos as well as video that you can use. Make sure you get video of mavens who have tried a new progression and were then able to accomplish a movement they didn’t think they were able to before. Try to capture as many before and after videos and photos as you can because these speak to the efficacy of your program.

This is before and after style content is what you’ll be posting 3 times per week for the next 4 weeks which will take you right up to the launch of your new program.

2 WEEKS OUT
Host a free class or event where you can test this new program out on your members. You’ll want to make this a public event so you can bring in more non-member leads. Keep this free class or event to a maximum of 30 minutes and be sure to have a sign in where you can collect attendee names, phone numbers, and emails.

The people who show up for this free class or event are interested and are hot leads at this point. Create an email newsletter to follow up with these people each week coming up to the course and even afterward because they may not be available for this program, but they may be interested in the next one.

Hosting a free class or event is great but you have to make a clear call-to-action so that you give these leads an opportunity to become customers. Have a sign up link on the page for your free event and at the end of your free event, bring them all together and tell them about this new program and how they can save their spot.

We recommend having a higher price for non-members and a lower price for members since they are already paying for crossfit. This can both take care of your existing members by making them feel valued and encourage non-members to join as a member.

Finally, you’ll award 1 maven the course for free. You can do this in any way you choose but I prefer to award it to the most interested person and do it privately. The benefit of awarding an interested maven the course for free is they are far more likely to sing your praises and promote your course to your members for you. Mavens are more socially involved with other members than most members are so this is natural for them and they do it with a positive energy.

As part of the agreement made with this maven, they’ll talk to all of the members as well as post about the course on their social media profiles exposing you and your course to more people. Keep in mind that you’ll want to cycle through your mavens for each program launch so each of them gets the opportunity to take a course for free while sharing it with others. We’re upfront with our mavens about this and they know it’s a perk that they get. We also have a private Facebook group for our mavens so that we can communicate with them easily as a group.
Take this 6 week pre-launch template and put it into place for your next launch and you’ll see much better results than you have before.

**Jeff Burlingame**

Two Brain Business Mentor  
Owner – Friction CrossFit

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**HOW MANY PEOPLE SHOULD BE ON YOUR LIST?**

The business community is OBSESSED with lead generation and lead capture.

Here's why you shouldn't be.

If you're a CrossFit gym, I'm sure you've seen the ads on Facebook: "Endless funnels! Download our free guide." "Guaranteed 100 new leads!" - there are more, but they all sound the same.

Very soon, a reliable marketing company will become the obvious choice for our gyms. Lead generation and SEO and ad targeting will be taken off our plates. And I can't wait for that to happen.

But what most gyms need is NOT marketing at all.

What MOST gyms need is SALES.

Here's the difference:

Marketing puts your name in front of people for the first time. It guides them to your door. And then it stops, and sales take over.

Marketing starts with a very cold audience (they've probably never heard of you) and warms them up to the point of interest. Marketing won't get anyone to pay for your service (Virtually no one enters their credit card online before visiting, do they? Maybe one in two hundred.) Marketing gets them to book the free consultation or No-Sweat Intro. At the very least, marketing puts people on your email list. Then Sales takes over.

Yes, "Sales" is a dirty word. I get it. When I say "sales", I'm not talking about the used-car-salesman stuff (or worse, the gym-membership-sales stuff). If you've read my books or anything I've published in the last 5 years, you already know that. In our case, "sales"
means telling the person what's best for them--in other words, coaching. But for the sake of this post, it's important to differentiate the two parts of the process. You'll see why in a moment.

Marketing gets people to pay attention. Sales gets people to pay money.

The thing is, you probably already have ENOUGH people paying attention...even if you don't have enough people paying you money. Let's look at your email list. How many people are on there who AREN'T your clients?

Why don't they unsubscribe, or hit 'spam'?

Because they're waiting.

They're sitting on "maybe".

Doesn't it make sense to coach the "maybes" to either a "yes!" or "no" than to put more people into "maybe"?

Especially because it costs you money to put cold leads onto your list...but costs you NOTHING to talk to those already there?

What's the value of your email list if you're not having a conversation with the people on it? Zero.

But we still listen to marketers brag about having a list of 10,000 people! Who cares?

If you're on this list, you're on "maybe" too. So I write you a letter almost every day, because I want to help you choose: either to sign up for our program, or to sign up for someone else's program.

"Maybe" is actually worse than "yes" or "no". Because you can be "maybe" forever, take no action, and slowly slip backward. If you say "yes" to me, we can move forward. If you say "no", I'm sure you'll find help somewhere else.

Now think of the folks on your email list: If they say "yes" to you, you can enhance their lives. If they say "no", they might get help elsewhere; or they might not, but at least you'll stop splitting your focus. But if they stay on "maybe", everyone loses.

Here's how I get people from the Catalyst list (2700 readers, 40% open rate) to get off "maybe": I write them love letters.

Every day or so, I pick a muse: one person facing one problem that I can solve. Then I write them a love letter about their problem. Then I send the letter to everyone on the list. Plain text, no images or links.
And 7 people email me back with their problems!

So I think about their problems for a day or so, and if I can help, I write them the next love letter.

The results? 7 new signups this month; 6 in our ID program. Two of them had been on my email list for 10 YEARS. That's not something to celebrate: it means it took ten years for me to say the thing that spurred them into action.

Here's the key: I can't just email them a "newsletter" or send them special offers or incentives for signing up. Even the stuff I used to do in 2011 doesn't work anymore.

I have to really care. Like, really, REALLY care.

I pretend the person is right in front of me, sitting around the campfire, and asking me the question. Then I answer the way I would in person: I use familiar language, because they're my friends. I tell them the truth, because that's what they deserve. I don't give them an up-sell or cross-sell or any kind of offer at ALL.

I just care a lot.

I write these letters to YOU because I care if your business succeeds. You've invested your life into the service of others. If you're investing your attention in me, I want to give you a return on that investment.

The future clients on your email list are the same. You care about them--I know you do--and want them to be successful. So tell them how.

Where do you start?

Use the eight-word email (you've seen it) or just ask, "What's your biggest hurdle to exercise?" on Facebook. People will tell you. Take each of their reasons and write them a love letter. That's your muse.

Your email list shouldn't be a storage facility. It should be a temporary way for people to sample your empathy and knowledge before deciding: yes or no?

(If you're on this list and a definite 'no', there's an unsubscribe button at the bottom. Go in peace, friend.)

Need a push to write your FIRST client email? Just hit "reply" and ask for one!

Chris

PS - this has to be in your voice. Having someone else write your emails just doesn't work: it's like asking your buddy in sixth grade to write a love letter to the cute girl in the
front row on your behalf. Either she won't like the note, or she'll spend the recess with him.

PODCAST EPISODE 86: KATE FOSTER

This episode is brought to you by Anvil Coffee Co.

CrossFit For Hope – Greg Glassman and Kate Foster

Today we are very lucky to be joined by Kate Foster former poster child for CrossFit for Hope.

Her journey through two bone marrow transplants is well-documented in CrossFit Journal. I was there at St. Jude in 2013, and I share a small snapshot of that meeting in this podcast intro.

A Model For the Next Generation

Kate just graduated high school a few months ago and is going to be attending the University of North Carolina this fall. She will be studying biology and economics and would eventually like to become a doctor. She has a heart for medicine and is looking forward to helping others just like she has been helped before.

One of the big causes that Kate supports is bone marrow transplants. Being that she has had two bone marrow transplants, she knows how important it is to have a matching donor.

Taylor Kemp was Kate’s bone marrow donor. She was a student at the time at University of Georgia and she happened to be attending an event for bone marrow donations. Six months later, she got a call telling her that she was a potential match for a girl with leukemia. After a few extra tests, she was confirmed as a match for Kate!

After flying to Washington D.C. to give her donation and Kate’s recovery she had the opportunity to reach out to Kate. A quick Google search revealed that Kate was no ordinary girl. After realizing Kate’s story, she was in tears and could not believe how incredible Kate was. They emailed back and forth for a number of years before meeting in person. Since then, they have become lifelong friends from their special bond.

According to Taylor, the bone marrow donation process is a lot scarier than it actually is. For anyone potentially wanting to be a donor the biggest commitment is going to be your time and educating yourself on the process. Kate and Taylor are encouraging everyone to register to be bone marrow donors so that other patients like Kate can find their match!

To register as an eligible donor, click here: https://bethematch.org/support-the-cause/donate-bone-marrow/
Use the code, “DonateWKate” when you do. Let’s show Kate we support the fight!

Timeline:

2:14 – Intro to Kate Foster

4:03 – What was it like emotionally and physically to have a cancer relapse?

6:04 – Kate’s plans into the future after graduating high school

7:15 – What is a bone marrow transplant is and how we can help those that need a transplant?

13:55 – Introduction to Taylor, Kate’s bone marrow donor

19:44 – What is the testing like that is required to perform a bone marrow donation?

20:58 – What is the actual bone marrow donation process like?

HOW TO BUILD A FUNNEL
How To Make Your Own Funnels

This is our mentoring model:

1. Tell you what to do
2. Show you exactly how to do it
3. Link you with someone who can do it for you if you can't.

The first article on this site was called "How To Build Your Own Website." It angered a lot of web designers.

In our Incubator program, there are over 95 modules that walk you step-by-step through the processes we teach. But sometimes your time is better spent elsewhere, so we also give you a "Do It For Me" option.

This post will be more in-depth than I normally write for free, because I HATE when knowledge is held hostage by companies who prey on gym owners. Building funnels isn't tricky, but it DOES take a lot of time. If you know what's involved and THEN decide to hire someone else, great--that's exactly what I do. I want to give you the power to choose, that's all.

First, my usual disclaimer: most CrossFit gyms don't need help with marketing; they need help with sales (not lead generation, but signing people up and keeping them.) So I dislike "funnels"--you can read my article, called "F Your Funnel", on EliteFTS.com here:

https://www.elitefts.com/education/an-introduction-to-affinity-marketing-f-your-funnel/

But if you need a new way to talk to a niche audience, or you want to guide people to specific information, funnels can work.

Let's start with the bottom of the funnel and work our way up.

The Goal: Conversion.

You want a client to sign up for your gym. We'll call that a "conversion", because it's all that matters.

Facebook "likes", comments and shares...these are cute, but only beneficial for your ego. In some cases, they're like footprints to follow, but they're not actually tools.

Facebook lets you define a "conversion" as a purchase (mostly used for product sales) or registration on a website. To Facebook, a "conversion" means a client has gone as far as possible through their platform, and they're handing the lead on to you. But this isn't really the end of the process. So we'll stick with:

Conversion = paid registration.
That's right: free visits to your gym ALSO don't count.

So the goal of any funnel is a paying new client.

Working backward from there, what's the step right BEFORE a person becomes a paying client?

For TwoBrain gyms, that's a No-Sweat Intro. We want to talk first, to prescribe the best path for any individual member (and sometimes refer them elsewhere.)

The No-Sweat Intro (I'll just call it NSI for the rest of this post) has a 94% conversion rate at my gym. We teach the exact phrasing and questions to ask in the Incubator, but some owners like to tweak the process (everyone wants to get 100%, and I don't blame them.)

If the last stage of the funnel is Conversion, and the second-to-last stage is a No-Sweat Intro, what comes before the NSI?

Probably a few emails.

When people enter the top of your funnel, they're cold leads. You need to warm them up. I wrote about "love letters" last week, but the basic goal here is to bridge your service to the client's goal. If they're trying to lose weight, they probably don't KNOW that CrossFit is great for weight loss. If they have a bad back, they probably aren't aware that you can help them.

Obviously, this education takes time. But if we skip this step, you'll wind up with cold leads walking through your door out of curiosity instead of interest, and you'll spend a lot of time on free consultations (or worse, free trials where you try to "sell" them.)

These emails can be automated. Here's the first part of the funnel where we have to use some scary, mysterious software.

I use ActiveCampaign now (I'm a visual guy) but other TwoBrain mentors use Drip or InfusionSoft. I recommend you start with MailChimp, because you can buy $9 worth of MailChimp credits and build an automation instead of subscribing to a larger service.

MailChimp is also VERY easy to use.

Step 1 in MailChimp: create a new list. This list will be like a net. When people sign up for this list, it will trigger your automated emails. (I'll cover how to get them to sign up in the next section.)

Call this list something like "Weight-Loss Interest" or "General Fitness Interest", depending on the audience you're trying to reach.
Step 2 in MailChimp: build a new Automation (they're under Campaigns now.) I show a step-by-step video walkthrough in the Incubator, but it's pretty simple. Your Trigger is when people join the list ("Weight-Loss Interest".), you just created.

What do you say in the Automation emails?

Take people on a journey, starting from where they are and leading to your pre-conversion goal (booking a NSI.)

Using the weight loss example, you might follow this path:

First email - 5 simple tricks to lose weight
Second email - The real trick: how to change your habits
Third email - where most people fail, and how you can help
Fourth email - how to get started
Fifth email - reason to start now.

There are a lot of "best practices" when it comes to these emails, and I cover them extensively in the Incubator, but I don't want to take us down that rabbit hole.

Here we are, working backward from the bottom of the funnel to the top:
Conversion - NSI - Email Automation to warm up the leads.

NOW we need to get people to join your list, right?

We typically use a lead magnet (although MANY people join the TwoBrain list just because they don't want to miss any content. Don't miss out on the people who are really interested; put a pop-up invitation to join your list on your site. They still work.)

A lead magnet is a valuable summary or blog post or video series, like our "Free Help" videos. The key here is "valuable": you've seen the "You won't believe what happened next..." clickbait on social media, and smart people are getting wise to it. Make your lead magnet valuable: the Free Help videos on our site took me about 8 hours to shoot and edit, and they answer the most common questions I get.

Your lead magnet should be valuable enough to warrant a trade: their email address for your information.

To set up this exchange, you need a landing page.

Think of a landing page like a "side door" into your website. All the normal menu options (price, schedule, about us, etc.) don't appear; only the registration form required to get the free valuable information.

For example, a good landing page might say, "Enter your information, and I'll send you our Five Simple Tricks To Lose Weight right now - for free!"
Keep it simple. Show the headline, a picture, and then a registration form.

You can use Leadpages or Clickfunnels to build your landing pages; they're easy. I use MailMunch on the Catalyst site. You could also just build a new page on Wordpress, go back to your list in MailChimp, click "Forms" and get the embed code for a signup form for your new Weight Loss List. Paste the embed code into your new landing page, and you're done. When people fill in the form, MailChimp adds them to the new Weight Loss List, which triggers the automation you've already built.

This sounds hard, but I walk you through the process step by step in the Incubator, with videos so you can follow along. It's just a matter of following the steps.

Recap, from the bottom of the funnel up: Conversion - NSI - Emails - Landing Page with registration form.

NOW we need to get leads onto your Landing Page. This is where marketing really enters the picture.

We have a huge Facebook Marketing Course in our Growth Stage (or you can actually buy it separately for $599, but Incubator-> Growth Stage is the much smarter bet.) For this example, I recommend targeting a simple ad at the people who already like your page.

Facebook is a funnel of its own. If you're classifying future clients as "warm leads" or "cold leads", the warmest will be the folks who already like your page. The coldest will be those you just target because of their demographic info (like their age, gender, income, and distance from you.) People who like your page are already paying attention--at least a little bit. Now we want to get them off Mark Zuckerberg's platform and onto yours.

So we'll set up a simple image ad, and optimize for conversions.

Here's where things can get tricky, but don't worry: I'll keep it simple. We won't talk about pixels or cost per conversion or anything here; it's all in the Facebook Marketing Course if you want that much depth.

Use the ad to push people to your Landing Page.

Use a simple picture (you can't use "before and after" shots on Facebook) and start with a simple question as a headline: "Ready to feel better?"
You also can't use "Fat Loss" or "Weight Loss" in your Facebook ad headline. Use something else, then say "Download our Five Free Tips!"

The ad should point to your landing page (copy and paste the URL into the ad line where prompted.) Spend $5 for 3 days on the ad; if people start clicking through and entering their info, increase the spend.
Remember: no one is going to see an ad for a $199 service and immediately sign up. You need to have a conversation with them. The automated emails are just a start.

To sum up, here's your funnel from the ground up:

Conversion -> NSI -> Emails -> Landing Page -> Ad to Facebook followers

Yes, there's some work here. This is why many people just say "screw this. I just want to coach" and pay someone else $1000 per month. I get it.

To make it easy, I give sample lead magnets to download, landing pages to copy, automated emails to use, and some Facebook tactics in the Incubator (of course, the FB Ads course in Growth Stage is massive.) But sometimes it's still worthwhile to pay someone else to do it for you (I do. We have partners in this space.)

Now, here's the (unpleasant) surprise: every funnel is really an hourglass.

From the fine point at the bottom of the funnel, a client's experience should really expand outward. At the NSI, a client's choices should be limited to one or two offerings. But as they stay longer, their choices should expand, because they'll have the context to judge what they like (and, frankly, they like novelty.)

I'll write about that more another day. But for now: pull back the curtain! There are no secrets to building a funnel. If this is the best use of your time today, get started!

STOP CLEANING THE GYM (BY YOURSELF)

By Jeff Burlingame, TwoBrain Mentor

If you own a gym and you are still the main cleaner, or if you’re spending more than 10 minutes per day cleaning, something is backwards and the reason why comes down to roles.

A CEO should be valuing their time at $40/hour or more because if you, as the CEO, can spend an hour working on your business, you can easily generate more than $40 in revenue. If you’re spending your time cleaning instead of generating new business, you’re losing money.
You are a $40+/hour worker doing a $10-$15/hour task within the business when you spend your time cleaning and that doesn’t help you grow. In fact, every role below the CEO level including cleaner, coach, general manager, and bookkeeper comes with a lower hourly rate and they are in the business instead of on it. The CEO should really be spending his or her time working on the business to grow it.

That’s not to say that these tasks aren’t important, because of course having a clean gym matters. Ideally what you’ll do is hire out, delegate out, or hire a virtual assistant to do the tasks below the level of CEO. In fact, you can look within your membership to find people to help you out with this. If a member has a teenager that is looking for a job, bring them on for a few hours per week at $10-$15 to clean and disinfect the gym.

When you’ve handed that task off to someone else, you get those hours back to focus on revenue-generating tasks as the CEO. Outsourcing and delegating tasks actually frees you up to generate more revenue, grow your brand, and become more profitable.

Those tasks that you should be outsourcing and delegating include coaching and that can be a hard one for gym owners to give up. You can’t be the CEO and grow the business when you’re coaching 30 hours per week. If that’s a difficult one for you to give up, think about what you could do if you reduced that down to 10 hours per week and had the other 20 to work on your business. Imagine how much you could grow with that extra 20 hours!

Jeff Burlingame
Two Brain Business Mentor
Owner – Friction CrossFit

INCREMENTAL VS EXPONENTIAL GROWTH

When Dan Martell was on TwoBrain Radio, he said:

"It's easier to 10x your business than to 2x your business."

And a lot of people thought he meant, "Aim for the moon and you'll land in the stars" or something like that--just a basic "set your sights higher" message.

Those people are wrong. Dan was talking about the difference between Incremental and Exponential Growth.

When you sell a service, it's not enough to be better; you have to be different.
You need to have a monopoly on your service. You need to be the only gym in town doing X.

As Peter Thiel hammered again and again in "Zero to One," simply being better at something means incremental change. It's incremental because most clients won't change gyms for incremental change; most non-clients won't be able to tell the difference. This is what starts price wars: when clients and future clients can't see a difference that justifies a higher price, they'll go with the lowest-priced option.

Now, you're probably thinking, "Well, I'm way better than the next guy. Why does ANYONE go to his gym instead of mine?" And the answer is: the difference is mostly in your head. It's not obvious to the client OR the future client. Sorry. You see apples to oranges: they see Macintosh and Braeburn.

Can you double your revenue by being incrementally better--by having cleaner bathrooms, better coaches and classes that start right on time? Yes. But you can't 10x your revenue that way.

To 10x your revenue, you need something that no one else is selling. This removes price pressure, because you're no longer competing with anyone.

I don't sell gym access because other gyms can sell it for $19 per month. I sell coaching, because they can't.

I don't just sell group classes, because the spin studio on the next block does that for much less.
We sell a prescriptive process, because NOBODY does that.

We have an InBody because no one else does.

Are there other CrossFit gyms in town? Sure. None of us are the same. Look at Baltimore: there are now five TwoBrain gyms in the city. None are the same. They get together every few months and help one another. Sometimes they take pictures.

Why don't TwoBrain gyms compete? Because they're not in competition. Each one is capable of 10x the average gym, because they're all unique. They can all be "the best" at what they do, instead of trying to be "better" than the others. That means exponential growth--growth by a power of 10--instead of incremental.

Can you 10x, or are you satisfied with incremental growth forever?

**EPISODE 87: JUSTIN BERGH, GM OF THE CROSSFIT GAMES**

Justin Bergh is the General Manager of The CrossFit Games. He is the man behind the curtain and he really makes the Games go--everything from making sure the athletes start
their heats on time to making sure the events flow well. He is the guy that puts it all together. In this episode, we are going to talk about what it takes to guide massive team of volunteers; what it takes to keep everyone following the rules; and how the CBS and Madison deals came about. More importantly, I want you to know the human element of HQ. These are some of the friendliest, happiest people on earth and they are here to serve you.

Justin has a background in sports. He graduated from a sports management program and worked with the Jacksonville Jaguars and also at a sports technology company. Additionally he has worked with the PGA tour and also many other events. He found CrossFit in 2006 before there even was such a thing as the CrossFit Games. In 2008, as the world economy was falling apart, Justin took the risk of jumping from his day job and opening a CrossFit gym. Justin knew that he wanted to be a part of making people healthier through meaningful work.

After opening the gym, he went to the CrossFit affiliate gathering and approached Greg Glassman about helping him with technological aspects of CrossFit. He was offered an internship chance on the CrossFit seminar staff which eventually turned into a full time position with CrossFit.

As part of the early years of The CrossFit Games, Justin experienced many challenges while the groundwork for what The Games would eventually become was being laid. One of the most challenging aspect of The Games is that many events are unknown until just before the workouts are about to begin. This challenges the staff to keep the information secret and control equipment throughout the venue at the same time.

For the first few years as the competition and the caliber of athletes was growing, they started touring a list of cities to host the annual CrossFit games. After looking at Madison and the Alliant Energy Center campus, the lightbulb went off and they really like what they saw. Madison was a place where the foundation of CrossFit could be built going forward.

First and foremost the goal of the CrossFit Games is to crown the fittest woman and man on earth. The second is to create a great community event and tell great stories through media. With these goals in mind, CrossFit feels like they have a great partner in Madison to provide more entertainment, education, and fun to the CrossFit games.

Justin could not manage the CrossFit games every year without the help of over 800 volunteers. The volunteers are extremely motivated to help the sport succeed and very experienced which makes running the event much easier. This is not to say the team has
not made mistakes. Most of the mistakes made by Justin and his team are from being too ambitious or attempting to be too precise. Ultimately the meaningful work is what makes the CrossFit Games successful and keeps Justin coming back for more every year.

Timeline:

0:55 – Justin Bergh Introduction
2:48 – Justin Bergh Story
13:41 – Justin on how he made inroads into CrossFit
18:26 – How did the Home Depot Center get selected?
21:20 – What prompted the move to Madison?
28:58 – What is planned for next year for the CrossFit Games setup?
36:12 – The type of leadership required to run the CrossFit Games
43:02 – How many people come back every year to volunteer
43:56 – How is conflict resolved amongst so many highly motivated people?
48:06 – What is to come with CrossFit Games of the future?

Contact Justin:

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HOW TO OPTIMIZE YOUR DAY

Work expands to fill the space you give it.

As an entrepreneur, it's easy to spend a day being "busy" but accomplishing little. Small tasks are always present to fill your time; and rabbit-holes like chatting up visitors and Facebook groups can drag you in for hours.

Just like budgeting your money, budgeting your time can help you optimize your efforts. Instead of adding more things to your place in the Incubator, you will succeed because we focus your attention and limit your tasks.

Here's a quick way to optimize your time.

First, you're going to create two windows for uninterrupted work.
The first work window is for checklists; the second is for creativity.

First window: FOCUS

Use this time for uninterrupted single-tasking. Pull up your checklist for the day. Find the simplest task to perform, and work it through to completion. Then find the next-simplest, and work it all the way through.

This is single-tasking. But it's also using a cognitive tendency called Gap Theory to get you some momentum and draw you into the "flow state", where you work at your optimum focused pace.

During your Focus window, you need to be in a place with a door that closes; you need to turn off your phone and desktop notifications. If you work better to music, play some (I work best in complete silence.)

As you work through your list, cross completed tasks off AND add them to your "Done" list. At the end of your Focus window, you'll want to see what you've accomplished.

That's important.

If you have trouble getting started, use the Hemingway hack: start with something that's almost done already. Hemingway would stop writing mid sentence at the end of each day so the next morning he could simply finish the sentence and then be in flow state.

The goal of your Focus window is to SHIP. Read more by Seth Godin here: http://99u.com/articles/6249/seth-godin-the-truth-about-shipping

Second window: CREATE

During this block, you're going to do more creative work.

This is when you post your Social Media stuff; this is when you write your blog posts or film your videos. This is when you create the next day's checklist.

Your creative time is more free-flowing, but absolutely necessary. It's not nap time; it's not easy, relaxing time. You still have to build.

Many entrepreneurs find they think best when their body is occupied at a repetitive task. (This is why you have your best ideas in the shower or while driving--we call this "thinking body, dancing mind.") So if you have trouble thinking up a blog topic, start a menial task, like mowing the grass or going out for a walk. You can't hit a CrossFit workout and call it your "creative" time, though, because hard workouts require too much conscious attention.

You can also use tools like 750words.com to urge you through creative work, or practice games like Tabata Talking, which we teach entrepreneurs.

Planning Your Windows

Focus time is best done before the day starts, or after a hard mental reset.

For me, that means a 4am start before anyone else is awake.

I start with easy stuff: doing money transfers and processing payments from the night before. Then I do responsive stuff: answering emails and messages. That's my segue into my creative time, when I write blog posts and love letters to my email list.
Because most of my work is creative work, my "focus" time usually involves building or optimizing materials that will help business owners--work that is, by nature, creative; but not free-flow writing.

If you're not an early morning person, that's fine. Your Focus window should immediately follow a hard workout. CrossFit requires your full attention, which temporarily blocks out little distractions. That creates a short time frame in which you can follow the Focus window directions above (notifications off, doors closed.)

You'll need at least one hour per day of Focus time during the Incubator, with a plan to build to two or more eventually.

Creative time is optimized by low-level exercise or a menial task (thinking body, dancing mind.) I have my best ideas while splitting wood or shoveling dirt. The challenge with these outdoor activities is that I rarely have a notepad around when I have my ideas. Ditto for driving and showering. If you can find a menial task--like mopping the floors of your business or rearranging boxes in your supply room--that keeps you close to a laptop, this is often best: you can go back and forth between doing the work and recording your ideas. Low-level aerobic stimulation, like walking, can help you remember facts more quickly AND make connections between ideas faster. It's invaluable for an entrepreneur. You need at least a 45-minute Creative window during the Incubator, working up to 90 minutes ideally.

The practices of Focus and Creativity are just that: practices. You won't be great on your first day. Each is its own fitness, which means they're both trainable. This is how you improve both critical skills for business owners.

**WHY YOU’LL NEVER NEED 300 MEMBERS**

A few months ago, I was speaking in Montreal, Quebec. It was a split seminar: other speakers took Saturday's presentation, and I followed on Sunday.

We have very different ideas on business, so I was glad to go second.

During the first day, one attendee volunteered that he wanted to earn $100,000 per year (net). He shared his rates (which were low, but not grievously so). The speaker did some quick math and told him, "You need 374 members. Go get them."

Never mind additional revenue streams. Forget about hiring other coaches to help with the workload. For 374 members, this guy could buy himself a job.

374 recurring memberships is a high number to reach (where will they all fit? How many bars will you need? How will you coach that many people?) There are a handful of gyms
doing it, but next to none have a decent profit margin (33% or above.) I’ve written about all of these problems at length.

The simple number “374” hides a deadly trap, though. What the speaker meant was that the owner needed to get and KEEP 374 members, averaging that number forever, to make a good living as a gym owner.

We track retention data through surveys, monthly accountability calls and our Gym Checkup. I first wrote about retention data in the CrossFit Journal in 2009. This is the number we watch most closely, because in the service industry, client acquisition is very time-expensive.

Let’s say you have a 95% monthly retention rate. If you have a small gym of 50 members, you’re probably slightly higher. But as your gym grows, you have weaker connections to each member. That’s one reason retention rates tend to drop in larger gyms. 95% monthly retention in gyms over 300 members is very, very rare. People quit because they don’t like it; they quit because they don’t like you; they quit because they move.

Even at a 95% retention rate, a gym with 374 members would have to gain 19 members per month just to stay even. That’s more than one new member every two days all year, including holidays and weekends. Where will you get those people?

Well, you could run a six-week challenge and market it on Facebook. Let’s say the challenge grabs you 30 new people. Retention data from these challenges shows that less than 24% of people in the challenge become long-term members, and less than 10% are still members three months later. So if you run a challenge, you might keep 7 people—or about a third of the total number you need. You’d have to run six-week challenges for 90 people every MONTH to convert enough people—and you probably won’t keep many, which accelerates your need for recruitment.

If your business is doing well, you should need to recruit fewer and fewer people over time...not more and more. A business model built on 300+ members will have you constantly chasing marketing ideas.

I walked through the method to build a great, profitable gym with 150 members here:

But I think it’s worth asking--as I always like to do--"who benefits?"

Who benefits from telling you to shoot for 300 members with high turnover and constant churn?

Internet marketing companies, for one. If you only need 150 clients, you’ll eventually back off your marketing. That’s not great news for them. The best retention strategy for marketing companies is for YOU—their client—to have BAD retention.
You increase your client base incrementally—one client at a time. But headcount increases other problems exponentially: overcrowding, cliques, drama, unpaid accounts, high numbers of volunteer coaches.

The high-volume model was introduced to CrossFit gyms in 2006, and it's been the Achilles heel of the movement since. Shooting for 300 clients introduces all the problems of selling a commodity (price pressure, lack of differentiation, low client affinity, competitors created in-house.)

Who are the exceptions? The gyms who start with a good margin (we teach 33% to start) and THEN build from there. Ken Andrukow is a shining example.

What are the REAL metrics that matter: ARM, profit, and retention.

Remember: the goal is never to serve the most clients. The goal is always to serve clients the MOST. Being successful means being profitable and sustainable. Don't fall into the trap of bad math.

WHY WE BUY THE IPHONE X, BUT COMPLAIN ABOUT THE PRICE OF CROSSFIT

Zig Ziglar was a traveling salesman in the 1940s. He did door-to-door sales for decades, eventually becoming a popular sales coach and public speaker. He recounted this tale in his book, "Ziglar on Selling".

Ziglar was in a family's living room--the studio for his art--pitching cookware. The family desperately needed cookware; there were many of them, and mama spent much of the day over a hot stove, reusing the same pot. Ziglar spent two hours trying to convince them that new cookware would save mama a lot of time cooking and even more time cleaning. But the family--mama included--kept repeating, "no money, too expensive, can't afford it."

As he was packing his samples into his suitcase, mama spied a catalogue for fine china in Ziglar's bag. She asked if he sold fine china, and he said, "Yes ma'am, we sell the finest china in the world!"
She and the family made a huge order for fine china--one of Ziglar's biggest sales--in the middle of a depression. I'll let Zig take it from here:

"Less than thirty minutes later, I left that household with an order worth substantially more than the entire set of cookware. Now think with me. If she couldn't afford the set of cookware she so desperately needed, how could she afford the china she didn't need? The answer is, she couldn't afford a set of cookware she didn't want, but she could afford a set of fine china she did want. Here is the key point: People buy what they want when they want it more than the money it costs."

We are not rational beings, but emotional ones.

We don't weigh purchase decisions logically ("I can cut my $4 daily coffee budget and be able to afford $120 per month at the gym.") Instead, we approach every purchase decision from an emotional perspective first. Then we rationalize that decision.

In the coffee example, I'd prefer to have both the coffee AND the gym membership. But if forced to choose one, I'd take the coffee, because I love coffee. And then I'd rationalize my choice by saying, "The coffee will make me more productive. So I'll go to work, earn a raise, and then be able to afford a gym membership."

Is that logical? No. See: "We are not rational beings..."

After we find what we want, we rationalize the purchase. We can talk ourselves into believing anything.

When you realize that people buy what they WANT--not what they NEED--you start to gain insight into marketing.

People don't want to get beaten up by tough workouts every day. But they DO want visible abs, and to feel like an athlete. They want to be the only guy in the office who can do a bar muscle-up, because they're also the only guy who can't turn in their receipts on time. And they rationalize that decision by telling themselves stories about "functional fitness" and "longevity".

This is why No-Sweat Intros are far more effective than movement screens at intake: the former focuses on "What makes you more comfortable?" instead of "Here's what you need to fix yourself."

People are attracted to nutrition challenges because they want others to be jealous of their abs, not because they need to avoid sugar.
Want > Need. It's how our brains are wired. Good coaches seek deeper understanding of their clients' psychology and learn to leverage it. They DON'T post social media rants that highlight their lack of understanding.

For example, "For the cost of one coffee every day, you could afford a gym membership that will save your LIFE! Wake up, people!"

Or, "People say they can't afford a gym membership but then they get the new iPhone...I just don't know sometimes!"

These distance you from your audience, instead of demonstrating that you understand what they want.

Let's say that I want a new truck (I ALWAYS want a new truck) but my insurance broker is trying to sell me more life insurance. He posts on his FB page:

"I can't believe people would buy bigger trucks when that same monthly payment would earn you 3x as much when you retire!"

First, I'd think, "That guy just doesn't get me."

Then I'd start justifying the truck purchase: "I need to haul my kids' hockey equipment around, and my old truck can't hold all my tools, and we'll probably need a bigger trailer soon..."

And then I'd buy the truck.

Another example: I don't understand why some gym owners have 12 rowers and no business coaching. Luckily I DO understand that it's easy to buy rowers, and hard to ask for help (because I've certainly been there.) So I wait until they want to change.

The duality of human thought is fascinating. We're always balancing "What I want" against "what I need." And as we move up the hierarchy of self-actualization, "Want" trumps "need" more and more.

We sell a premium service. That means our audience is likely to buy new iPhones and get Starbucks every day. But if they can't afford those AND a gym membership, they'll probably prioritize what they want over what they need. The Apple Watch is the "fine china" of our generation.

**HOW TO SAY “NO” TO DISCOUNTS**
By now, you already know: discounts kill businesses.

I made the case in "Why We Don't Have Sales"--you can read that here: https://twobrainbusiness.com/why-we-dont-have-sales/

But there are two parts to change: the first is making the decision to change, and the second is actually making the change.

In other words, knowing what to do is half the battle (or less). Taking ACTION is really all that matters. So here are the easiest ways to say "NO" when someone asks for a discount:

1. "We don't have discounts."

This is my go-to. Since I don't have discounts for ANYONE, it's simplest for me to say that discounts don't exist. This has solved our "discount" problem for over six years.

2. If someone else in town is giving discounts:

"We don't play those games."

Since the nature of discounts is subjective (it requires a human "decision" instead of an automated process) it's always easy to cast a shadow of doubt on the intent on the discounter.

I saw this in action when I was selling high-end fitness equipment. We were always in a losing price battle against Sears and other department stores, who ran frequent "sales" on their treadmills. So when someone asked us to match a price or when we'd have a 40% off sale, we'd say "We don't play those games." It worked: you could see a visible shift in the purchaser as they became suspicious of the chains offering the discount. It helped that one of the department stores was sued for advertising a regular price on tires that it never actually charged--they were ALWAYS on sale--and I occasionally brought that up.

3. When someone asks for a SPECIFIC discount, as for teachers or firemen:

"We treat all of our service professionals equally well, because we know our service is critical for your safety."

The service you provide to military staff, police officers and other safety workers isn't five bucks off: it's keeping their butts alive. Remind them (gently) and also use the peer anchor (no one else gets a discount, and you don't want to be different from the crowd, do you?)

4. When someone asks why your rates are so much higher than everyone else:

"This is as inexpensive as possible for this level of service."
First, don't ever say "cheap" unless you're talking about the competition. Second, you're sticking a wedge into the conversation ("...for this level of service") that should prompt an opportunity for more explanation. But don't expand unless asked.

A couple of other things:

Don't over-explain. All of these responses consist of one sentence. The more words you use, the more handholds you give the person asking for a discount.

Keep it black and white. If you give a discount for one person in your gym, you're ripping off everyone else.

Your primary duty is to your current clients. Scrambling to recruit new clients with discounts that your current clients can't get is a breach of trust.

Don't run through all the scenarios in your head before a conversation starts. You'll be trying to "remember lines" instead of giving honest answers, which come naturally. Especially if you use #1, this is easy and transparent.

If they say, "I'll go join the cheaper gym," GOOD. You don't want everyone. Don't pour your knowledge and care into a promiscuous client.

Finally, don't presume anyone WANTS a discount. This is the #1 error business owners make (we project our budget onto other people.)

Years ago when my gym opened, I was desperate for cash flow. So I started offering discounts for teachers, military, spouses...it was a pretty long list, and it got longer all the time. In the discount mindset, I'd actually TRY to find a reason to discount people. Without them even asking, my mind would race to make them an exception. Soon I had a gym full of members, a 15-hour day and a redlining bank account.

Every time you give a 20% discount, you increase the number of clients you need to reach your perfect day. You weaken your business and impoverish your family.

You know why no one ever asks me for a discount? We don't give any.

PODCAST EPISODE 88: BUY THIS, BE HAPPY
#ridebikesbehappy

I’ve known Jan Roubal for probably 20 years. He’s a personal friend who owns Vélorution, a bike store in Sault Ste. Marie, ON.

What does a bike store have to do with owning a gym?
As CrossFit gym owners, we are in the fitness industry. We own a service business, not a product business. We already KNOW that building a community is critical for our success. We also know: that’s not easy.

In the product sales business, that’s even harder. Some would say it’s impossible to build a community around a product when there are dozens of competing products in town. If a new cyclist can’t tell the difference between a Cannondale and a Trek, won’t they always make their decision based on price?

Not if you’re buying a bike from Velorution.

You buy a bike from Jan because it makes you happy.

His customers routinely show up to ride with him and help new cyclists. They tag him in pictures—#ridebikesbehappy—every weekend, wherever they are.

I would never consider buying a bike somewhere else locally other than Jan’s shop and it’s all because of the atmosphere he has built around Velorution. Jan’s personality comes through in this interview—the first one recorded at the new TwoBrain Workshop. Jan strolled in wearing cycling shoes and jeans, and carrying two cans of his favorite beer. But this chill persona isn’t innate: it’s the person Jan has learned to be in order to become a better leader and business owner. And we can learn it too.

Jan was born in Czechoslovakia and immigrated to Canada when he was just six years old. He started working at a bike shop at the young age of 13 and this is where his true passion for bikes was born. He was on National teams for mountain biking when he was a teenager.

In 2008, Jan started Vélorution with a local physiotherapist. His goal was to transform the culture of the cycling business. He purchased the bike shop from his partner. Since then, Vélorution has grown into its own community and has become a hangout spot for local riders. More often than not you can find local riders hanging out and having a coffee, grouping up for rides, or just looking to help others get into biking.

At Vélorution, Jan’s primary goal is to help educate customers—not to sell them a bike. This ultimately ends up driving the business. Jan also likes to hire his friends which makes working at the shop even more fun. He focuses on his staff first, and prioritizes people who hang around the shop and who are just outgoing as he is. Staff often shows up at the shop on days off to hang out.

Jan is very transparent about his sales and numbers with his staff. They all receive online training in technical know-how, but really learn sales through Jan’s example of “Help First” and follow the #ridebikesbehappy mantra.
Jan visits other bike shops on the road. His experience (like mine) isn’t always a great one. Jan doesn’t look like a skinny cyclist: he’s thick and muscular up top. Sometimes this means he isn’t recognized as a hardcore rider, and shop employees don’t give him their full attention. Jan recalls one instance where he didn’t receive the help he needed simply because he did not drive a nice enough car. Shedding the elitist attitude of bike shops is something Jan takes very seriously.

For example, some bike shops were reluctant to sell fat bikes (mountain bike frames with really fat tires, for riding on snow) because they were a novelty. But Jan says, “They make people happy. Why wouldn’t I sell them?”

When I visit his shop, I’m immediately offered a coffee and a spot to sit. Other cyclists are always around. There are usually donuts and “paleo” jokes. If my kids are with me, he offers them a new sticker for their bike—and then someone takes them outside to try the pump track.

One great example of Jan’s “marketing” strategy is the “Titty Tuesday” program. This is an all-women group ride on Tuesdays that was dreamed up by one of his staff. She volunteers to lead a group mountain bike ride every Tuesday night for beginners and never-overs. Veteran riders typically turn up to help; it’s not abnormal to see a group of 50 or 60 women in the group. Another staff member runs the “Friday Night Loser Ride”.

If you’re looking for a bike, and you’re invited to group ride for beginners, and find a welcoming group when you get there—will you buy your NEXT bike from those people? I bet you will, and that’s part of Jan’s secret “sales” strategy. Sounds a lot like Help First.

Jan’s last tip is to be extremely customer-focused. On a recent group ride, Jan saw a bike lock laying on the side of the road. It was an expensive brand, and Jan went back to pick it up. Then he sorted through his customer list to find everyone who had purchased the lock from him, and called each. After many calls, Jan tracked the owner down and was able to return the bike lock—saving the customer $150, and probably cementing the client for life.

Jan is truly an all-around great guy and someone we can definitely learn something from despite him not being one of our typical guests. Listen closely and take good notes during the show—and then go onto Instagram and follow the #ridebikesbehappy hashtag.

Timeline:
1:31 – Jan Roubal Introduction
5:01 – Jan’s story and how he came to own a bike shop
8:19 – All about Vélorution. Is it really a bike shop?
10:58 – How does the free donuts, the coffee, and the community translate into selling bikes?
13:36 – An example of coaching a staff member up.
16:32 – Jan’s hiring process at Vélorution
18:21 – How Jan motivates employees to sell his products efficiently
WHY MILLIONAIRES HAVE MENTORS

The last five gym owners to sign up for the Incubator all have multiple gyms and a solid lifestyle. In fact, almost every single one said "Chris, I'm pretty close to living my perfect day already."

Each of these--four men, and one woman--realized the danger of getting complacent. I know it all too well.

In November 2016, after a long day of working on interesting problems, I had a quiet moment in my basement office. Before heading upstairs to join my family for dinner, I asked myself "Why am I pushing so hard?"

I was earning more money than I needed. I was achieving my educational goals, my travel goals, my lifestyle goals AND my service-beyond-self goals. I didn't need more.

And my next literal thought was, "I need to find a new mentor."

If you've read any of my four books, you know that mentorship turned my first business around. My first mentor focused my attention, removed distractions, and gave me the traction to turn my gym into a very profitable (and happy) business.

Now, I realized, I needed someone else to do the same thing. Because I'm never happy while at rest.
I called Dan Martell, who I had just seen onstage with Gary Vaynerchuk and Seth Godin, and asked if he'd help me. He agreed. And his guidance helped TwoBrain become the largest mentoring practice in the fitness industry.

Every single one of these five new members of the TwoBrain Family have something ELSE in common: opportunity.

Each owns multiple gyms. Every one has large, beyond-the-box ideas. They have investors knocking on their door. Or maybe they have a kids' team to sponsor. But they all faced more than the inertia of settling for what they already have: they all faced the paralysis of choice.

Having too MANY opportunities can be as challenging as having too FEW opportunities.

Since opening the TwoBrain Workshop, three local business owners have walked into my office and asked for mentorship. One offered me half his company.

As I write this, I'm on a plane to Boise, Idaho, to vet another interesting idea. There's a tiny chance it will work, but if it does, the lives of thousands of box owners could change. Think of the #1 question many gym owners are asking, and imagine a simple answer that totally solves their problem. It's THAT big.

If the idea is viable, it will be horrendously expensive. But I'm more worried about having the time and energy than having the money. And THIS is when I call a mentor for help: no longer "What will I do??!!?" but "Which should I choose?"

The first metric of success in business isn't $100,000 in profit or 300 clients. It's the freedom to choose where you invest your time.

Most of these successful box owners now have that choice. And that creates a new set of problems that we're happy to help with.

The ten members of our Level 5 Group are all gym owners with million-dollar ideas (literally.) But none were ready for that group until their OWN gyms were creating a "perfect day" for the owners. And when they reached that level, they found--well, that they were still entrepreneurs, and had OTHER problems to solve.

You're an entrepreneur now.

The bad news is that the mountain has no peak.

The good news is that we get to keep climbing.

Wherever you're working today--Boise, or Bangkok--I wish you fair winds and strong anchors. With love from your humble sherpa,
Coop
THE TWO PICTURES I HANG, AND WHAT THEY REPRESENT

I have two pictures hanging in my office.

The first is a painting of trilliums. It was done by a famous local artist, Doug Hook. I grew up with Doug's son. Doug's pretty old now, but he's still alive, and his art is expensive. Hanging a Hook print in your office means that you can afford the best.

The other picture is a photograph: a hockey team of 11-year-old girls with my daughter Avery in the center. Their jerseys say "Catalyst" on them. They're all sweaty and smiling, fingers set in the "we're number one" sign, celebrating some win. You can see in their eyes that they think, "This is it, we've made it to the peak of life." And they might be right.

A Doug Hook painting on your wall means you've made a lot of money.

A pic of your kid's team--that you can afford to sponsor--means you've made it.

One of my first conversations with Sherman Merricks (owner of Dynasty CrossFit and Two-Brain mentor-in-training) is one of my all-time favorites.

I asked about Sherman's financial goals. He said,

"I want my wife to walk into a store and buy any dress she wants without looking at the price tag."

The reason Sherman and I want to be successful is because our income goals were set to support our lifestyle goals.

Every December, entrepreneurs in the TwoBrain family set five goals in five categories: Lifestyle Education Travel Service ...and Income.

Income is last, because it depends on the others:

Where do you want to travel next year? What will that cost? What will you learn? What will the education cost? Who will you serve? What will that cost?
My service goal includes helping youth through sport. Volunteering to coach a local hockey team creates a perfect backdrop for life mentoring. It gives me an excuse to tell them they're awesome; to buy them cool stuff; and to share their wins.

But without profit, none of that happens. And that's why I run profitable businesses.

I DO buy stuff for myself--like the Doug Hook print. But that's not my goal--that's just the happy leftovers.

**PLAYING THE LONG GAME: EMBRACE YOUR INNER TORTOISE**

_Slow and steady wins the race._

The lesson of the timeless fable—the Tortoise and the Hare—are well-known. We might even agree that it’s best approach to many things in life, but how often do we heed that advice?

Consider a classic CrossFit workout template: the 20-minute AMRAP. When the clock counts down—three, two, one, go!—at what percentage of your maximal effort do you go out of the gates? One hundred percent? Do you think you could keep that up for 20 minutes? We know through experience that we can’t. Therefore, to give ourselves the greatest chance at success, we should pace ourselves. If we maintain 80 percent for 20 minutes, we will beat anyone who goes 100 percent out of the gate and quickly hits the wall, dropping to 50 percent effort and worse as the clock ticks away. More importantly, we’ll recover more quickly and be ready to put in a good workout the next day.

I apply the same philosophy to reading or listening to audiobooks, which is part of my self-development practice. If I read or listen to a book for one hour per day, after ten years I will have listened to 3,650 hours and taken in a tremendous amount of information and perspective. However, if I try to consume three hours of books every day but only do that consistently for two years—because it got overwhelming and I gave up—I will have taken in only 730 hours of content.

How many times have you hyped yourself up for a new routine or goal only to have it slip away to the chaos of life and business? You might be tempted to berate yourself for your lack of motivation. But in reality, you don’t need more motivation; you need consistency.

Whether your goal is to work out more, cook healthier meals or start a business, visualize the end result and create a plan of attack you know you can realistically stick to, avoiding repeated burnouts and failures. The next time you set out to enforce a new routine or habit, keep this in mind: Play the long game. Find a pace in life and business that you could keep up forever, and don’t waiver from it.
When I was 17, I had a job as phone customer service representative. It paid well enough, but I was always drawn to sales and the potentially higher income I could make there. Even at that young age, I understood that the ceiling was far higher for earnings if I could just figure out how to win the game of sales.

It taught me a valuable lesson: When running a business, you can either hire people who eat into the existing pie or you can hire people who understand that making the pie bigger allows them to eat even more.

At Two Brain Business, we preach intrapreneurship—a business concept wherein employees of a company exhibit entrepreneurial attributes—and the art of empowering your staff to build a business within your own business. To do this you have to have staff who truly understand that their livelihood depends on them creating, managing and delivering programs that make the pie bigger, allowing everyone to win.

Salaries breed laziness and complacency.

If that statement offends you, it is probably because you either have never had a sales job or have never succeeded in one. Let me break it down for you.

It is human nature to do as little as possible for the highest reward. In other words, we’re always looking for a shortcut. That doesn’t make us bad people; efficiency is an evolutionary concept. It’s wired into our DNA. But human nature combined with salaries—a guaranteed reward as long as base prerequisites are met—often results in employees with little motivation to go above and beyond. However, if employees are paid based on their contributions—starting new programs, bringing in new clients—motivation and output are bound to increase. Greater autonomy will also lead to greater job satisfaction.

That doesn’t mean a commission-based business model is easy. Your livelihood depends, quite literally, on you doing the work. To find success with this model, remember these lessons:
1. You are only as good as your last month. Nobody cares what you did last year, so don’t dwell on your successes for too long. You have to continue to produce to be relevant.
2. You get out of it what you put into it. There is a direct correlation between the effort, energy and thought that you put in and the results you will reap.
3. Work smarter AND harder than everyone out there and you will win every single time. There are no shortcuts, no easy days if you are doing it right.

Finally, this model will only work if you have the right people in the right seats. Employees must have a true passion for their piece of the pie, or it won’t grow any bigger. Sales isn’t for everyone—remember that when you’re hiring. But when combined with passionate, qualified employees and a little autonomy, the potential for growth is limitless.

www.twobrainbusiness.com/help

Brian Alexander

Two Brain Business Mentor
Owner/CIO (Chief Inspirational Officer) - CrossFit Illumine & Illumine North

RECESSIONS AND CROSSFIT: WHY YOU DON’T HAVE TO WORRY

When I was a personal trainer, I worked with a lot of financial planners and wealth managers.

Our first "gym" was in the financial district in town--three banks and a couple of financial offices. I didn't get much free advice, but I heard a LOT of gloom and doom.

In 2007, as the stock market was on the brink of disaster, we were all still blissfully unaware. But I remember one of my clients telling me:

"You're selling a luxury, buddy. If the steel mill goes down in this town, you're done."

Another said:
"You should be paying close attention to the market, because when people start losing money, you'll be the first thing they cut."

Obviously, they were wrong: my stock portfolio--basically, my shares in OTHER people's companies--took a vicious beating in 2008. But Catalyst started to grow. I'll share the reason WHY in one moment.

First, though, a quick definition: antifragility. Nassim Taleb's book, Antifragile: Things That Gain From Disorder is a fantastic lesson on building a resilient business. The key takeaway for the service industry: hold tightly to your values but loosely to their delivery. In other words, be plastic: change the service, not the price; and recruit clients who are also immune to market forces.

In a stock market crisis, who is least affected?

Government workers, like teachers (in Canada, at least, they can't be downsized)
Entrepreneurs with the same anti fragile policies
Financial planners (ironically, with fixed fees, they're among the safest; they make their 3% even if you lose money)
Doctors, lawyers and professionals.
Kids
Cab drivers
In other words, generalists.

Who is MOST affected?

Middle managers
Salaried workers in collapsable positions (including steelworkers, unfortunately)
In other words, skilled specialists.

The market DID collapse in 2008, of course. And our city's major industries--pulp, paper and steel--took a massive beating. One of the top three employers went bankrupt; another is now only a third of its size a decade ago.

When the steelworkers and paperworkers had to leave town, it was depressing. But the doctors, lawyers--and financial planners--are still here.

This is why I write that the average per capita income of your area doesn't really matter: because we sell a premium service. High-volume, access-based fitness centers suffer in times of financial crisis, because people cancel unnecessary (unused) expenses. But that's not our model.

Chain gyms suffer in a recession, because they sell on volume, and try to appeal to budget-seekers (who are most affected by a financial crisis.) Their clients lose their jobs, cancel their memberships and the gyms suffer. But that's not our model.
CrossFit is a premium service.

The population of our city has dropped by over 25% since I opened my gym. Average household income is lower now than it was. But we're thriving, because the doctors, lawyers and entrepreneurs are still here.

Do we have waitresses who pick up extra shifts to pay for their memberships? Of course.

Are there people at Catalyst who will suffer in a recession? Sadly, yes: but at least their gym family will be there for them.

Recessions happen. And they're bad news for commodities, like beef and cars and globogyms. But they're not bad news for agile entrepreneurs.

**PODCAST EPISODE 89: IT'S SIMPLE, WITH DAVE TATE**

This episode is a recording of Dave Tate’s speech at the 2017 TwoBrain Summit.

Dave is the owner of EliteFTS.com, the premier source of powerlifting equipment.

Dave has been an inspiration to me since his first articles on T-Nation (the Periodization Bible Parts 1 and 2) almost a decade ago. His early stories were about training at Westside with Louie, but since then he’s written extensively about his own experiences in business; learning disabilities; training; and even helping writers.

Dave is excellent at identifying the work that NEEDS to be done, and doing it, instead of being busy for the sake of being busy. He’s also a very down-to-earth guy; despite being famous in the fitness world, he always makes time to respond to emails (and even answer his phone when people call his private number.)

In this recording from the 2017 TwoBrain Summit, Tate tells us all how SIMPLE success actually is.

Dave is plain-spoken but very intelligent. This recording contains a LOT of f-bombs, and an exponentially higher amount of actionable knowledge. Enjoy.

**HOW TO PUNISH YOUR CLIENTS**

Ashley's first visit to a CrossFit gym was long overdue.

I've known Ashley for a LONG time. She's the ideal client for a CrossFit gym: interested in trying new things; a high-earning professional; and she has a long history in fitness.
It took me months to get Ashley to try CrossFit. I even drug her to a Regional event to show her how supportive the community can be. So she signed up for a free trial class.

My feelings on "free trial classes" notwithstanding, I thought, "She'll be hooked right away."

She wasn't.

The class started on time, but one client was a few minutes late. The coach stopped the class, and everyone turned to watch the latecomer tie their shoes.

Then the coach said, "Bill is six minutes late. So we're all going to do sixty burpees while Bill watches us."

I'm sure that taught Bill a lesson. And it taught Ashley one too: "CrossFit treats you like a preschooler." She never returned.

Ashley's case is an extreme example. But every day, I see gym owners asking, "How do you punish clients who are late?"

The answer: you don't.

We're all adults here. We have good jobs. We have responsibilities outside the pursuit of fitness, and options outside our gyms.

We don't need to visit a place where we feel embarrassed to arrive late. Or punished when we forget our shoes once or twice.

Imagine this: you're a busy professional, and you attend the noon class to reduce stress and clear your head before a crazy afternoon. When class is over, you're already thinking about your 2pm client meeting. You leave your lifting shoes behind.

The next day, your coach says, "It will cost you 25 burpees to get your shoes back. You can start now."

I'd leave. But let's say I didn't: who, in this situation, will NOT feel awkward?

The coach will probably feel embarrassed to mete out the punishment. This isn't the army.

The client will feel embarrassed to be singled out. Even if the "fine" is paid in private--probably not--they'll have their coach standing over them and counting as if they were a child.
The rest of the class will feel embarrassed to watch a respected member of their community reduced to a ridiculous punishment.

Who really wins here?

Client punishments usually serve ONLY the owner's ego.

We get it: you're tired of cleaning up chalk spills. And you're surprised by clients who are messy in the bathroom, or too distracted to remove their shoes. You're fatigued, under stress and maybe broke. You think, "I don't need this..." and then "There's only one way to teach these guys a lesson."

There are other ways, of course. We teach those methods of behavioral change in UpCoach. But that's beyond the scope of this post.

And latecomers need to warm up. We teach modified warmups in UpCoach, too. And that's also a separate issue.

The REAL issue is owner and coach frustration, not client behavior. If you catch yourself punishing those who pay your bills, you might be sabotaging your own business.
How many "friends" do you need to make a living?

What's your profit margin on "views"?

Facebook is a fun toy that really does have practical business applications. For generating interest and communicating with people, it's the most effective online platform the world has ever seen.

But Facebook's real mission is to keep you on Facebook. It can be a useful business tool...but it can also distract you into "ego traps": likes, shares and views. Here's what they mean, and how to avoid the traps. First, a bit on who's actually paying attention.

In our Facebook Marketing Course (free in our growth stage or $599 otherwise), we teach three stages of audience interest:
Informed (very warm, ready to sign up) - they've decided to do CrossFit, and are just comparing gyms
Aware (warm, but not hot) - know they "need to do something" and are actively seeking a solution to their problem (like weight loss)
Oblivious (cold) - don't even know they have a problem; aren't looking for a solution.
This is important to understand, because your messages on Facebook reach ALL of these audiences at once.

For example:
You post a before/after picture in a blog post about your nutrition challenge.
Informed: "That's cool. This gym has nutrition challenges."
Aware: "Looks like I can lose weight through nutrition challenges. Add that to my list of options."
Oblivious: "Girl in a bikini!"
People in each audience might hit "like", or even share your post, but for far different reasons.

The point is that we really have no idea who's hitting the "like" button. If your picture receives fanfare from 100 people, it's entirely possible that none of them will become a new client. It would be nice to have an algorithm that says, 'If 100 people hit 'like', one of them will sign up.' But that's not true; there's no linear progression at all.

What really matters: CONVERSIONS.

A conversion is when someone signs up for your service. With money.
A conversion isn't a "page like."
A conversion isn't even a "free trial."
A conversion is a purchase.
A "view" means they're slow at scrolling their finger on the screen.
Again, there's no linear relationship between a person sharing your post and signing up for your service.

How do we get people to conversion? We start with the people closest to converting.

First, former clients. How can you reach them? Probably a phone call or email. This is a very warm audience, because they've purchased from you before. Re-engaging former clients is a top priority for gyms in the TwoBrain family. It's so effective that when we give a gym owner an email to use, and they don't bring anyone back, we know there's something wrong in the gym.

Second, people who have done a NSI or consultation but didn't sign up. They were ready to go, but something stopped them. How do you reach them? Consistent messages about how your service will solve their problem. You can trail them to their coffee shop every day, or put a sign in their yard...or send them love letters through email.

Third, people on your email list. These folks are paying attention, and have indicated their attention by taking action (signing up for something.) They're waiting for you to say the right thing. Luckily, they'll let you say a lot of "not-quite-right" things first. Some industry surveys in other services (like martial arts) show the biggest conversion rate on
the 22nd email. Let that one sink in. Email warms up a cold audience; the colder they are, the more emails they'll need to get from you.

If they're not on your email list, they probably haven't done much to indicate their interest. But let's say they've hit "like" or "follow" on your page--that's a sign they have at least a passing, minimal interest in you. Our audience engagement is already getting colder here, but you warm people up through constant conversation. That's easier through email, because everyone gets the email. On Facebook, only 10% of your page audience will see your posts at any given time, and never the same 10%. So your top priority with people who like your page should be to get them onto your email list.

If they're not followers of your Facebook page--at a bare minimum--they probably don't count as a future client at all. And if they're not on your email list, you're going to have to do a LOT of work to warm them up before they convert. The early adopters--"Hey, CrossFit looks awesome, take my money!" are gone. NOW you need to show people how you're going to solve their problem.

If you share the Before/After pics from above, and get 100 "likes", here's how it might break down:
55 - your current clients who know the woman in the pic
10 - her family (if you've tagged it properly)
  5 - your coaches
  3 - your mom (she has secret accounts. She told me about them.)
  1 - your fourth-grade teacher (a 'like' is the new gold star)
  2 - former clients who have moved away
  4 - candidates running for office
17 - other gym owners who are 'liking' your Facebook play
  1 - person who has been thinking about your service. She won't see your next 9 posts, by the way--unless you get her on your email list.

That list is an overdramatization, of course: it's a guess. But here's the kicker: IT'S JUST AS LIKELY TO BE TRUE AS FALSE. Go ahead: hover over the 'like' button on your last post, and track who's paying attention.

OKAY, what about ads?

Following the Informed/Aware/Oblivious model, our sales and marketing priority should be:
Current and former clients
Not-quite-conversions (they came in for a NSI but didn't sign up)
People on your email list
MAYBE people who like your page. At this point, the audience is cooling off; you have better options.
Lookalike audience of people on your mailing list - maaaaaaaybe someone who also likes Garth Brooks music, long walks on the beach, the CrossFit Games and Vampire romance might also like your service and be ready to sign up. But again, you have other priorities.
Lookalikes of people who like your page - you're really reaching here.
Demographic targeting - you might as well drop flyers out of a helicopter. The odds are better, because you'll only drop the flyers over the neighborhoods where your best clients live. Right?

BUT HOW DO I GET LEADS?

Most CrossFit gym owners don't actually need leads. What they need is conversions: to move the people on their email list toward a consultation or intake meeting or NSI. Of course, it's a lot easier to run an ad and get 400 more followers on your FB page than to actually convert any of them, so that's what many marketing companies sell. Unfortunately, it's really easy to convince us that "likes = $" because we really want to believe it.

Is it possible to entice a cold lead into your gym for a free trial? Yes, it is--at least, it's possible to get someone from your "aware" audience into the gym for something. Companies selling a six-week challenge have proven successful by putting a novel fitness "challenge" in front of thousands of colder leads in different markets. People signing up for the challenge are "aware" that they need exercise, and are enticed by novelty. But most haven't previously indicated interest in CrossFit. And the marketing plan doesn't attract warm leads: it simply fires a lot of bullets until someone gets hit. The gym owner might be successful in warming the lead up to CrossFit and converting them during the challenge (our data shows this used to happen 38% of the time, best-case, but this seems to be dropping as leads get 'colder').

When I was 13, I visited Paris. Part of the tour involved spending an evening at the Notre Dame Cathedral. I met people from all around the world; my friends from home were with me in the tour group. I took pictures of myself in front of gargoyles and went away happy.

But I didn't convert to Catholicism.

I was there for the tour. I wanted to say, "I did CrossFit"--uh, "I did Notre Dame." I was an oblivious audience. I was a teenage boy on a trip with his friends.

Skip ahead to 2016, when I embarked on a 12-month journey to finally "figure out Facebook." I travelled extensively, took expensive courses, and took top experts to lunch. And what I learned comes down to this:

The "trick" to Facebook is that we're all just a bunch of humans on there.

The "magic" to Facebook Marketing is understanding what people actually WANT...not what headline will make them want something different.
The real TRUTH to Facebook marketing is that there isn't a trick. It's practicing, trial and error, and scaling. It's a LOT of patience, like learning the air squat over and over for weeks, and then finally adding a barbell.

After building the massive course, I offered it for sale...for a day. Hundreds of hours of work in recording and testing, tens of thousands of dollars spent learning...and I didn't want to teach anyone the secrets without the context of the Incubator. Now I give the course away for FREE in our Growth Stage. And here's one more funny little story:

After all these months on Facebook, I was earning a good ROI. But I also learned that I HATED doing Facebook marketing. I decided to hire someone else to scale my working ads. But first...

...I decided to take a month off, and just write love letters to my email list. NO boosted posts on Facebook, ZERO ads, $0 spend. My blogs auto-post to their respective Pages, but that's it - most didn't even have pictures or headlines. I averaged 4-7 likes per blog post (you can go check for yourself on the TwoBrain and Catalyst Facebook pages.)

But I wrote my Informed audience a love letter almost every single day. It wasn't "marketing"--it was always about something I NEEDED to tell them. Like this post: I'm compelled to tell you the truth. I can't NOT write this post, because I see so many affiliates wasting time and other resources.

The results? A $6k revenue spike in August at my gym. Best August ever, in fact, and I've been open for 12 years as Catalyst. Some of the "new members" were actually members a decade ago. All of them referred to one email or another. And at TwoBrain...well, we keep selling out our Incubator spots.

Facebook seems sexy because it strokes your ego with "likes" and "shares" and "views". It's designed that way. But it's a siren song: focus on the people closest to you. Tell them what you need them to know. You'll like the results.

PS - it's okay to share this post. But it's okay if you don't.

**PODCAST EPISODE 90: WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE?**

Last week, I published one of the longest blog posts I ever have. But I actually cut over half of it before hitting ‘publish’, because I didn't want it to be a rant.

You’ve heard me talk about recruiting quality clients (instead of trying to attract a large quantity of clients) before. In this episode, I’ll talk about identifying your BEST clients, and how to move them closer to “conversion”--signing up for your service.

This episode won’t be another tome on Facebook marketing, because I don’t think “funnels” are the best way to build the best business in the service industry. Funnels are
great for selling online courses, books and monthly makeup subscriptions; they’re NOT great for finding great clients or saving you time.

In this episode:

The three Audiences
“Warm” leads and “cold” leads
The difference between “sales” and “marketing”
Why the best clients don’t come from funnels
How to identify your best clients
Where your NEXT best clients are hiding
How to write a “love letter”
WHAT IS “COMMUNITY”?

What is a community?

What is a culture?

Can you define them in one paragraph? How about one word?

Chances are, like most business owners, you define community either with a collection of ideas or with the word itself. Neither are acceptable.

Put yourself in the shoes of a prospective client. You are looking for a way to lose weight and get fit. You stumble across a gym on Google and want to learn more about it. So you go to the gym’s website and the first thing you see is a picture of some sweaty person with a pain face, the word “community” emblazoned at the top.

Confused? I’d be surprised if you weren’t. This is what we do to our prospects every day. We shove the idea of community in their faces without defining it.

So what is community?

A community is relationships—a collection of relationships.

A community is made of people who build each other up because they care about each other. And because they care about each other—and they know that you and your coaches care, too—people in your community stick around.

So how do we build community?

You must first be genuine and authentic: “Nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care,” or so goes the saying attributed to former President Theodore Roosevelt. By showing, through action, that you genuinely care about your people and their results, you build strong relationships.

What about your staff?

Your staff should be a genuine extension of you, and therefore just as authentic and caring. If they are not, your community falls apart.

If they don't take the time to work with a client in class, run a goal-setting session, reach out to a missing member, show up to a social event or comment on a Bright Spot Friday post, your community will fall apart.

Where do we go from here?
Instead of throwing around the word "community," try removing it from your website and replacing it with client stories and positive images and videos. And instead of trying to define community, host events to help people experience it.

You can't define a word with the word itself—so stop telling, and start showing.

**Jeff Burlingame**  
Two Brain Business Mentor  
Owner - Friction CrossFit

**WHY I'M HEADED TO CROSSFIT HQ**

It's no secret that I worked on the CrossFit HQ Media team for years. I'm still an irregular contributor to the Journal on business-related ideas.

My relationship with the Journal, the Hope team and Greg Glassman himself is too long for one letter, but here are the highlights, and how the conversation benefits YOU:

In 2013, after serving as Regional Media Director (and helping with the CrossFit Community Page), Greg called my gym to ask if I'd meet him in Seattle. Of course, I flew out. After a long night at the Four Seasons, I met some of his friends for coffee at the original Starbucks. Sevan Metossian, Jimi Letchford, and Andy Stumpf were there for coffee, and they asked what kind of business advice I'd been giving gyms.

Many readers will know that I was mentoring gyms for a website company at the time. The HQ staff asked what I was telling other gym owners—they were nervous, and rightly so. Other "consultants" had steered the community wrong before, in my opinion. I shared my views on mentors vs. consultants. They supported me (as they always do), but made it clear they couldn't overtly endorse anyone as a CrossFit business expert. Late for my flight, I walked back to the hotel; made a handshake deal with Greg in the parking lot (my only 'ask' was for the chris@crossfit.com email address, which I still have) and flew home.

The next big conversation about business came at the 2014 Games. I flew out to Carson hoping to meet with Jeff Glassman about my CrossFit Brain project. That, too, was supported by HQ (I was sent to chess matches and memory contests; and wrote several articles that were unpublished as the "big soda" campaign began to take shape.) But the trip was worthwhile because the conversation turned back to business—my true passion.

During a long night in the bar at the Hilton with Sevan and my new friend Jeff Cain, the conversation about libertarianism and the affiliate model shifted a bit. I extolled the opportunity created by CrossFit--15,000 new entrepreneurs--but suggested that guidance
was more powerful than a blank slate. Best practices, supported by data, could be
delivered in a flexible way that didn't approach a "franchisee" model. They listened, and
an amazing thing happened: affiliate owners approached the table, one after another, to
thank me for the help. I didn't plan it, of course. But the social proof was powerful. And
we were all encouraged to keep talking.

I spent the next few years building my toolbox as a mentor. When I left the software
company to found Two-Brain Business, it was because I saw my responsibility as a gym
owner, publisher and mentor as something far beyond selling websites and online
courses. As soon as I applied to be an official CEU provider for CrossFit, Inc., Sevan
(and Tyson Oldroyd) jumped in to support me again: they sent a producer to my first
seminar in Charlotte. Highlights were published in the Journal in a 13-part series.

As case studies of gym turnarounds and affiliate success stories started to pile up, and I
started to collect before/after data, the conversation became more and more frequent. I
had great discussions at the Games this year, and followed up with calls with more HQ
staff afterward. Finally, I was invited to Scotts Valley to record an episode for the new
CrossFit podcast. And I'm on a plane now.

I'm going to HQ to talk about my own failures and successes, but also to continue the
conversation about the business of being an affiliate. The CrossFit Movement is saving
lives and changing the face of health, and affiliates are the conduits. We need support,
including objectively-collected data on best practices. Currently, the collective
knowledge of gym owners revolves around trickle-down myths and guesses, trials and
errors. It's NOT necessary for you--or me--to repeat every single error made by every
other affiliate on the road to success. That's the reason mentorship is so successful; why
TwoBrain has rapidly become the largest mentoring practice for gyms in the world; and
why I'm writing this from a plane headed to California.

But the reason I've been invited to talk about this is because HQ has ALWAYS been
open to the conversation; they've always been supportive of my ideas and vision. HQ isn't
a server farm occupied by robots; it's a group of great people changing the world, and
cautiously aware of their influence. They're humble, but they know their support carries
mountains of weight. I'm honored by their trust, and accepting of the multi-year road to
reach this point.

Stay tuned. I'm here to represent YOU. And as I've done since my first blog post in 2009,
I'll tell you all about it.
During our Senior Mentoring Team Meeting at the TwoBrain Workshop last weekend, I asked, “What’s the biggest opportunity in front of the CrossFit community that no one is seeing yet?” Two years ago, that was adding nutrition programs. We introduced the world to a simple solution in HSN, and other services have cropped up since. That’s been huge for many. Before that, the opportunity was the Intramural Open; before that, it was Bright Spots.

We agreed the biggest opportunity for some affiliates is to help other local business owners. This might sound like a left-field idea, but here’s why we love it:

CrossFit has created over 15,000 new entrepreneurs.

Though it’s very, very easy to start a new CrossFit gym, it’s very hard to keep one open. So we all jump in with both feet, and then SCRAMBLE to get profitable as quickly as possible. Then we hammer as hard as we can to add staff, and then to level up our businesses to true entrepreneurship instead of just owning a job.

Heavy loads, long distances, for time.

Most CrossFit gyms have to be successful before the end of their first lease. Most new businesses are now stared as “side hustles”—driving an Uber, doing task-based one-off “jobs”, or selling expertise as a VA. We have everything on the line. We’re just desperate enough to try stuff—and fail—fast.

And though the network between affiliates is informal, we DO talk. In the middle of all the Kill Cliff/FitAid questions on Facebook, there IS some progression in our thinking. Granted, we started behind most entrepreneurs (we used to think “profit” was bad) but
we’ve pulled ahead. And common knowledge in CrossFit is uncommon knowledge elsewhere.

So when a CrossFit athlete who owns a machine shop asked for my advice this week, I said, “Oh, that’s simple.” because I solved that problem in my box seven years ago.

When a cafe owner asked if she needed a website, I said, “Just a two-pager. But you could REALLY use a subscription model.” And then I told her how to make a great living in the food industry without crazy overhead. And she baked muffins for my kids. I got the idea from other gyms.

When a local screen printer asked how to “get his name out there”, I suggested he focus on his current clients a bit more instead of worrying about attracting new clients.

This is why I opened the Workshop in Sault Ste. Marie: because entrepreneurship can save my sinking city. But I believe it can save the world. And you, my friend, can do a lot to help YOUR city.

Bonus: entrepreneurs make IDEAL clients for CrossFit gyms.

You’ll hear more about the implementation of this idea in the next few weeks and months. But here’s a special bonus: while I still had three of the mentors at the Workshop, I dropped a microphone in our midst and put them all on a Hot Seat. I fired questions at them: “How would you get more clients for a hairdresser?” “If you owned a gym and had to make $5000 in ten days, how would you do it?” I gave them each a beer, hit “RECORD”, and let it flow. I’ll publish that episode on our podcast today. We’re calling it the Mentor Hot Seat, and I’ll do one every time I gather with this crew of growing TwoBrian Mentors.

Enjoy. I sure did.

The Heart and the Brain

A solid business runs on two things: systems and relationships.

Think of these two pieces as the brain and the heart of your business. In order for a business to succeed it needs a brain (systems) to direct decision-making and avoid chaos. But it also needs a heart (relationships) to keep the blood (revenue) pumping.

If a business has neither, it usually leads to an overworked owner, constantly looking for new customers while retaining none. Without a system in place, he or she is prone to making poor decision-making.

If a business just has a heart, it will struggle to grow, eventually imploding due to angry customers and a dried-up bank account.
If a business has only a brain, it will result in poor retention and an owner who can never leave the gym, lest it fall apart.

But with BOTH, we have a powerful business that can weather all obstacles. We have systems in place to keep things running smoothly no matter who is in charge, and we have relationships to promote retention and organic growth. A brain and a heart combined develop a healthy, un-killable business and create better lifestyles for owner, staff and clients.

So what's the trick?

Build your systems ASAP and continue to work on them indefinitely. Ensure that your staff can easily access and search your staff handbook to avoid any issues.

Create a community by genuinely caring for your members AND staff. Try to meet with one staff member per day to talk about their growth and ambitions. What does their perfect day look like? Where do they see themselves in one, three or five years? How can you help get them there?

Apply the 90-second rule to your coaches. Make sure they are spending time with each member, during every class.

Use campfiring to build relationships after class. During cool down, talk to your members, learn about them and help them.

Offer social events that educate and entertain. Have fun, but be sure to add some value other than just hanging out. Offer a nutrition seminar or mobility clinic before your next social. Or invite local businesses to your gym to offer a clinic or product trial.

A business cannot survive on systems or community alone; it needs both to survive.

**Jeff Burlingame**  
Two Brain Business Mentor  
Owner - Friction CrossFit
I spent the last 72 hours with most of the senior mentors at TwoBrain. It was the first time any had visited the TwoBrain Workshop. And the first time several had met in person. Despite growing from zero to 350 mentoring clients in just over 18 months, we'd never had our own private Summit.

I didn't sleep for two nights before they got there. These are some of the most successful gym owners in the world--and, far and away, the best mentors in the fitness business. They're friends, and we often lean on each other. The struggles of our clients weigh heavily on each of us (I've cried with Ken many times, and celebrated with Dani almost every week) and that has forged a very strong bond.

All of that brainpower in the Workshop at once, and I could have pointed the conversation in any direction. So what did we talk about?

We talked about OUR process, and YOUR opportunities.

First, our process: over 15 hours spent in front of a whiteboard, making sure we're giving gym owners the best advice in the most actionable way.

Now, we're busy. We don't have to fly all over North America to sit on my couch for a weekend. None of us is asking, "How do we get more clients?" or "how do we make more money?" because that's not our goal. Instead, we spent thousands of dollars and time away from our families to figure out how to help gym owners MORE. These discussions will result in upgrades that are mostly invisible. They'll be expensive. And our clients probably won't know about them. But it will make our mentoring practice better for THEM, and that's why we do it.

Codifying my gym's processes saved it. Not a marketing strategy; not a sales pitch; not a Facebook ad.

Whenever a business wants to reach the next level--whether that level is earning the first dollar in profit, or the $10 million mark--it MUST start with solidifying its processes. Operations at their current level must be codified, them optimized, and then (if possible) automated. New roles emerge from this discussion in gyms AND in a large mentorship practice. If you're coaching every class, you simply can't work on your retention strategy. And if I'm implementing the CRM, I can't finish the book that will change your idea of "marketing" and "sales". Making me better at fixing a CRM doesn't help YOU--the gym owner--one bit.

Second, we talked about what gym owners actually need. Starting with a blank slate, we asked ourselves, "How much help do people need? What does the data actually support? Are we better off as franchisees?" Nothing was off the table.
This sounds superfluous, maybe. But it's necessary, because most "consultants" in our industry are actually selling ineffective solutions. As I learned in 2015, online courses don't actually solve anyone's problems, because knowledge is less than half the issue.

The discussion finished with, "Which of these problems can be solved by software?" which, of course, led to the obvious question: "Is software effectively solving the problems of gym owners in 2017/2018?"

You can probably guess the answer to that one.

Finally, I asked, "What's the biggest opportunity in front of the CrossFit community that no one is seeing yet?" Two years ago, that was adding nutrition programs. We introduced the world to a simple solution in HSN, and other services have cropped up since. That's been huge for many. Before that, the opportunity was the Intramural Open; before that, it was Bright Spots.

I'll share the next "big opportunity" for CrossFit gyms on Thursday. In the meantime, I'll be at HQ all week talking about business!

**HOW IMPROV COMEDY HELPS YOUR BUSINESS**

You've seen Improvisational Comedy, I know it.

In Improv, a couple of comedians stand on stage and make up a funny story on the fly. One person starts with a simple sentence, like: "Oh! Look at my watch!" and then another follows with something else: "Why is there water running out of it?"

The goal is to make the story funny, and it often works. But despite what the audience thinks, Improv doesn't start from a blank canvas. There are RULES. And we can learn from them.

Just as in business, scripts can often sound fake. If you read a phone script to a client who's inquiring about your rates, they'll trust you less. That's why we don't use call centers.

But you also don't want to have a 90-minute conversation with every client, either. You don't want to vomit every single detail of your philosophy, practice and science; you want them to take action, because knowledge alone doesn't make anyone fit.

Here's how the lessons of Improv comedy can help you:

First rule of Improv: Don't disagree.
When two performers are building a funny story, they agree to agree. Neither will ever say, "No." or "You're wrong," because that ends a conversation before it goes anywhere. Instead, performers will say "Yes, and..." because they know it's more important to keep the conversation alive than it is to "win".

When I started as a Personal Trainer, I'd often argue with people who wanted to pay me money. I'd say, "You don't need to run 10 miles every day to run a marathon! You need to do HIIT. And you don't need all those carbs either!" I won lots of conversations and lost a lot of money.

Instead, I should have approached the conversation the way a train approaches a turn: slowly and incrementally. I should have said, "Yes, you can run and do CrossFit too." Then, after a month, I could have said, "Have you noticed a difference in your running? You can probably cut back a bit now."

Second rule of Improv: Add new information. Help your partner move the story along, instead of forcing them to do all the work.

In your business, add little things that reinforce the client's story or desires. They'll move faster along the same path to conversion.

For example, if a client says, "I want to run a marathon," you can say, "This will sure help with those hills--you're right about that!"

Third rule of Improv: Be funny. No one wants to hear why you're the victim.

I've mentioned a few times that we don't accept everyone into the TwoBrain family. But when we do invite an entrepreneur to join us, they'll sometimes ask, "How did I make the cut?"

And the answer is sometimes, "We laughed on the phone."

Laughter establishes intimacy. It's the most obvious sign of rapport. If you're laughing, the conversation is easy and natural instead of painful. On my side, if the business owner is laughing, then they're mature enough to be open about their problems. On their side, if I'm laughing, they know I'm not reading a script or trying to push a sale.

Fourth rule of Improv: Make The Other Guy Look Good. On the stage, they'll reciprocate. When you're sitting across a desk from them, remind them that they're already doing SOMETHING right; that they've already taken the first steps toward their goal; that they're already a little bit successful.

Fifth rule of Improv: Do it a LOT.
Doing > Reading, says Scott Berkun, author of "Making Things Happen", "The Myths of Innovation" and "A Year Without Pants."

"Life is experience and reading about other people’s experiences, as powerful as it can be if the writer’s good, is a shell of having the experience yourself." Berkun says.

We can learn a lot from those who fail faster than we do.

Comedians fail a LOT. They do it in public. And they use the experience to get better. That makes them very good at performing. And their failures can guide us.

**SET YOUR GOALS**

Do you have a goal?

Is it for the short, medium or long term?

Do you take action toward that goal every day? If not, what are you working toward?

Gym owners, like any other entrepreneur, can be short sighted or long sighted. They either live minute-to-minute in chaos or year-to-year with minimal risk and slow progress. If you’re an entrepreneur running your business in either of these ways, you’re probably feeling frustrated, like you’re spinning your wheels.

Here are a few ways to break out of this tough spot.

1. **Set up an easy win early every week.** Got a good lead? Run a No-Sweat Intro on Monday. Working on a co-branding deal? Start the week with a cool change to the facility that members will love. Accomplishing a small goal early in the week will give you momentum to keep running strong for the next seven days.

2. **Set SMART goals:** Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-focused, Time-bound

At a recent mentor meet-up, we sat down for a "hot seat" podcast recording. The first question asked was, "As a gym owner, if you had to make $5,000 in 10 days, what would you do?"

Naturally, all of the mentors had different, yet effective ideas. However, the lesson we took away was the power of deadlines. Think about it this way: If I say, "You need to make five grand," you can get started whenever you feel like it. You might meet the goal in a month, six months or even never, because there was no time frame or sense of urgency established. But if I say, "You have 10 days to make five grand or your business is bankrupt," I guarantee you will hustle until you meet that goal.

It’s the same sense of efficiency you get the day before you leave for vacation. If you were to leave on a vacation for one week starting tomorrow, you would become effective
and efficient in ways you may not have thought possible because you don't want the ship to sink in your absence. What would happen if you approached every day with the same sense of urgency and efficiency?

As business owners, it is so easy to get caught up in day-to-day time sucks like email, Facebook and member issues. But if you have a concrete goal with a solid, urgent deadline, you will prioritize that goal and get back to work.

3. Establish a timeline. By setting short, medium and long-term goals, we can zoom out from the day-to-day and see where we want to go (long-term), what has to happen this quarter (medium term) and what has to happen this week (short term). Again, set a deadline on these items and make sure they are SMART. This will help keep your motivation and emotional attachment to achieving your goal high.

4. Remember your Bright Spots. When working towards a goal, as an athlete or business owner, you must understand that there will be setbacks. Sometimes things go sideways. Sometimes we fail. Sometimes we have to take a step back. However, as long as you keep your goals in sight and take action on them daily, you cannot fail. Persistence is key. Begin every day and end every week with your Bright Spots. What are three things that went great today or this week?

Roll these Bright Spots into "Bread Crumbs," aka, "What's next?" You just won the Super Bowl; what are you going to do next? I'm going to Disneyland! What will you do after you hit a revenue goal? Set a higher one! Keep your motivation up by continuously adding and one-upping your goals.

Running a successful business is not easy; there are a lot of moving pieces. But it is simple. Start with a win, set goals, take action daily and stay positive. That's it.

What are your goals?

Jeff Burlingame
Two-Brain Business Mentor
Owner - Friction CrossFit

SHOULD YOU BUY AN EMAIL LIST?

When you're in the "funnel mindset", you count leads instead of people.

A funnel mindset means blasting your message to everyone you can--even if they didn't ask to hear it--and then filtering, filtering, filtering.
Sometimes, the odd little fish swims all the way through. In a funnel mindset, these are "qualified leads", and it's worth going through 300 real people to find one of them.

But what happens to the other 299?

It all depends on permission.

If 300 people sign up for your email list, they've given you permission to continue the conversation. They might not like--or even read--every message you send them; they might eventually even opt out of your list. But they won't hit 'spam'. And they won't get angry.

If, though, you DON'T have their permission, they'll recognize spam for what it is. They'll opt out. And worse, the tactic will backfire. They'll actually be LESS likely to use your service in the future. Think about that weird guy at the bar: he approaches 300 women. One of them goes home with him. The other 299 are repulsed. Did he win?

(Here's a hint: ask him in the morning.)

Dan Pink wrote about "the backfire effect" in "To Sell is Human", and it's been the subject of study for years now. It's been studied by behaviorists like Kaplan and Gimbel, and email marketers have been avoiding it since--well, since their second email backfired.

Here's what Seth Godin wrote about it in 2008:

"Permission marketing is the privilege (not the right) of delivering anticipated, personal and relevant messages to people who actually want to get them."

You should read the rest of his post here.

I teach permission marketing to the TwoBrain family of entrepreneurs. And if you're reading this, it's because you've given me permission to continue our conversation. Thank you.

A conversation is a beautiful thing. It's a powerful sales tool. But it can't be imposed upon anyone. If you're trying to sell, don't buy the list: build it.
HOW WE TEACH FACEBOOK MARKETING

If you're a frequent reader of this blog, or you receive my love letters, you might think we don't teach social media marketing at all. That's understandable.

We have a HUGE Facebook Marketing course in the Growth Stage of our mentoring program. It's the most comprehensive online course in the world that's specific to the fitness industry. But I don't talk about it much outside our group. Below, I'll explain WHY.

I spent the last 15 months traveling with a group of very high-level SaaS founders (if you don't know what SaaS means, it's "Software as a Service.") These guys are all extremely successful. They KNOW Facebook and social media marketing.

I also enrolled in every FB marketing course I could find, and spent THOUSANDS on ads to test the systems. I went to lunch with experts; I invited some onto my podcast; and took 1:1 lessons from others.

I compiled all of these lessons into the Facebook Marketing Course. We listed the course for $599...and then, after one day of open enrollment, I decided to stop selling it.

Why? Because it's NOT what gym owners NEED. At least, not until they can handle the growth. And I'm willing to bet $2500 on it for EVERY gym we work with.

Many gym owners (and some "consultants") think funnel marketing and Facebook ads are the answer. And a tiny percentage of the time, they're right. But jumping straight to social media advertising is like starting a CrossFitter on bar muscle-ups before they've learned the air squat: it's frustrating, and it won't take them from their current state to fitness in the fastest way possible. It might even break them.

Here's one lesson from the Facebook Marketing Course we include in our Growth Stage:
There's a lot of discussion in the module, but I'll sum up this way: "Hot leads" are close to purchasing your service. "Cold leads" are very far away from purchasing your service (they don't even know they need it, which is why they're "Oblivious").

Are there "hot leads" on Facebook? Of course. But Facebook isn't the easiest way to reach them.

Are there "warm leads" on Facebook? Yes. Many. But these folks are waiting to be told how your service will solve their problem, and an ad won't do that well. They need to be part of a conversation.

Are there "cold leads" on Facebook? Billions. But they don't know about you, or care about your service.

The latter category is the trap: people think, "If only ONE PERCENT of the people who see this ad sign up, I'll make thousands of dollars!" And they're right...but conversion rates for most ads are a fraction of one percent. Really great ads might get their attention, but won't keep their attention. You'll have to warm up cold leads over time. And you probably ALREADY have hundreds--if not thousands--of people in your pipeline who have shown interest. But you're not warming THEM up...why add more people to that list?
Before I move on from the "cold audiences" and "warm audiences" point, here's another illustration:

- **Audiences and Targeting**

![Audience Chart]

This is a "temperature chart" for custom audiences that you can create on Facebook.

These aren't all the audiences you can sell to, however. We teach Affinity Marketing, which starts with your own clients--the people who already love you; their families; and their friends. We'd call the top of THIS list (a Facebook audience made from people on your email list) stage FIVE of a good marketing plan. That means there are four levels of people--dozens, maybe hundreds--of others who are more likely to want your service; be able to afford it; and fit in with your best clients.

The reason we don't teach Facebook Marketing in the Incubator? It's not the fastest way to get new clients, make more money, or take more time off. It's NOT what gym owners actually need.

Want proof? Here it is:

When we accept a new gym owner into the Incubator, I'm making a big bet on them. Our 100% ROI guarantee says that if I can't show you how to earn your $2499 back, we'll put you in Growth Stage until we DO. That means I'm SO sure that you're missing easy opportunities that I'm willing to bet your registration fee on it. And I make this bet around 20 times every month.
After the Incubator, when your process flows smoothly; when you have time to rest and think and plan; when you have staff in place to handle multiple revenue streams; when your clients are being helped optimally--sure, use Facebook Ads. We have the largest and best course in the WORLD to help you.

But many of our gym owners don't use them at all--because they don't NEED to.

Why don't I use them at my gym anymore? Because I don't need to. I signed up to coach, not to be a FB Marketing expert. In fact, the biggest lesson I learned over the last 15 months of building a FB marketing course is: I don't like doing it! Haha.

Now, some people DO like setting up ads, tweaking one word at a time, and waiting patiently for days while the algorithm does its job before tweaking the next word. I prefer direct and effective action that will have an immediate impact. And that's why we tell people to "F Your Funnel" -- at least for awhile -- because they're usually making sales and growth more confusing than it has to be.

The Facebook Marketing course is now FREE in Growth Stage. It's hours long, with templates, video walk-throughs and sample data. It will teach you everything you need to know. Luckily, you don't have to be great at social media marketing to be great in the fitness business.

**SHOULD YOU BUY OUT ANOTHER GYM?**

Maybe this should be titled, "Do You WANT A Second Location?"

This is a common topic in the TwoBrain Family. Successful gyms are now often invited to "buy out" failing gyms in their area. As the polarization of "successful" and "unsuccessful" gyms continues, more owners are becoming either a buyer or seller.

I've been approached to purchase gyms many times. And many MORE times, I've been asked to consult on a sale agreement. But I don't start with the valuation. I start with a question:

"Why do you want to own a second gym?"

If I hear: "I just want to help more people. My first gym doesn't take any of my time" -- then we proceed with the purchase.
But usually, I hear: "It's a great opportunity. There are no other gyms in the area. My members could choose where to visit. It's almost profitable. I KNOW I COULD FIX IT."

That last one is in all caps because I hear it a LOT.

Here are the questions I ask next:
Is there a chance you could get the gym's members even if you didn't buy the gym?
Is there an easier way to increase your income in your current gym in less time than you'd require to fix the other gym?
Are clients in the other gym accustomed to lower rates? Do they match your target demographic?
Why is the other gym failing? Are you buying the problems that killed them?
Does a higher membership count move you closer to your "perfect day"?
What liabilities are you also buying? (For example, a lease)

After thinking it through, many owners decide NOT to buy out another owner. Here are some reasons I've heard recently:

"It would take me months to fix that gym. If I calculate the value of my time, it would be a lot easier to just increase my sales by $2000 per month at my current location."
"I'm pretty close to my perfect day already. I can't imagine dealing with all the discounts and student memberships that killed the other gym."
"I know I could fix the culture over there, but it would cause me a lot of stress in the meantime."
"They want a lot more than their valuation. No thanks."
"I realized it was just my ego saying, 'I want to be the guy who owns two gyms.'"

Many decide they don't want to buy the other guy's problems. But they DO still want to help. So sometimes they offer the other owner a job; or pay for their client list; or even buy their equipment. There are ways to help that don't involve sacrificing YOUR perfect day (or your income!) to save someone else. But kudos for wanting to!

If you DO want to buy out another, we've been through it many times. The path is clear. Just make sure your OWN house is in tip-top shape, because you'll have to focus your full attention on the second gym for a few months. Clients who have been through the Incubator are generally successful when they buy out another gym--unless they decide they're doing just fine with one.

After all, no one needs a second gym when the first one pays them well.

SHOULD COMPETITORS PAY LESS...OR MORE?
Winning the Games doesn't help your business.

What, then, is the benefit of having Games athletes under your roof?

I've been around Games and Regional-level athletes often. In my former role as Media Director for several different Regionals, I've been lucky enough to meet many of the CrossFit-famous. Most are nice; some went out of their way to greet fans even while preparing for an event. Many understand that their "fame" is specific only to our niche.

The best athletes can provide inspiration and leadership in the gym. Of course. The best athletes participate with other members, and give them a sense of "Look what she can do! Maybe I can do more." The best athletes lift the ceiling for everyone else. But let's be clear about what top CrossFit competitors DON'T do:

They don't pull in new members
They don't always make the best coaches
They don't make your gym "famous"
They don't increase your bottom line--unless, of course, they're paying more for training than anyone else. I'll get to that in a moment.

In a very few cases, hosting a Games or Regional-level competitor can even be a detriment. If the athlete is following outside programming (which is understandable), then they're not interacting with your clients much anyway. And if they're doing "their own thing", they're a distraction to everyone else. In a few extreme examples, the "big dog effect" can separate the pack, causing cliques and making a mess of your policies, space and equipment.

I wish I didn't hear this often, but I do:

She comes in and stays most of the day. She stays in the corner and doesn't really talk to anyone else. She's doing other programming. She usually leaves a mess. She's not really part of our community. She only talks to certain people. And now those people just follow what she's doing! And she doesn't even wear our gym's t-shirt at competitions!

I love the sport of CrossFit. Every year, we prove to the world that elite levels of fitness are possible by generalists. But the ability to deadlift 600, run a sub-5:30 mile and link 50 pull-ups requires different training than most of our clients. That means a different plan; more time; and more coaching.

Luckily, that's what you sell!

In any service industry, a general-level service carries a standardized price. Usually, a premium service is available for those who want more. In this case, competitors require a LOT more attention than the average client. Here's how you can provide them with the options they need to meet their goals:
Competitors' Classes
Individualized Programming
Open Gym time (as an add-on)
Nutrition for Competition service
Personal training for specific skills
Outside experts brought in to do seminars
Renting outside venues

Of course, each of these will require a LOT more time from the coach, and time should be charged accordingly.

This model is well established in most amateur sports, where "rep" or "traveling teams" are common. Rep teams travel to compete at a higher level. They try to put athletes in a more visible venue for sponsors. They spend more time on training and gear.

And they cost a LOT more. Team fees for 8-year-olds in hockey are around $400 for non-rep players, and $5000 for rep players. Parents understand this is part of the process, and expect to pay far more. The model holds true for baseball, soccer, football and virtually every other amateur sport with a division of talent.

Having a high-level CrossFit competitor in your gym can be great. In the best cases, they're friendly and inspirational for the others. But they don't attract new clients, and most of your SEED clients are probably indifferent to their presence. The value of having them there should translate into a specialized service with an increased price. If not, what objectively-measurable value do they bring?

PODCAST EPISODE 92: MADE BY HQ
If you visit the CrossFit Facebook page, you’ll see this:

…not “Education Company”. Not even “Fitness”. “MEDIA/NEWS”.

Since the first days of the PDF-.emailed Journal, I’ve learned from–and copied–CrossFit HQ’s media team. More than any other organization on the planet, CrossFit educates its fans and consumers to create frenzied evangelists. They publish every day. They produce world-class video, employ full-time writers and editors, and pay above the grade for quality photos.

What can we learn from CrossFit HQ’s Media Team?

Just about everything.
There are 200 people in HQ Media. It’s a multimillion-dollar operation to produce the best exercise demos, Journal articles, full-length movies, daily blog content, social media—and now, podcasts. They’re among the best in the world, and they do it to help CrossFit affiliates grow.

Many of us don’t realize it, but HQ’s media can serve as a template for our own. Content marketing bridges the gap between our service (fitness) and a client’s needs (lose weight, get more energy, etc.) We can copy their methods, share their videos, and use their testimonials in OUR gyms.

For this episode, I traveled to Santa Cruz, CA and visited CrossFit HQ for three days. I was interviewed for their new podcast, and then turned the tables: I asked Mike Warkentin (managing editor of the CrossFit Journal), Tyson Oldroyd (head producer) and Matt Bischel (head of social media) to answer questions about production, promotion and best practices.

This interview runs over an hour, and it’s FULL of useful stuff that I haven’t seen or heard anywhere else. For the first time, HQ allowed me to peek under the skirt, and ask “Why?” and “How?” – and even though I’ve worked closely with HQ Media for years, many of the answers still surprised me.

Don’t listen to this podcast while driving. Wait until you have a pen and paper ready, because you’re going to want to take notes!

MENTORING YOUR COACHES AND ATHLETES

The TwoBrain model is built on the balance of knowledge and caring service.

My gym is built on the same model. And yours can be, too.

Like our brain, our mentorship practice prioritizes education or empathy, depending on what's needed MOST at the moment. Virtuosity in mentorship--and virtuosity in coaching--means coordinating both sides, emotional and logical, to work together.

Solving a problem has two parts:
First, you have to know what to do.
Second, you have to know how to DO it. You have to take action.

Years ago, I started mentoring gym owners with a phone call and a blank sheet of paper. The owners found value in the service, but it took many conversations to explain the concepts and reinforce WHY changes had to be made. Some of these early clients are still
with me, and they're all great friends. The early service was very heavy on care, but weaker on knowledge.

Two years in, I decided that I could put together a course to reinforce the educational side. I'd already published Two-Brain Business, and was writing 2.0 and Help First. I'd been offering online courses through IgniteGym for years already, so I knew the mechanics.

When the course was built, we sold it without an in-person mentoring component. It was very popular, but when I measured its effect at the end, I discovered that many gym owners rarely made the changes necessary to fix their business. They had a TON of education--more than enough--but not enough accountability or personal guidance.

When I launched TwoBrainBusiness.com, I did so with years of mentorship under my belt. I prioritized what WORKED, instead of what sold well, and the results skyrocketed. Soon I could offer our 100% ROI guarantee, because I was so confident in our service. Think about it: what else can you purchase for around $2500 that will pay you back in less than 8 weeks, and KEEP paying you forever?

Here's how we do it now. Next, I'll explain how to do the same in YOUR gym:

We start with a very intensive, focused stage (called the Incubator) where you work 1:1 with a mentor. You do an hour call each week. These are one-on-one. Then the mentor assigns you homework; you login to our extensive mentoring platform and do your assignments. There are videos, templates, downloads and essays to help, and you can message us right through the platform. We work from foundational processes, then introduce the gold standards. We build retention systems, promotion systems and education systems for your staff. Then we teach actionable sales strategy and then, finally, marketing.

When you've finished the Incubator, you can go on to Growth. In that stage, you do a call every month, and work backward from annual targets to reach your income, service, travel and educational goals for the year. These calls are still 1:1, but daily interaction occurs in our private FB group.

That's mentorship. How is that like what the best gyms are doing?

Because the best gyms are really mentorship practices.

Let's consider your coaches, and then your athletes.

You need to mentor your coaches. When they start, they need a focused "incubation" stage. This should be done one on one, and information should be tailored to their level. While there's a common path to their education, some students will need more (or less) time on different subjects.
When they're ready to coach, they still need accountability, goal-setting and continuing education. Meet with them monthly; review their goals; plot their course. I shared our goal-setting and evaluation sheets with attendees at the Strong(er) Fitness Summit in Columbus last weekend.

Every year, ask your coaches, "What do you want NOW?" and help them build a road map to get there.

Now, your athletes:

When they start, they need an "incubation" phase to nurture their bodies and your relationship. This phase should include physical AND nutritional coaching. Its goal isn't to build perfect movers, but to build the habit and passion for exercise. The incubation phase (call it OnRamp or Fundamentals, whatever) should be crammed with positive feedback, Bright Spots and smiles.

When they graduate to a stage of personal growth, they still need to be mentored by you. That means annual goal-setting (3x/year is even better), accountability and a clear path to success.

Accountability and goal-setting means far more than a private FB group, or calling people when they miss. Those are your last-ditch options. REAL accountability means constant 1:1 interaction between athlete and mentor/coach.

Here's our process again, for review:
https://twobrainbusiness.com/mentoring-process/
If you do nothing else to change your gym before 2018, change your mindset from "selling CrossFit" to "mentoring people I care about."

**DISCIPLINE AND PATIENCE**

Owning a business requires discipline.

*Discipline to remain focused through the good times and the bad.*

If revenues are up and things are looking great, stay focused—don't pull back and relax just yet. Better yet, have someone shadow you as you continue to take action. Develop them and then present them with a career-changing opportunity to take over. Then you can be free to pursue other goals or grow the business.

If revenues are down, don't wallow in self-pity. Take a nice big bite of humble pie, accept that things suck right now and then get to work. As long as you are taking action daily, you will see results. You will get out of this rut.
Discipline to see one program through before starting another.

It can be tempting to launch multiple programs at once. You may believe this will multiply your revenue. Unfortunately, it may do just the opposite. With so many options available, your community may choose the easiest one: none of them.

Start with one program and see it through. Document the process and learn from it. Then try again and aim to improve every time. This is slower, but much more effective.

Discipline to evaluate staff before giving them more to do.

Testing and evaluating is key to developing great staff members. First offer a good staff member a new opportunity. Then test them for one month and evaluate them at the end. How did they do? How do they feel? Can they take on more? If so, repeat the process and add another task or role. Again—slow, but effective.

Discipline to review and improve systems often.

Your systems are not perfect. There is no such thing. The top businesses understand that how it is done now is not how it will always be done. It may be tedious—even annoying—but you must review and recode your processes often. Aim for a review every quarter. You don't have to completely recode every quarter, just look for holes and fix them.

Discipline to avoid the attraction of shiny get-rich-quick programs.

So you found a fancy new ad campaign, or Facebook marketing guy, or event template—great, what does the data say? Has this worked at more than a dozen gyms, more than one time? Just because it sounds great doesn't mean that it is. Just because it has worked doesn't mean it will work. This is not a pessimistic view, this is a realistic view. Trying and failing is part of owning a business. But trying without having done the research is foolish.

Discipline to protect your staff and community by firing a member.

If a member is causing problems in your community or causing stress and anxiety for your staff, it is your duty as an owner to handle it. Remove them. Do so gracefully and professionally, but urgently nonetheless.

Discipline to protect your members by firing an employee.

The same can be said for your staff. If they are the ones causing issues, deal with it immediately. Handle it professionally, and then communicate with tact to your members. Communication is key in termination.
Discipline to take action even when it's hard, even when it seems like you can do nothing right.

So you had a bad month, quarter or year. That's okay. It happens. Focus on what you can control: your actions. No matter what condition your business is in, you can save it—if you only take action. Every day, identify a way you can improve your situation and take action. Don't overthink it. Just do something to move the needle forward. If you continuously do this, you will climb out of the hole.

Discipline and patience are the keys. It's easy to give up. It's hard to take action—but it’s worth it.

**Jeff Burlingame**  
Two-Brain Business Mentor  
Owner - Friction CrossFit

**WHAT’S L5?**

CrossFit has provided a unique entrepreneurial opportunity to change lives.

The path to joy requires security, consistency and the opportunity to serve others. Gym ownership ticks all of those boxes. The challenges of running a successful gym are large and diverse: certainly challenging enough for virtually anyone. No one EVER got bored owning a gym.
But...

Some of us, infected with the entrepreneurial virus, decide to pursue another project. Usually this involves broadening our audience, our influences and our minds. It also means our gyms have to run themselves while we focus on this new project.

Two-Brain Business is MY Level 5 project. My interest became an experiment, and then it became a passion; now it's a compulsion. I can't NOT help other gym owners. And at TwoBrain, we're exceptionally rich with owners from all across the spectrum: not-quite-open to ten-years-in. Broke to millionaire, starving to hungry for more. And now that the TwoBrain Workshop is open, it's clear that other entrepreneurs need help. We stand ready to help with the philosophy of Help First, incubation and mentorship.

The Level 5 Group is where we mentor those who want MORE.

They have a big idea, or a massive opportunity. Many already own a gym, but have moved on from the day-to-day operations and are ready to help a larger audience. Some own many gyms; some are founders of software companies that SERVE gym owners.

I'm not sure if TwoBrain attracts the entrepreneurial, or if business success makes them hungry for more. I'm not sure if Level 5 thinkers are made, or born. But I know that we can help them.

The Level 5 Group is for entrepreneurs whose first business is virtually automated and requires little of their time or attention. It's for owners who have another big idea that keeps them up at night. It's for people who, despite being happy with their business, are still not satisfied with their life.

Here's how it works:

Monthly 1:1 calls with a senior TwoBrain mentor
Monthly group video calls for accountability
Quarterly in-person meet ups with Hot Seats, high-level topics and personal/family development
Guests who have been successful at their OWN Level 5 project

Level 5 members sign NDAs due to the nature of their ideas. Frankly, some of them are industry-changers; no one is trying to invent a faster apple-peeler here.

This is not "the next step" for most gym owners. There's a certain blend of success, freedom and yearning that identifies you as a Level 5 candidate (if you haven't completed the Incubator, you'll need to do that first.)

Most ideas in Level 5 are at the million-dollar opportunity level. They're GREAT. But without mentorship and freedom from the gym business, they'll never happen. That
would be a shame. Missed opportunities keep me up at night. If you're the same, ask your mentor about L5.

**PODCAST EPISODE 93: GREG GLASSMAN (FULL TRANSCRIPT)**

Greg Glassman isn’t your average genius.

Greg shares the mannerisms of the virtuoso: he moves while he talks, fidgeting with coasters on the table. He leans in, then back, tipping his chair from one side to the next. His answers are so quick, most of the time, that you’d think they were rehearsed. But they’re not.

And Greg isn’t just a big thinker. He’s also a big doer: he acts. He travels extensively. He has frequent speaking engagements. Old-time CrossFit fans will remember his monthly manifesto, emailed as a PDF to be printed with “CrossFit Journal” on the top. In 2001, he put the workouts from his private training gym online for free, and hasn’t missed a day since.

Greg has spawned a worldwide health initiative. He’s also given over 25,000 people the opportunity to be entrepreneurs and change lives. This is my passion. But that’s not his true genius.

Last week on this podcast, I introduced some of Greg’s Media team—Tyson Oldroyd, Mike Warkentin and Matt Bischel. They’re part of “CrossFit HQ” — an army of professionals dedicated to helping Greg’s affiliates. They’re all loyal to the point of fanaticism; many have been with the company a decade already. Very few people quit CrossFit HQ: they love the opportunity to serve in a meaningful way. And they love Greg.

I flew across the country to sit with Greg at his kitchen table for 90 minutes. It took days of travel and three years of conversation to reach this point. My questions weren’t pre-approved or censored afterward. Greg greeted me at his front door with a hug; when we parted a few hours later, he said “Love ya, man. Keep doing what you’re doing.”

**THAT is Greg’s true genius:** the ability to spread his care; to inspire everyone around him to beat their plowshares into swords and follow him.

“CrossFit is not an exercise program. It’s a fitness program.” What did Greg mean by that? Listen in…

**FULL TRANSCRIPT:**

**Greg:** Training people? Yes, okay. Working with the best people in your community, during what is for them and due to no shortcoming of their own, it's just how cool it is but
what might be the best part of their day and the start of their day. That is a perk. What you're doing is you're having the strongest and most positive impact on their lives that any professional service is likely to have. That even includes for services like psychiatry or medicine.

Now see if you're hurt in a car accident, I know that some people believe that you lived because your doctor was very, very good at what they're doing. Although that happens, you're likely that you lived because you weren't critically injured and that the healthcare you got was routine. It was to the standards of the profession. So how different it would have been if you'd been in the care of a different physician.

Often it won't make much difference but in the case of what we do, the people that didn't train with me, they didn't get to do CrossFit. What they did is they found themselves doing lateral raises and curls or working out, standing in line with William Kramer at the Smith Machine.

Interviewer: [laughs]

Greg: At the end of the day, what we have is an unprecedented impact on the best subset of your community that you can imagine, a relationship that transcends the professional and becomes at once personal, I don't know why that is but we got to somehow -- You can have a relationship with your clients that you wouldn't have as a lawyer or a physician. How many people have married their clients and our bosses? Hundreds. It's hundreds, it's a cliche.

I can't imagine a better way to make a living, I really can't. I don't see what I do for a living as being different, really. It's not quite like opening the door every morning but I'm closer to those people than anyone else or anything else that happens in a workplace anywhere I know. I may even understand them and what they do better than I do my own staff and what they do for me, often specialized, often not.

I remember in the last days of riding my bike and unlocking the door that things were changing for me, that my responsibilities were making that less and less like what each day was going to be. I boldly and bravely went in on this new direction and all but it also wasn't lost on me like. Look, I got my dog following me to town, East Cliff on my way to the gym with the wave breaking on the -- I was like, "This is great. This is great." And it was. It was.

Interviewer: It still is. At some point, you realized in the gym that you were called to another level maybe, what was that transition like?

Greg: Very difficult. The growing pains that are the growing pains that a business endures come as -- The way business grows is that all those things you'd metric as business grow but the network that is the relationship of the principles is also a thing that grows. What happens is that everyone in the process has to iteratively focus for scope. You go from there in the details doing something to backing up far enough to watch someone else do it. Several people do it. You don't see it right away but what's happening is that you're getting a better and better scope with less and less focus. Pretty soon you see in all the moving parts and don't have a clear vision to any of it. You can use the analogy of, take off on a rocket ship. There's a level at which you can see the trees to the point where you can make out the leaves. Say something about the individual health of a tree. With not much altitude at all you can see the tree but no longer the leaves and then pretty soon you're able to finally see the forest but you can see no tree. Just the forest. That's it and you've sacrificed focus for scope.
Now, that growing pain in the individuals involved creates a psychological dilemma of the first order. Some of those people get left behind. It's tragic. The difference can be as simple as being a great bricklayer, a lousy instructor of bricklayers and an even shittier instructor of bricklaying instructors. It's just getting worse for you. Really what you had but a singular skill and it was bricklaying. I'd consider giving you names but we've -- Littered's a wrong word because most of us that were here at the beginning still are but many that aren't, it was that kind of pressure. Maybe it's the good example of my brother, David Castro. He is one of the few people that I have ever seen reinvent themselves.

**Interviewer:** How so?

**Greg:** He is just a different, better, newer version of what he used to be. It's just a beautiful thing. It's not easy to do. It's not easy to do, but he's that stronger of a person. I don't want to get into any more specifics. It's not fair to Dave but if I was going to point to someone -- And Miss Nicole too. I have watched her go from someone who doodled pictures of us at the first searching went to running the most successful important training organization on Earth. I have watched her go from a little girl to a widely respected business leader of the first order. Not everyone can do that.

**Interviewer:** No, very few. How do you maintain that focus on quality as you increase in scope?

**Greg:** By the exacting standards of expectation. I've told you before, many have heard me say I'm not an end point guy. I'm a process guy. Without end point there's never perfect. There's only better. You don't have to worry about being done because we are not going to be. Right? It's an inducement to a being indefatigable. People ask me when we're going to kick soda's ass. I said, "I have no idea." But I know this, that we will win and what's that win look like I'm going to drive them out of the health sciences. That's what it means. I'm not trying to get people to not drink. I have the world's most effective avoidance program or what would you call it? Consumptive reduction plan. It sounds like this. Meat and vegetables, nuts and seeds, some fruit, low starch and no sugar. That was it. We were done with it. It wasn't an issue in our community, in our lives. Then their intrusion into the fitness space. Let's talk about Pepsi and Gatorade with the help of the American College of Sports and Medicine killing athletes with exercises associated hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy.

The people that were behind that hideous scandal, deadly scandal were involved in the champ piece which was one of the first in what would have been torturous assault on CrossFit where the plot not hatched on DOD property at the Uniform Services University. They were the most certainly been sued for that crap. They knew what they were doing and they did it there. I'm kind of on a rant here but yes. I'll bring it back home. This is all just training for me. I'm protecting the training space. I'm protecting the best work of the affiliates and promoting the best work of the affiliates. What that is is the health component.

The soda thing, no issues of consumptive reduction. I want them out of the fitness space. I want them out of the health space and that's what the victory looks like. Will it take five years, 10 or 50? I don't know. I have no sense of that at all. At all. For me though, those things that I've just told you we're going to keep at it. We're not going to stop. They tend
to happen faster than you would have thought. We got to a place on the hydration battle in a fraction of the time I was thinking it might take or what I was prepared to say. I think that's a thing too. When you're not an end-point guy but a process guy, then the job ends up completed, you're always "Wow." Because I was ready to do this forever. So it's always a pleasant surprise.

**Interviewer:** As CrossFit increases its scale, your name is still written on every individual affiliate. How do you know that the affiliates are helping in this battle for the health of the country and the world?

**Greg:** I told you I know what the affiliates do and I understand that better than anything, so I can tell you if you've got hundreds of members, that you've seen a hundred pound weight loss. You know damn well, who's coming up and tell me, "It's not about the game, it's not about the game?" It's the guy with 300 clients. When your first 50 clients are all your really fit friends that love you and support you if you are new to the game. Right? Then the next 50 aren't so fit. Then you get out there and client number 200, you got someone with diabetes and you've seen the overweight. Then stay in this game long enough and I think for the best of us, that's the part we enjoy most. It dawned on me that I had become that guy when I realized that I got out of more of Sally getting her first pull-up at 65 and balling like a baby. That was more enjoyable to me than Garth winning the world championships of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and telling me he couldn't have done without me. I think most of us are wired for that. I don't think so.

**Interviewer:** That's certainly one of the biggest rewards of owning a CrossFit affiliate, is that opportunity. That opportunity was certainly never provided to me through the NSCA. With that in mind—

**Greg:** You have the CSCS cert?

**Interviewer:** Yes, when I went to college.

**Greg:** Yes, hold on to that.

**Interviewer:** I used it.

**Greg:** Yes, I mean keep a picture of it, keep it framed. That's not always going to be around.

**Interviewer:** Actually I wrecked it because when I was writing a story on Gatorade for the journal, I poured Gatorade and cornstarch on top of it and wouldn't use the picture. Now it's gone. But along with that opportunity comes the responsibility to actively promote health obviously. So if your mark is on every individual affiliate, the leaf in your forest, what should we be doing in this crusade at the affiliate level?

**Greg:** I've been speaking with staff about -- This came up at the trainer summit about the need to reiterate that we are a high fat, low carb concern, and to do CrossFit on a high carb diet is CrossFit with glycation, inflammation and oxidative stress. Even if you are burning it to stay skinny, and you are going to induce a maybe visually attractive metabolically deranged outcome. If it is possible to win the games on a high carb diet, I would suggest that you are putting yourself right where Sami Inkinen put himself when he won the world championships of the professional triathlon only to be diagnosed as a type two diabetic.

That kind of thing concerns me. I like to share something. I think you'll like this. I learned how to make world class athletes by applying to very talented people all of the lessons I learned with very normal people. The Sallies taught me how to make Greg Amundsons. From the Greg Amundsons I have learned nothing and I had to pick on
Greg. I love him, he's a friend, but I mean from that -- Look at what the CrossFit games best do and try to develop some sense of how you might train.

You would have found five years ago that you really didn't have much chance in the games without compression fabric. The following year, no one believed that. But that year, they were pretty sure that if you weren't putting on the hard to get on shit, you weren't going to be here in the games because they were all doing it. Then we learned if you don't soak yourself in ice between the heats, and maybe that's what makes the heat easier is the ice. Maybe it's one of those things. The opposite of the heat is an ice, so I'm going to -- "After my heat, I go in the ice. That's why I'm winning."

Then it was the ridiculous fucking tape all over your ass. Everyone's got the tape on themselves. That's what you need to win. Where's the tape going? It's not going to be around for awhile. They're going to do this with lucky socks, and with nutritionists, and herbalists, and steroids. These are all things that are rearing their heads. We're using world class standards for testing with -- Cut no corner here. We may not be as big as the Olympics, but their testing is no more rigorous than ours, and the protocol is no different. We're farming this out just like they do.

The athletes are what they are. God bless them. Look, I've had professional athlete clients. If you're in the NFL and you're asking me, "Should I quit steroids?" I'm not going to answer that. I'm not going to be the one to tell you here that I think you ought to pull the plug on your career right now. It's not my decision to make. Ask me, but I think it's enhancing the quality of your life, she's had the paycheck, yes. Health, probably not so much.

Interviewer: Is it the affiliates' responsibility to have those conversations with their clients?

Greg: Yes. If you're my affiliate, yes. "How are you doing? How are the kids? Did your daughter take the SAT? Did your husband have his collarbone repaired? What did you have for dinner last night?" It's part of every conversation. Unless I know you're like Greg Amundson. He brought a tupperware in. He gave me a magic marker, and he want me to show where to put the cottage cheese up to. He wrote on that in cottage cheese, and it was going to get filled to that line everyday [laughs]. I go, "You know, you can try other things and put use to buy [unintelligible 00:17:28]"

"Really, it's easier for me if I just-- you're awesome. Awesome." Yes, you have to have that discussion. You have to care. When I don't see results to my liking at the pace that I'm accustomed to, we're going to talk more and more. I was always jealous of Skip Chase in his home intervention. I just love that.

I haven't heard a lot of times where I, "Man, I wish I'd thought of that in the training space." I did on that. He basically without much verbal harangue, if he wasn't seeing what he needed at the pace that made him happy, he shows up at your fucking house with a cardboard box and he wants to see the fridge. Let's himself in, he goes to the fridge, and he loads up the bad shit, and he's taking it with him. I think that's brilliant. That might just require a personality to duck tail with that. I don't know, but I was jealous of it.

Interviewer: I think it's a skill you can practice, yes.

Greg: Good on him though. Good on him. CrossFit is not an exercise program, it's a fitness program. The thing that differentiate it is that for me, the fitness programs involves the food part. It's huge. How much? Axel Pflueger thinks it's 40%. I think it's
more like 60, but we can argue about that. What I can't do is but with a few, few narrow exceptions, I can't point to an eating adaptation that isn't also an exercise adaptation. Increase bone density, I deal with diet alone. If you don't exercise and you eat shitty, I can increase your bone density without exercising. I can decrease your insulin resistance. I can increase your muscle mass. I learned that for-- I had the wonderful experience in 1995, I wasn't training for the first time in forever, but I was traveling with Barry Sears and we were zoning people. For the first time ever, I got to have impact on nutrition where I wasn't providing one physically. I'd never seen that before.

I knew what it looked like if you exercise and ate the way I told you, and I know what it look like if you exercise and eat the way the American College of Sports and Medicine wants you to eat. The way they causes the chronic disease. But I've never seen anyone eat right and not exercise. Never seen that. To come back and revisit locals and find that there was increase in muscle mass, in bone density. It's like, "Wow, you look like you've been exercising." "Nope, haven't." What happens if you do both together? It's a jet stream of positive results.

Interviewer: I think we affiliates could maybe use some help in knowing how to approach that conversation. Just some of the things that you've mentioned already were -- Here's what I would talk about with my clients, that doesn't always happen in my box. What kind of conversation should we be having, and how do you introduce nutrition into that conversation?

Greg: We were promoting the hell out of the Zone diet since 1995. What that meant is that when you came into my box, I would give you a prescription and tell you about the Zone, and we had purchased hundreds of copies of the book and just hand that out. It was everywhere. We were doing that, and we charged for that like we did training. Ever since they've known me, there were people around that were introductory sessions and nutrition clients. I learned that trick from Gold's Gym where I did that for them. You'd get six weeks of training, and a meal plan that you were expected to follow. If you didn't have some reduction in your percent body fat by the end of that-- I don't remember now. For the six or 12 weeks, whatever it was, you'd get your money back. I think it was 12 weeks and a drop of six percentage points. It may have been what it was. You had this book and you couldn't miss anytime. Laura and I did exactly that in Santa Cruz, and it's great. It's great.

I wouldn't train people without having in place some constant pressure on their nutrition. Some boxes have it just culturally, it just happens. You have boxes doing paleo challenges, the whole life challenge. There's a lot of that going on. It's an indispensable part of what they do. I'll make a shameless plug for my friend Sami Inkinen, my superstar triathlete, was a diabetic, now he's the CEO and founder of Virta Life, Virta Health Corporation.

They do hand holding off the metabolic precipice. They do diabetes, type two diabetes reversal for just hundreds of dollars a month, only 400 a month. I can do that work too. Cost you a whole lot more than that. If I were training today and someone came to the door that I didn't think -- for whom I thought their nutrition had served them poorly, that'd be almost everybody. I would encourage them to spend the 400 a month with the Virta Corp. How long do you have to do that? Four, five months? Right?

Interviewer: Right.
Greg: I think Sami got 70% of his cohort from Purdue off of meds in six months, I think it was. 70% of the 400 people were off meds in six months. You're at the point you're off meds and you've been eating well for six months, I don't think you'd need anymore Virta or anything else. It's not possible to eat in a manner that brings your A1C down to five, and then when the instructions stops, not know how you did it. It's not possible. You've become an expert, a world class authority because it's not an easy thing to do. You've had to display so much willpower, that you've learned -- it's been a journey, a very personal journey for you.

Forget the getting off diabetes meds, sometimes everything in your life, you're better at because the denial that's required of that, it's an amazing thing.

Interviewer: It's far tougher to change a nutrition than to start exercising right?

Greg: Yes. My best tool for getting people to eat right once they had been working out with me, I don't have a lot of tools for those who don't want to play. One of my best tools was to mark plot the progress of the person that was doing well. I remember in -- people come around and thought, "Well, I'm just never going to be Greg Amundson, so what?" But when Mike Weaver started running past people that had been working out longer than Weaver had been around, they were like, "All right. What's he doing?" I go, "One thing different than you." "What's that?" "Listening to what I'm saying about the nutrition." I've also used that to get bike riders that I wanted, big name bike rider. I've taken someone that was not a threat and just had them over there shoulder all of a sudden. Now, you got two to three of these guys on my ass where they didn't use to be and that has brought in some big-name cyclists in the door for me. Going way back, back in the days of Tom Rogers and guys like that. There's no one riding today that remember those names.

Interviewer: Actually, I don't want to go down too many rabbit holes but I love cycling and just bought 10 bikes for my gym. When I was at HQ, I know cycling's always been a part of what you did. Was there ever a point where you were introducing cycling into the gym itself?

Greg: Yes, we had a fleet of bikes.

Interviewer: What would you do with them?

Greg: [chuckles] Well, go up about 2,000 feet into the woods with a pick-up truck full of dumbbells and hide them in the Red Woods. [laughs]

Then come down and tell everyone get on a bike and go to the top of the hill at Rodeo Belts and I'll be there, you'll see me and I'll have dumbbells and you've got to do 50 thrusters and then down the hill and 100 pull-ups and stop the clock or something like that. Maybe it was a hundred thrusters and 50 pull-ups, I don't know, on the regular.

Interviewer: That's great.

Greg: It was wonderful. They hated those bikes. [laughs] Let me tell you where the bikes came from. I was at that crossroad, "Do I need a bigger space?" Well, I'm getting complaints, I don't have the money for an expansion, not just sitting around at any rate and you just don't know if that's the right thing to do or not. So I went down this angle, will it provide a better program or service. I was like, :well, I'd hang some cargo nets, I'd get mountain bikes. I had a list of things I'd do." Anyhow, it's okay. This is due to more room. I could when we were at 1,250 square feet, what kind of moron's going to put eight bikes in there? At 2,500 square feet, I'm the moron that would do that.

Interviewer: Right, got it.
Greg: We rode the hell out of them, rode the hell out of them.
Interviewer: That's good to hear.
Greg: You know something too, man, anyone -- "So, you're a bike guy?" "Yes, I like biking. I really do" "Do you deadlift? Have you ever been on a [unintelligible 00:28:08]?" "No." We're going to make you a better bike rider.
Interviewer: Right.
Greg: Almost instantly. The report from any level of output, the report an all you cyclists out there you think you're all as good as you can get, probably are with your current methods but if you don't deadlift and you ride bikes, you're not as good as you could be. I can add other things to that but the report you always get back is, there's that hill that you would tend to shift up and stand. Now all you have do to is staying seated and spinning it out and grabbing a harder gear and grinding on it, just stuff like that. You know that hill, you know what your typical climb pattern is and it's clearly been altered in the path to create more power.
Interviewer: Is there anything else in that same vein that maybe we affiliates aren't seeing that we should be thinking about when we're outfitting a gym or growing?
Greg: I've mentioned this to other places and so I don't know who's probably tired of hearing it or not but the dumbbell thing, I can't get past that. The difference between a ring man and a parallel wire man in terms of strength is due to that independent axis of the rings. The dumbbell-barbell analogy is perfect, perfect. There's no comparing the strength of -- and this is -- I was in the era of specialists so there were guys that did the rings only. Most competitors were that way.
Small percentage of gymnasts we're all-around guys when I was a kid, small percentage. The sport hasn't been improved because of that. I don't think it's been good for it but whatever. Imagine going out on the track and field and everyone would go home except the decathletes. It's interesting. But there was never any doubt as to how much stronger the ring men were than the parallel wire guys. The dumbbells would do something similar too.
Interviewer: Those are self-indulgent questions because I just like that stuff.
Greg: Stay with the list presses to handstand. There's not enough done with it. There's a progression of presses from a bent leg, bent arm, bent hip to straightening arm hip and leg. They grade out nicely and they're all learned the same way in the negative and the strength that you get out of that. If people would spend more time with dumbbells, commit to a long-term path to the power presses, the planche presses a straight arm straight body press. For sure you'll be able to do on parallel bars before the floor and straight body bent arm press and then straight arm straight leg press bent hip. Anyone can learn those but it takes years, but it takes a little bit of playing with it all the time. A bigger deadlift, more dumbbell work, and those presses, the handstand can be a shortcut to better Olympic lifts at our level of expertise and exposure than a lot of the training that we're currently doing, I believe. I'm pretty cocky confident of that too. Dan Bailey claims to have tested this theory and it paid off. I don't know how or what but he did let me know what was working for him. He's a good dude, I think he wanted me to feel good.
That all games athletes can't get in a push-up position and then slide those hands down and arch the back, and drive that up to a handstand is a mistake for them, it's a mistake. What happens in these presses, the handstand. One thing is it's-- the likelihood of you
falling out of a handstand again just plummets because if you can get that low and you'll learn it in the negative. So the way to learn a straight body, a straight leg, no bend at the hip, just straight body and bent arm press is to get into a handstand and lower into that more and more slowly, more and more slowly, and then one day you can finally reverse it.

When you get to practice that is your body being three inches off the ground and you driving it back to a handstand is the practice you're getting. You might stumble just like you would on your feet but the likelihood of having to put your hands on the ground or get your feet on the ground goes real low. Then there's the strength component and the balance component. It's wonderful and there's another piece too. These presses require like the straight arm straight leg, bent hip pressed to a handstand, it's called the stiff stiff so it's a straight arm straight leg press doing a handstand requires that you be pretty flexible and pretty damn strong and I'm talking about of a gymnast standards.

It's a good but not a great. It's a B move. If you're not flexible then you have to be very strong. If you're extremely flexible you don't have to be as strong. But in the end, it requires significant flexibility and strength and it's just a great tool. That's another one. Everyone has been doing CrossFit for two or three years should be able to do.

Interviewer: That's interesting.
Greg: That's my shortcoming.
Interviewer: How is it your shortcoming?
Greg: Well, it would have been nice if there's another journal or it can be written out on these progressions. I've done it for in-house staff, I've made that material and just never thrown my name on it doing other stuff.
Interviewer: Busy, can't do everything.
Greg: The big deadlift -- this is my things. There's presses, the handstand, and I'll outline these, I'll send that to you. I'll get it to you. I'll show you the progression, it's fun to play with. Presses the handstand, more dumbbell work and a bigger deadlift, a bigger deadlift. There's that point in your clean where you -- at 225, I slip right under it. 230, I'm stuck. I can't -- What happened was, the weight got too heavy.
If you have a 325lbs deadlift, you'd be happy with your 225 clean. Because that's all you - Any weight you clean with good technique comes off the floor in a very unintimidating manner. So these monster cleans belong to people with monster deadlifts. We had the best time -- Strossen, the IronMinds guy used to make a weight-lifting videotape, training tape that cut out all the nonsense. It was just lift, approve, cut. lift, approve. So in an hour tape, you could watch hundreds and hundreds of lifts.
I watched these things with Tony Budding for hours. We'd just sit there and loop this thing. Then I started noticing things like it was really significant to notice the change in countenance, the expression of the athlete and to watch hair, what it was doing. If your hair always stands straight up what's that mean?
Interviewer: Moving fast?
Greg: You're fucking going down, man. Only one direction. That is down and fast. Where you marked against the lettering. Is there a poster on the wall? Just trying to do some -- looking at vectors and watching this stuff. You came away with a world-class understanding of what's going on these lifts. That was really fun. The successful clean, the load comes off the floor with relative ease. As soon as that torso rotates to perpendicular, which is the cause of the scoop or the double-knee bend, the bar's still
rising but you've rotated the torso forward and at that exact instance, there is a significant change in the countenance of the athlete.
The next thing you see is the hair go up. What has happened is that these people have pulled the trap door on a moderate weight that they were accelerating handsomely and then as they exploded on it. At the moment of full afterburner, the knees get sucked up and they're shot underneath the bar bow and arrow style. Imagine if we put -- find the max weight you could possibly shrug, then add ten more pounds. I tell you to shrug it as far as you can and then I pull a trap door. You're going to beat the weight down.

Interviewer: Got it.
Greg: And it's bow and arrow like. That's exactly what's happening in that lift. That's exactly what is happening in the lift. Get me a bigger deadlift and while I'm going -- In the balance of the press to handstand, it's going to translate to bar control on the jerk. Promise it. Promise it. When you get some other things along the way that we might not have gotten committing all that time under the barbell and the barbell alone.

Interviewer: Very interesting.
Greg: This is fun. It's old school.
Interviewer: Yes, it is.
Greg: There are people I can have these conversations with. I'll tell you one that I just saw the other day, Romanov.
Nicole: So your guy's [unintelligible 00:39:04]

Interviewer: Why Romanov?
Greg: I don't know. I go where I'm safe, make myself sound good here. I just really like talking to Nikolai. He's a good dude. He's sharp. He's thought about a lot of things. He's a hard science guy too.

Interviewer: I just met him at the games. The hard science guy is like Mel Siff, haven't always been open to anything you've said.
Greg: Mel. I wouldn't call Mel a hard science guy.
Interviewer: Okay.
Greg: I'm talking about people with certain -- I'm talking about math, physics, chemistry, engineering hard science. Not the blue sky science. Biology and medicine are not on the hard side, sorry. This could get hate. You might want to take that out.

Interviewer: No problem.
Greg: Mel thought everything was bullshit and since 99.9% of shit is, he was right all along.

[laugher]
That's okay and I really enjoyed him and I enjoyed his spirit but he decided that I was confused about fitness and health, being so powerfully related that, perhaps, they're the same thing, by offering up his own athletic prowess, of which he was quite proud and some of it, rightfully so. That, in contradistinction to his illness, which was profound. I chimed in with, however good you were, you'd have been better if you had eaten right and the way you do it, was killing you.
Then, he proceeded to explain to the world in his little offering that, "Glassman's full of shit. He's evolved. Great people had been around and had in my hot tub. He's never even been to my house. Where would I get such a notion as to what he even ate?"
It was well from his fucking book, where he said that he was drinking a quart a day of pineapple juice for the bromelian, for his joints. I said, "Wow that's enough pineapple
juice to kill you dead from heart disease, just as it did him. Mel, God bless his soul, was right 99.9% of the time but one thing that wasn't bullshitting, he had wrong and it was nutrition. He had it dead wrong. It's a loss. No one benefited from Mel not being here and Ed Burke and Jim Fixx. I think, I have it right. Might look this up, the guy that wrote the cyclist's Bible for nutrition, died of a coronary heart disease, we believe it is.

Coronary artery disease but last I had heard, and someone can fact check me on all of this, take note of yourself but last I had heard, there wasn't cooperation from the family in the autopsy. If you [sic] out for a bike ride at 50 something and die and the family doesn't want me to see, if you've written the nutrition Bible for cycling, I'm going to jump to my conclusion and that you followed your advice and it was deadly.

Jim Fixx is another thing. Can you be a good or even great athlete on a high carb diet? Absolutely. My problem with exercises medicine, it's not that I don't think it works, that is, that you can exercise away fat. My problem is that, if that allows me, then, to consume more product, and I'm talking about Coke or Pepsi or anything [chuckles] like that and that is the excuse to do more exercise, to burn off more product, now, I don't like what's happening. Now, what I'm doing is, I'm running more product through the system doing what? Glycating, inflamating? [chuckles] I'm creating oxidative stress. Exercising or not, it's doing that and we don't want that. If you ever make me pick between the eating and exercise I would rather you eat right and don't exercise than exercising and eat like shit.

Interviewer: At what point is it the box owner's responsibility to say to a client, "I've got a problem with how you're training?"

Greg: I did all the time. I would never fire a client for that and it's the language I use and the clients had been fired, but not for that. You can eat any way you want and I had a guy that'd come to me, never took any of my nutrition advice, George. George worked out one day a week and that was his hour with me. That's it, that's all he'd do all week long and the son of a bitch, I was disappointed in the fact that he was getting results and he had for years.

Interviewer: [laughs]

Greg: Part of me, that I wished he wouldn't come but I wanted him to come more, that's what I wanted. I always asked, "Did you do any this week?" "No." "What's the last thing you did?" "That thing we did last Friday." I just kicked the ever loving shit out of George, just beat him up bad.

Interviewer: [laughs]

Greg: "Why are you doing this to me? You're training like you hate me." "I train like you're not going to do anything for a week. That's what I'm training."

Interviewer: [laughs]

Greg: I go, "Come one more time, I won't charge you." "I can't do it. I don't have time." I'm, "Geez, George, please." I was making a deals with him, "Look, if you come twice, we'll go a third as hard." [laughs] No deal. Son of a bitch and he was fat and getting skinnier on one hour of exercise a week everything else, I have to believe, was held constant. He certainly wasn't undoing it with food, he was making progress.

Interviewer: Was it food?

Greg: I don't think he changed anything except that hour, I think he was shooting me straight. It's all you're going to get. I'm giving you an hour a week. He's still alive. I've looked him up, recently, [chuckles] wondering about that. "Hi, George."

Interviewer: Did you call him?
Interviewer: A client wants to come into my gym, they want to come in one time a week. Your response to that client is, "Absolutely."
Greg: Yes, because I think I'm going to get you all into more involvement than that.
Interviewer: Saying, "No," is not going to get you--?
Greg: No, it's just a start. Look, I bring them in. I just want him to come in once. [chuckles] I want you to come a second time. I hide that behind my back until we're done. [laughter]
I'm not going to mention it during the suffering. I don't want you to make a rash decision while you're at max heart rate, right?
[laughter]
Interviewer: Yes, right.
Greg: Afterwards, after I've told you how that was fucking amazing for a beginner, "Look what you did, some of the best PVC work I've seen this week. I'll see you Wednesday." When I-- tricky me, I'll leave with that assumption that you're coming back. I don't even give you a chance to say, "No."
Interviewer: See you Wednesday?
Greg: Wednesday, same time, high five. I might call Monday night. I'm not going to call you Tuesday because it might be your chance to say, "Hey I got something coming up, I'm really sorry." I just call you Monday, to tell you how good that was and that you're going to be really really sore but don't listen to it.
Interviewer: Is there a nutrition talk in that first day?
Greg: Always, yes. It was always there, always there. Barry Sears was a part of my early CrossFitter's life. He came round to the gym, we traveled with him. A bunch of us had involvement. I know he and his brother very well and he's a friend, Barry is a friend. We were working with him prior to him writing the book. The book did wonderfully well. It's been a big, big piece of this whole movement. Even listening, "All right, you're good," he'll accept that. I think, maybe, we've not made a big enough point of it and I'll just sit right here and accept that. We are in discussions about dusting off a nutrition [unintelligible 00:48:14]. I had a problem with some of our nutrition friends. It was this. What we posted on the website was a work out, not a hypertheoretical discussion of exercise stimulus and response.
There is no Kreb citric acid cycle because that has no fucking relevancy. It's important to biochemistry but not to exercise science. For William Cramer to make sure that the Kreb cycle is in his book while he squats at a Smith machine, is insanity. It's to be not in the field of exercise science. You're pretending to be doing science while you exercise. [laughs] That's not exercise science. What was I talking about? I started hating on that bastard for a second and got a little--
Speaker 1: You said your whole nutrition.
Greg: What I didn't want was theoretical nutrition and what's the equivalent to this work out? This is a meal plan. When we're talking about this recently, it caused young Leaf [sic] to say, "Then, what we want is cooking classes," and I said, "That's exactly right." We've done exactly that. Do you remember we did that in San Diego, where we barbecued Zone meals? Do you remember doing that at the Lucas gym?
Speaker 1: Yes.
Greg: No, it wasn't there.
Speaker 1: No it was in a east--
Nicole: That one.
Male: East and here, whatever that was.
Greg: We’re going to revamp, do some experimenting but I really don’t want to run
down the rabbit hole of— Here’s what I want to avoid. There used to be a thing that was
done by Amway, I believe, and it was this weight loss pill and the little bottle had you do
an hour of cardio and then, take one. The guy promised it worked.
What’s working is that you’ve been fooled. It was working but the only thing that’s
happening here is the cardio, the hour of cardio and the pills, just you getting ripped off.
You can do that with CrossFit, too. I can have you do CrossFit while holding this lucky
coaster and look at the lucky coaster or have you wear rock tape or do ice pads, there’s all
kinds of shit.
People are wanting to differentiate themselves by adding their third element to the mix or
they’re unique something, rather. When they have nothing to offer in that regard and I’ve
listened to someone recently on podcast that was exactly of that--
Interviewer: If it was me you can say that.
Greg: It was OPT.
Interviewer: On my podcast?
Greg: Yes.
Interviewer: Here we go. [laughs]
Greg: Man, he’s been there for a long time but I get it, it’s hard to differentiate yourself
when the essence of the whole thing’s been given to everyone and we all sit in possession
of, roughly, the same skill set. Do I know something magical about training that Nicole
doesn’t? No.
Do I think there’s some magic extra factor? You know why I think not? If chromium or
fish oil or ice pads or rock tape were important, I would expect to have seen people that
did what I wanted and didn’t get results but for lack of rock tape or something.
What’s with the non-responders? Then, it might turn out they don’t eat right for their
type. When I get a non-responder, I got a non-compliance and there’s only a couple of
things I have to look for. Compliance, are you here and are you trying? The rest is food
and I got really fucking good at seeing what people are eating, and the best way to do it is
have them write it down. No one can, for long, fake write shit down.
[laughter]
We [unintelligible 00:53:00] tried but you get caught.
Interviewer: How much of a CrossFit coach's time in a given week is supposed to be
spent going through nutrition plans?
Greg: If you haven’t convinced me that you’re eating right, moving in the right direction
and I know shortly after, you’re starting your meal plan, if I see any failure to thrive but
more importantly, I see changes in physiognomy, either moving in the direction, next to
never happen or we don’t keep getting leaner and leaner, at some point, and once you’re
there, I’m not going to talk to Nicole about food so much. Jimmy a little more, me a little
more-
[laughter]
-until I get what I want. As a trainer, I’m always out there on the floor looking for
anything you do that’s not perfect. [unintelligible 00:54:00], “It’s so much better to
teach if you point out the positives.” I said, “Let me think about that for a minute.” It's, “Fuck you.” I'm going to tell you, “It's not like that.” Perfect technique means you're not doing anything stupid. It’s all the things I don’t want. I can’t help it. Come to full extension, you’re not. It’s a negative thing, stop it. You’re pulling with your arms, quit that. Look straight ahead, not up.

You teach gymnastics this way. I teach you to do tricks by getting you to pick up some behaviors and then, we real quickly, get into the, stop this shit. The thing I ask you to do may not even be capable. "I want you to, with your left-hand reach under your right arm pit and I want you to touch yourself in the center of your spine. As soon as you pull back under those rings I want you to look underneath them and with that head, I want you to drive these fingers and touch your spine." In fact, I’m trying to initiate a spin [laughs] because what you're doing isn't getting it there. Then, it comes to this point where you go, "Listen, next time up, here's what your going to do, Jason, something fucking different."

**Interviewer:** [laughs]

**Greg:** "You get up there, I don't care what it is but I want to see something different."

You spend so much time like that. Train [sic] people to do things is taking out the non-perfect parts until what you're left with, something of brown, which you have nothing to say. Nicole knows this from the training certs, where you get out there in the middle. When we were first doing level ones, oh, my God, did you have to work. There'd be 15 things I'd have to tell you, 20 things I'd have to tell you, [unintelligible 00:55:37]. Then, you roll the clock forward 10 years and man, they're people they'd get groups. "Widen your stance slightly, I think. Let me see. No, put it back where it was."

**Speaker 1:** [laughs]

**Greg:** Damn. There's some great movement coming through the door, which is really a neat thing to see.

**Interviewer:** It's pretty amazing.

**Greg:** It is.

**Interviewer:** If a client or if a coach's responsibility is to spend as much time on nutrition as it is on exercise, then--?

**Greg:** Listen, there's a couple of things going. I've got a hour with you. I got the formalities of, "Did your daughter take the SATs? Is your dad still visiting, I know that was making you nuts." Now, they know where I'm really at. That's the prelude to, "Let's get started. I'm going to talk to you about what we are going to do today. I'm going to let you know what my standards are, everything, what I would expect, what I think you could do, one way or two way [sic] we might go at it." Then, immediately, "How are things? How's the eating going?" I've got an hour. We got a couple of things I can do. I can explain the exercise to you. I'm not going to lecture you on exercise physiology, I never did that, ever. I got the small talk out of the way.

The very next action item, frankly, is the eating, because that's the part I'm not seeing. I can ask you in between sets or reps or all during the warm ups, certainly during the cool down. I brought in hand-outs, more often than not. They were almost always on nutrition, almost always. I was a hyperinsulinism-warning zealot. It was a big part of what was happening in the box all the time. Why wouldn't a trainer want to use that tool to leverage every rep of every exercise? This would be stupid not to.

**Interviewer:** How do you do that? A lot of affiliates, now, are running classes with 20, 25 people. How do you do that in such a big group environment?
Greg: It's a lot of people. I've done it and can do it, but it's hard. They better be of, and I don't mean of similar capacity, but they better be of all well-initiated. I can't have five of those people that has been here a couple of weeks, now, or I'm not going to be able to handle it.

Interviewer: On the nutrition side and the exercise side?

Greg: Yes. Everyone in my groups had been one-on-one with me. Isn't that true, Nicole?

Nicole: Yes.

Interviewer: How did that progression look from one-on-one into a group?

Greg: I was doing group classes for my Jiu-Jitsu friends because I had just come in limited time. I got 30 students. I'd set up stations, we'd do stuff. In my one-on-one training, I'm working 50 hours a week. That's 50 hours and 50 clients. I always tried to keep Sunday free and rather than losing a client, I would somewhat go into Sundays and then, the quality of my life would turn to shit. I was coming off a period where I had gotten back where my Sundays were free and then, I had some high profile clients that I was very interested in.

I started to double up. It was a, "Take a deep breath, we're going to try to talk this person into this." I remember saying that, "You're paying me 75, I can make it 50. I think you're going to like her. Let's just start, please. I need it and if you don't like it we'll go back."

They took me up on it. Now, I'm making $100 an hour with 25 and I found at once, I could do as a good job. I could do that three, four, especially if I expand on that kernel but I can give 10 people all the one-on-one instruction they would care for in the space of an hour. It very quickly gets to those that you don't say much to. It's because they're not doing as much wrong and there is no one that would come out of the class and go, "I wish you'd said more to me." [laughs]

Interviewer: That's huge.

Greg: Right?

Nicole: Yes, I never wanted that.

Greg: Because if we're in a group and I'm all of a sudden, out here with you, "Come on, I won't fuck," and the rest of it.

Interviewer: "Get off me."

Greg: I think, it was that way in PE. The whistle and your name yelled, it was, "Fuck." [laughs] I made it fun, though, right? Did we have fun?

Nicole: Yes, we had a lot of fun.

Greg: I talk like I wasn't fun. Look, there was a lot of laughter and maybe that's what I'm calling fun, is the fact that we were laughing.

[laughter]

Often, when there's laughter, not everyone's having the same fun. Right?

[laughter]

Nicole: Yes.

Speaker 1: Yes

Interviewer: Is that one of the tall marks of a great affiliate then, is, you walk in the door and you hear laughter?

Greg: Yes, levity or the lack thereof, is my favorite, pre-clinical harbinger of over-training. When I come in the morning, "Hi," and then, everyone's or two people don't even bother to turn around and say, "Hi," [chuckles] it normally would. The very next part's, "What did we do last? I've done this. Here's what I want to do today. I just want to
stretch.” Someone turns around and they’re-- because I’ve seen them cry. [laughs] "You could have said something."

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Greg: When the enthusiasm for the effort diminishes, the intensity's likely exceeded the psychological tolerance of your crew. Jason Hybarger [sic] used to watch classes for us when we would travel together and pretty soon, nobody wanted Jason because he’d thin your class for you, and one of his columns was whether you puked or not. I finally found on the board.

What happened is either raced or everybody had ghosted. I was, “Dude,-

Interviewer: [laughs]

Greg: -look at this. This is what you did with my fucking people?” I actually thought he was trying to reduce the numbers to make it easy for himself,-

[laughter]

-but I was gone for two weeks of a three day a week class and it went from 21 to 15, 12, like one of my workouts. It was going to be nine, six, three and done.

[laughter]

He had this fucking column up, where they puked or not. He’s brought that value into the system and he’s going to-- We have a puking clown as a mascot because someone told me you could never have a successful business with that mascot. That was a big part of it. It made me laugh and that’s not going to make or break a business. It’s ridiculous.

Interviewer: CrossFit, to circle back to the beginning, here, presents this unique entrepreneurial opportunity. It’s created 14,000, 20,000 new entrepreneurs, 14,000 small businesses, whatever. What is our responsibility back to age Q?

Greg: I don’t know that there is one. I shouldn’t speak to that. I would probably let my affiliates answer that and they'd probably be moved to tears, what they perceive to be their responsibility. Look, I’ve got an organization of the willing, I’ve built an affiliation, an alliance that it would be important for me to be a part of. I would make damn sure that I had taken $3,000 of my money and I converted that to how many clients it would be, and I ask myself, “Would I pay it?” The answer is, "I fucking would and I'd be proud to.” Someone asked me recently about the value of affiliation and I said, "If’s in doubt, you’re the wrong affiliate." If each year you’re, “I don’t know, what do I get for this?” Please, there's no hard feelings but it isn’t right for you, if you wonder. Contrast that with, let's compare, let’s talk about a couple of SEALs. Let’s talk about Mark Twike [sic] who was, in everything he did, it was the antithesis of CrossFit. Now, everything he does, unless it's changed again or he's found someone else to poach from, it's [sic] became CrossFit and he claims [laughs] no loyalty.

At his cert was another SEAL named Duffy Gaver and Duffy had been training celebrities, certainly in a more CrossFit manner than anything Mark Twite [sic] had done and it was very, very successful. Probably the most successful celebrity trainer, ever. I know there are some that promote themselves as celebrity trainers but they don't have a list like his list of clients. He won't talk about it, which is amazing but we all know who he has trained and it's everybody.

Duffy Gaver went and took the seminar, thanked us for the material and then, went out on his own. Seven or eight years later, he affiliated and his essay was that he's been using this method for a long time and he doesn't fly the flag and his customers keep asking, "Isn't this CrossFit?” Every time they ask, he says, he feels like a thieving douchebag.
Speaker 1: [laughs]
Greg: "I guess, I got to just pay some money, so I don't have to feel like a thief." There's a translation of that, that makes me proud to stand alongside him. What he's telling me is that the methods are something that he's profoundly committed to and that he doesn't feel right standing apart from the people that brought that to him. That the alliances mean something to him. Now, it would be nice [laughs] for someone to maybe feel a little better about that but I get it and it works for me. I would be like that, too. I'm not going to scrape anyone's name off of anything and pretend like it came from me. [chuckles] I don't understand that.

When the Marines do CrossFit and call it something else and then, say they can't endorse a brand, their boots have a brand on it, their weapons have a brand name on it, their sunglasses have a brand name on it, their helmet carries a brand name, but they got to scrape the CrossFit name off of something and put something else on. We might want to be careful with that.

Speaker 1: I know.
Greg: We actually have a very good relationship with the Marine Corps but there's been a faction of the Corps that wanted to scrape the name off and call it something else due to a corrupt civilian influence.

Interviewer: That happened in Canada, right?
Greg: The discussions is the same thing, discussions been [sic] had everywhere. My problem is that, to have adopted this methodology so completely for it to be so crazy different than what you were doing, and to not feel compelled to tell whose material it is, lacks integrity.

Interviewer: There's a lot of that out there. tens of thousands.
Greg: Of course. A bunch of things are odd to me. If I tell a joke I'd like to tell who told it to me. I love attribution. Whenever I can do that, I will. If you and I were to open up a taco place, one of the things we might do is call it, Jason and Greg's Tacos. [laughs] The very first thing I'm going to do is fucking check Google and if there's a Jason and Greg's Taco anywhere in the world, we need another name. I can't imagine wanting to use someone else's name.

Interviewer: [laughs]
Greg: Is there Jason and Greg's Tacos?
Interviewer: Dot com. [laughs]
Speaker 1: I just registered it.
Greg: Do you remember the guy, there was the name even had this wonderful touch of irony, ForgeFit?

Nicole: Yes.

Interviewer: ForgeFit, yes, it does sound familiar.
Greg: I'm not going to mention his name, again, but I'm going to write it down because I don't want to be term hell on this kid because he actually told me that what [unintelligible 01:09:47] screw his life but this is the guy's his name. This guy puts up a website, ForgeFit. CrossFit Forge. Forge Fit. He's got pictures of Andy Sakamoto and even my dog.

[laughter]
The guy doesn't even get his own fucking dog.

[laughter]
What was he an illegal affiliate, was the deal and told us, basically, to fuck off and this is prior to having-- Dale was our only lawyer and maybe we hadn't even met him. I don't know what the deal was. [laughs]

Nicole: I think, it was early

Greg: It was very early. We just put up on Google, showed the world, "Look at this guy." Used his name and, "Look what's happened. Look what he's doing." We took 15 or 20 minutes and when we put his name into Google, that came up first. After a while, I think, he's, "I can't even get a job." I felt bad for him but I didn't know what to do, now. I wish you hadn't stolen from us and then, told us to fuck off when we talked to you about it. We're really a bunch of really nice people. The whole crew. There's no one mean-spirited on my staff. Not a one, not even Dave. [laughs]

Interviewer: That's the misperception, though. Why isn't the affiliate fee 10,000 by now?

Greg: It was my least [unintelligible 01:11:51] model. That's the easy answer. I wanted as many people as possible to have this opportunity. That isn't consistent with, "How much can I get for it."

Interviewer: What's the definition of a thriving box? I'm not going to take too much more of your time, here.

Greg: I'm doing good, bubba. Nicole helped me with this. I'm not saying you had to come back, but she did. With some quants of SAIC, we were going to quantify the work of our affiliates. We were going to be able to identify best practices. There were a lot we could do and these guys were technologically very, very savvy. What we couldn't do was produce an algorithm that didn't, just on cursory inspection, create some decision-making, some ranking that we just weren't willing to accept. Let me give you an item that speaks very specifically here.

What about a box that is just looking for sick people and the most reluctant to train and follow your advice, compared to a gym of a bunch of younger people? How do you compare to training five that were in a horrible fix and now aren't? I just don't know what to do. I don't know how to rank it. Is your gym unsuccessful if there's no sick people in it and there's hundreds of people there and everyone's having a smile and playing? Sure. How about if you only work with children? Yes. Women only? Only the sick? A mixed bag? I always ask you, "Are you growing?" because I like growth. Not a lot, but some. A couple of new people every month, that's more than enough. I want to know if people are having fun. That's really important. You're not going to be successful without it.

Interviewer: Their metrics are keys that you could point out that a successful affiliate would have in common with other successful affiliates?

Greg: The successful affiliates earn more than they spend. [laughs]

Interviewer: Profitable.

Greg: That's important. I always did, but the way to do that is to not spend more than you earn, and keep working hard.

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Greg: There's not a lot of mystery to that.

Interviewer: Algebra.

Greg: I've never done any marketing or advertising or promotion or deal-making, none, nothing. You don't get a discount with more sessions. Nothing happens good to you by
paying up front because I don't want you to pay up front. I've found the business of this to be exceedingly easy, but I also left it largely to Lauren. She was with the simplest of tools, an Excel spreadsheet. She did a marvelous job. How many clients are you going to have? A couple hundred? That could be done with a number two pencil on a brown paper bag, every evening, and you could use your iPhone for digital backup. [laughs] in case the bag catches on fire. Is that ideal? Probably not, but will that make or break you? I don't think so, but I think your attitude could.

I like to ask people that come up to me all sunny-faced and happy, affiliates, and younger the more fun it is to ask, "How's business?" They're generally astonished at the question. "What do you mean?" "I know, you're cute. I work out with you, I'm just asking because I think you're a neat person." You know what I mean? You can be incompetent and fun and do very well in this business. I've met those. You can be competent and an asshole and struggle. I've seen that, and fail. If you're an asshole and incompetent, you'll never get off the ground. You won't even get a training job in a gym. To be competent and to be pleasant, to be a source of inspiration, not just for this next rep, but in general, those people thrive.

I like to tell the story about being at-- I'm at Sonya Khan's 50th birthday party. The lawyers aren't there, the accountants aren't there, just a few of the sailing team is there. All the people that work with, they're not there, but I am. I'm there. I went everywhere. I was part of that family. [laughs] Then, Nicole had that job. You were a family member. You travel with them, like no one else. At the end of the night when all the professional people went home, you were there for dinner if you want. There's an intimacy in the client relationship that is unusual.

**Interviewer:** That's the mark of a successful affiliate, is that strong relationship?

**Greg:** Or is that just one of perks of the job? I don't know. Are you close to your clients?

**Interviewer:** Yes. Absolutely.

**Greg:** Do you socialize with them?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Greg:** Are they your friends? [crosstalk]

**Interviewer:** Ride bikes with them, yes, exactly.

**Greg:** That's who I play with. I understand. We marry those people, we fall in love with those people. That's who you know.

**WHY YOU CAN'T STOP STRESSING**

You've done it: you're free!

You no longer have to open your business at 6am and spin the "CLOSED" sign at 9pm. You have staff, systems and automation.

You're making enough money to have a comfortable income for your family, and a cushion for your business. Things are GOOD.
So why can't you stop stressing about your business?

Why do you check the phone 50 times every evening, when you should be pushing your kid on a swing set?

If you've ever been called out by your wife (I certainly have) for checking your phone when you were "off", this is for you.

See that little red dot in the middle of your brain? That's called your amygdala.

Amygdala's job is fight-or-flight, baby. It's the GO area. And everything you encounter--the food you eat, the air you breathe, the people who eyeball you on the subway--they're all processed by the amygdala FIRST.

Before you even think about any of that stuff, your amygdala has already made a decision about it. On the plains of Africa, the amygdala learned to trigger the "run away!" response even before your neocortical regions recognized the lion.

Obviously, we aren't on the plains anymore. But as entrepreneurs, we're ALWAYS on the lookout for lions. There are so many ways a business can be killed--especially in the early days--that our amygdala is on constant alert:

"What's that client going to write about me on Facebook?"
"How many people are coming through the door today?"
"Is my assistant's grammar getting better, or do I need to read more of her emails?"
"Did my lunch make my breath stinky before this meeting?"
"How am I going to get more clients?!?"

And your amygdala LIKES it.

This constant vigil makes your amygdala grow. It recruits other neurons from nearby areas of the brain and says, "I need these more than you do." As it gathers power, our amygdala takes an even larger role in the brain, and evaluates all stimulus for possible threats.

Do entrepreneurs sometimes overreact? Sure we do. And we blame it on fatigue, or stress, or distraction. But it's our amygdala, baby. It's training. It's eating our stress and growing.

And then, one day...we try to shut it off.

Now, when normal people get bored, they tend to create drama for themselves. A certain amount of positive stress (called "eustress") is natural to keep the amygdala healthy. Think of it as brain exercise: when things are going really well, small problems become big deals. We blow things out of proportion simply because we don't have anything else to worry about: we have to fill that amygdala UP. And so pebbles become boulders.

What happens when someone wins the lottery? More than half the time, their life implodes. They end up bankrupt.

But when an entrepreneur, with his super macho, jacked-up amygdala gets bored...he gets twitchy. His brain needs to be FED. So he's constantly grazing: looking for trouble, problems to solve, or just plain stimulation.

You ever meet an entrepreneur who's just reached the first level of real success? He probably naps a lot while his brain rewires itself. But when he's not sleeping, he's twitching: hitting 'refresh' on email, signing up to test new software, starting 50 new projects. He can't help it.

I work with over 300 gym owners. Many work from 5am until 9pm, making little or no money, until they start the Incubator program. When we finally get their lives turned around, they're surprised to find their stress doesn't decrease. Their spouses wonder why they're not giving their full attention to their kids, or they're out making more work for themselves. And it's because they're wired that way.

How do you REWIRE yourself to be a normal human again? How do you start to ENJOY success, lower your blood pressure, and catch up on the last decade of missed sleep?

You have to train your brain.

First, leave the house. Get away from screens and phones.
Second, have predetermined "check-in" times for email, text, social media and all other messaging tools.

Third, exercise. Rewiring the brain happens MUCH more quickly when you pepper it with BDNF (the chemical you secrete when you exercise. John Ratey calls it "Miracle-Gro for the Brain.")

Fourth, go away. Commit yourself to a family activity that will fully occupy your mind.

Finally, practice Bright Spots every day. Start flushing out your brain with writing or other creative tasks, and finish your day by writing out your Bright Spots to practice gratitude.

The amygdala is a powerful part of your brain...but it's overridden by the slower neocortex (where you think your thoughts.) You can retrain your automatic responses with habits, and override your impulses with logic--but only if you practice.

The same things happens, to a far greater extent, with PTSD. While our stress isn't usually traumatic, when stress levels go down, we're wired to crank them back up. But the brain that got you here won't get you to the next level.

**DEVELOP YOUR PEOPLE (SLOWLY)**

We’ve all been there. You hire a new, hungry staff member, ready to put in work and help you grow your business.

You, being the tired, overworked gym owner you are, dream of freedom. It's a win-win for both of you.

At first, things go great. They take on many of the roles you once had to shoulder yourself. Revenue is up and it seems they can do no wrong. So you offer them more things to do, and they, being young and hungry, say yes.

A few months later, things change. Members are complaining, some are leaving, revenue is down and your young, hungry staff member is showing up late.

You broke them.

Well, you helped break them.

The point is, you both came into this relationship with good intentions, but took poor action.
Don't worry—you are not alone. I have done this many times in my business. You would think I would have learned by the fifth time. You would think I would have realized that I was doing something wrong, not them.

Well, I’ve finally learned the crucial lesson: Move slowly. Like, really slowly. Avoid the temptation to dump everything on new staff when they start. I know it's hard, but trust me.

**The Plan**

When a new person starts, give them one role. Set clear expectations, give them a contract and an evaluation form. Our Incubator and Growth clients go through this process with mentors.


If they do a good job AND are not feeling overwhelmed, extend their contract to three months and CONSIDER giving them one more opportunity. This could be additional tasks or one additional role. Then re-evaluate at the end of three months.

Slowly but surely they will develop into an awesome employee with a promising career. And slowly but surely you will find more and more time to work on your business instead of in it. Or spend more time with your family.

Avoid the trap of unloading on them, because they will just implode—and you will have to start over again. This way is slow, but not as slow as causing multiple employees to fail and having to restart over and over again.

Do it right the first time.

**Jeff Burlingame**
Two-Brain Business Mentor
Owner - Friction CrossFit

**CONSTANT REINFORCEMENT OF VALUE**

Politicians who are trying to get elected talk about what they're going to do.
Politicians who are trying to STAY in power talk about what they've DONE. Over and over again.
I don't want to be a politician. But I want to be really good at keeping people engaged long-term. SO here's the strategy:

Constantly reinforce the value of your service by reminding clients what they get with their membership.
For example: "Strength workout AND aerobic workout today, built into a full hour of coaching!"
(It seems obvious, doesn't it? But your clients need to be reminded that they're paying for coaching, not access.)

Another example: "We've programmed an easier day for tomorrow, because we want to optimize your recovery time!"
(Remind your clients that you have a long-term plan for their success--you're not just randomly choosing workouts online, which they could do themselves.)

Too often, we aim our sales and marketing messages at NON-clients, and forget to remind our current clients why they love our service.

Simple, right? So why doesn't anyone do it except politicians?
A few reasons:
We believe the value of our service is obvious (it's not)
We believe our clients know all the benefits they get from us (they don't)
We believe people make decisions and stick to them forever (uh, no.)
Novelty bias: over time, things that once excited us become normalized.

I'm as guilty as anyone.
I only remind them of gym upgrades before I'm about to raise rates.
I only say "I care about you" when I'm about to make a change they might not like.
I only buy new equipment when I feel like I HAVE to.

Here's the strategy many TwoBrain gyms are now often using:
Monday - reminder message to current clients
Tuesday - benefits-based message to future clients
Wednesday - client story
Thursday - love letter
Friday - bright spots.

Why does your wife need to hear, "I love you" every day? Because we all need reinforcement in our decisions. Our members need to hear how you're helping them all the time, or they'll start looking for something new.
I was visiting a new gym in Boston.

The coach said, "Warm up with double-unders." I'm okay at those, so I did 100 unbroken.

Then I noticed people were staring.

"You just broke the record!" one lady said. The others were still frozen.

"What was the record?" I asked.

"SEVEN!!" she said, loudly.

I love visiting new gyms. To a brand-new CrossFitter, I can pull off a bit of athleticism because I have a good skillset even if my fitness isn't at its peak. A REAL CrossFit athlete can usually lap me on any given day.

The point is that context matters.

The fastest way to 10x your business is to have a really bad business, and then make it mediocre.

It's very, very hard to 10x a GOOD business, because it's already doing the things that make it successful. TwoBrain grew by 300% this year--which is remarkable--but it was only our second year. Growing Catalyst, IgniteGym or another of my established companies 300% would be close to a miracle. Because they're already very successful.

In fact, a 20% growth in Catalyst would be a 200% growth in other gyms. Context matters.

When you're considering growth, start with what you NEED to earn first:

Being stretched I decided good seed would be investing in a business mentor- Chris Cooper... curious and wondering how long it would take to start seeing some fruit, we jumped in. That first year 2016 with 2BB we made 200K that's 110K more than the year before!! More than that my family slowly started getting their dad and husband back. My parents started getting their son back... my friends started getting their friend back. My team started getting the leader they needed and wanted. This year we have already well surpassed our last year revenue and still have 2 months to go. The best part is because of this group I am constantly challenged to do all that's in my heart while making sure those most important to me get the best of me! Thanks guys!

That's just over 2x growth in a year. Amazing. And even more this year.
But as the gym becomes more successful, percentage growth will go down because the numbers are FAR bigger now. It's still great if you have the right context. And, frankly, this guy's top priority is his family; a more important metric for him to track is his family time.

The point of this article is clearly a humble brag about my double-unders.

But my secondary point is this: be impressed by personal growth, long-term retention and profit; don't fall for the red herrings of high gross, high headcount or "I tripled my revenue in the first month!" troubadours.

**PODCAST EPISODE 94: RELATIONSHIP MARKETING**

Dave Picardy and Chandler Walker own Out of the Cave Media. Between the two of them, they have spent years working with gym owners and now they are pursuing a different passion which they call relationship marketing. In this episode we talk about relationships with your clients and how you can leverage these relationships to give them the best experience possible all while also growing your business.

Chandler originally started a blog about fitness before even considering starting a gym. After realizing that relationships are the real key to growing your business, Chandler began helping others which brought on the onset of Out of the Cave Media. Dave on the other hand began his onset into the fitness industry as a personal training. Things were good except for the amount of hours he had to put into his business to make a living. Soon after Dave learned about CrossFit he became certified and began his CrossFit journey. Dave’s passion for helping others and connecting people together led him to connect with Chandler and help gyms focus on their relationships with their clients. Out of the Cave gives both Dave and Chandler a great platform to enact something they like to call relationship marketing.

Relationship marketing is really about building a culture of caring between the business, the coach, and the client. What this really comes down to be own you show yourself to the consumer and to the staff. It is important that this relationship is always mapped out and when they interact with you they feel comfortable. Having the customer feel as though they are attached to you is important. Successful gyms always have a story and people love to be around this type of business. Ultimately where everyone struggles is telling a story and getting all of the coaches and employees to be a part of that story. This is where Out of the Cave Media steps in to help tell this story.

One of the important aspects of telling your story is getting your team involved. It is important that they also use social media and help tell the story. Despite this, you do not want to force it upon your team. It is important to motivate your team and get them onboard to contribute to the overall plan. If someone really likes making video but hates doing blogging then you should plan accordingly to achieve the best results.
Another important aspect is to showcase your local affiliate culture. Although the CrossFit HQ content is nice and well-polished, putting a face with the name and showcasing who you are to potential clients is really important. Telling your story in a unique and identifiable story allows people to recognize you in the community and relate in a much easier way.

Another way to leverage relationships without producing any content is putting yourself in situations where you can talk about your business. The more relationships you build and the more relationships you have the more people are going to care about you and what you have to do. This is more about becoming a leader within your community rather than schmoozing people and luring them into your gym. You want to establish relationships around town and see how you can help them first. When you truly care about someone they will notice and turn to you for help when they need it.

This episode is full of wisdom. Be sure to be ready to take notes and see how you too can implement these strategies into your own business!

Timeline:
0:58 – Dave and Chandler of Out of the Cave Media Introduction
1:39 – What brought Dave and Chandler to this stage of their gym owner career.
8:30 – What exactly is relationship marketing?
9:32 – Why is it important that the client is part of the business’ story?
12:38 – The beginning steps to telling your business’ story.
14:30 – What expectations should the staff have for producing content?
18:18 – Perfecting content. Is it really necessary?
19:40 – How important is it that the owners face get out there?
26:26 – What kind of story should you be telling potential clients.
27:56 – The best channels to display your media
33:10 – Getting out from behind the screen and talking to more potential clients
37:23 – Dave and Chandler’s favorite clients
40:33 – The best way to generate 5 new leads in the next 7 days

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WHEN TO RUN A 6-WEEK CHALLENGE
We teach Affinity Marketing, which is the overarching practice of focusing on your best clients, and making new connections through the "Help First" strategy.

That means we don't usually focus on lead generation or social media advertising, because there are WAY too many easier opportunities to get new clients. People who find your brand online are usually unqualified "cold" leads who are nowhere near ready to sign up for a long-term service. They might not be able to afford a premium service like CrossFit. They might live too far away, or be too busy, or prefer to do Barre in the basement.

But sometimes, we DO tell gym owners to run a six-week challenge.

We're a mentorship practice, so we don't have to stick to a script. Sometimes a gym simply needs some new faces. Sometimes the owner needs a short-term win, even if it's not a good long-term strategy. And sometimes an owner would simply not worry about their marketing.

Tommy Hackenbruck shared his six-week challenge (the New-You Challenge) on our podcast nearly two years ago. Many of the others are copies, so I'll use NYC as an example.

Here's how to do it best, what to avoid, and what to focus on:

**First, your focus should be on the long tail.**

Online challenges are often good at generating leads. Most of these are cold leads--they're uneducated, unqualified, but curious. It's hard to convert them to long-term clients, in my experience. But the real value of the challenge is to start a conversation, not convert cold leads into sales.

If a person clicks through the ad, reads the landing page, fills in the form...and then suddenly goes dark, it doesn't mean they're disinterested. It doesn't mean they're scared. It just means they can't sign up right now. They might not see how your service can solve their problem. They might not yet know they HAVE a problem. Their credit card could be outside in their car. The baby might be crying. The phone might be ringing...just because they don't sign up NOW doesn't mean they won't sign up EVER.

Adding 100 leads to your email list is valuable, if you know what to do next.

**Second, aim for a 40% retention rate after the challenge.**

This seems to be the "gold standard" when leads are filtered properly. This number sounds low, but many challenges produce retention rates that are far lower. This has a lot to do with the quality of leads that are brought in; the price of the challenge; and the transition "after the challenge."
The gyms with the highest retention rates consistently do goal reviews with every client individually, integrate the new clients into their community after a few weeks (not too early) and have a "next step" set up from day one.

**Third, plan your calendar in advance.**

Back-to-back challenges can be a downward spiral. Have you heard this: "I'm basically using the challenge as my intake process now..." ?

It's a trap. Don't do it. A challenge might kickstart your marketing and sales process; it might bridge a short-term cash flow gap. But if it replaces the things that will make you successful in the long-term, you're building fragility into your business.

A good "challenge" strategy is to plan 2-3 per year during your normal dips (August and March, for me.) Then follow the challenge with a deep email marketing campaign, and roll on your Affinity Marketing plan in the meantime to keep up your momentum.

Cold leads naturally have a higher turnover rate for a variety of reasons. Maybe they can't afford your service long-term; maybe they just like trying new things; maybe they just got out of jail. They take awhile to warm up before they'll become great clients. But nothing draws a crowd like a crowd does: if you're struggling to fill a midnight class, a challenge might just do it.

**HOW TO PARALYZE YOUR COMPETITION**

Give them three great ideas.

Does that sound backward, or WHAT?

But if I know anything, after owning a business for 13 years and mentoring other owners for 6, it's this: people with one great idea get it DONE. People with three great ideas get NOTHING DONE.

The reason the "other guys" took your idea and did it better? Because they're not working on anything else. YOU are trying to do three things at once...and if you're like me, not doing any of them very well.

Most CrossFit gym owners already have a big idea or two, but they can't work on them because they're coaching all the time. Their stress comes from their inability to act on a great idea. We get them to the Action point by leading them step-by-step in the Incubator.
We believe in a short period of intensive focus (usually 6-8 weeks) where we do things one at a time, in order, with each building on the one before it. Mentors guide owners through it one-on-one. Hundreds of videos and templates are available for homework--and the mentors tell the owners exactly which to watch, what to do, and make sure they DO it. Then they build.

We DON'T believe in selling access to a Facebook group, or selling courses without mentorship, because it's paralyzing. I tried that with another company in 2015. We sold a lot of courses. Owners saved money on mentoring. And they didn't get the results I wanted them to have.

If you told someone you'd guarantee their weight loss, how much personal attention would you give them? Probably a lot. You'd want to make SURE it would work. And that's why we do 1:1 mentorship in the Incubator: I'm making a bet on you, and I want to make sure you'll succeed.

But enough about that.

The best way to stop someone is to give them three things to work on at once.

The best way to move someone forward is to keep them focused on one thing.

You might not be giving your competition great ideas to paralyze them. But are you doing it to YOURSELF?

**WHAT IS THE TWO BRAIN WORKSHOP?**

Last night, CrossFit's EOD (Email of the Day) mentioned our local mentorship project: the TwoBrain Workshop.

After noticing that many of my seed clients at Catalyst are entrepreneurs, I started offering little seminars to them: Facebook Marketing, Affinity Marketing, and other burning topics.

Since many of the first lessons I shared in Two-Brain Business were taken from books and mentors in the non-fitness realm, it was easy to apply the lessons from my books to other local entrepreneurs. In fact, I was having SO much fun that I bought a 7800sqft building, and opened a coworking space, boardroom, and incubator offices. ([www.twobrain.com/workshops](http://www.twobrain.com/workshops))

And then something amazing happened.

The local entrepreneurs who come in for coffee, or to use coworking space, or to use our boardroom invariably ask about CrossFit. We're not just leading CrossFit owners to real entrepreneurship; we're leading entrepreneurs to CrossFit.

That's a million-watt win.
In fact, we've shut off all other marketing at the gym and now just focus on talking to people who come into the Workshop for coffee.

Many of them rent the boardroom for meetings...and ask us to build a short workout into their day! Some, seeking to lease office space, are requesting a gym membership quote as part of their lease. It's crazy.

But here's my favorite part:

Years ago, I realized that CrossFit gym owners have to learn good business practices MUCH faster than most other business owners. Because of the low barrier to entry, it's very easy to open a CrossFit gym...and very hard to keep one open. That means thousands of people have jumped into entrepreneurship with very little preparation, and then SCRAMBLE to learn things as fast as possible. This isn't the way it's usually done. CrossFit gym owners are also faster learners for other reasons: we have good networks; we all have to start from scratch, without guidance; and our brains are fit.

So gym owners in the TwoBrain family started asking, "Can I do that, too?" and I started sharing the model with them. No surprise: many asked how they could open a Workshop of their own, and start helping local business owners. We're working on that now.

It's a two-sided business model, and I'm having the time of my life. If you're in the Sault, come and visit. If you're not, come and visit anyway.

PODCAST EPISODE 95: RACHEL BALKOVEC

Rachel Balkovec is the first female strength and conditioning coach for any major sport within the United States. Rachel is currently with the Houston Astros, and I spoke to her on the eve of Game 6 of the World Series.

Rachel took the prescribed route for education in strength and conditioning. She got her first degree, then the CSCS, and then pursued her first internship. Then she did her second. Eventually, her third…

She’s been through Athletes Performance (now EXOS.) She got into the graduate program at LSU, then did an internship for the St Louis Cardinals–twice. She worked weekends for years, waitressing and helping retirees go to the bathroom.

She referred to Angela Duckworth’s book “Grit” right at the start of this podcast. Grit COULD be the title of this episode.

After so many experiences with athletic training Rachel assumed she was a shoe in to obtain additional internships while she was pursuing another degree. It was at this
moment that she realized how hard it would be to make it as a woman in Major League Baseball. After countless attempts to contact teams and submit her resume, she heard nothing. It wasn’t until Rachel changed her name to Rae, that she finally got a call back.

It wasn’t until another internship with the Cardinals that she secured a strength and conditioning coaching position where she now overseas eight minor league teams and roughly 200 players. Now that the Astros have won the World Series, it is all about what they can continue to do to elevate their game and continue their success. It is one thing to get to the top but a whole different thing to stay there, according to Rachel.

One of Rachel’s major jobs is to support the minor league teams in foreign countries. Many of the players in Major League baseball come from Latin America and they are signed to teams as young as 16 years of age.

Learn more about Rachel’s current position, future goals, and how she has overcome the gender barrier and broken into Major League baseball in this very special episode!

Timeline:
1:33 – Rachel Balkovec Introduction
4:17 – Rachel’s story, how she made it to the Houston Astro’s
14:50 – The struggle to make it as a woman in Major League Baseball
16:54 – Why won’t major sports teams hire more women?
21:42 – Rachel changes her name to Rae
27:28 – The atmosphere surrounding the Houston Astros
30:49 – The minor leagues of baseball explained.
38:18 – What is it like to deal with young baseball players in Latin America
43:59 – Moving up further within Major League baseball
47:07 – Rachel’s dream to make it the General Manager role
48:23 – Rachel’s philosophy on money
54:20 – How to choose between an internship and a paid position
62:05 – What will it take for Major League baseball to not be so archaic
66:25 – How important are results of the players for a coach’s credibility
72:18 – Creating objective measurements for movement

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WHAT IS EXCELLENCE?

"Money follows excellence."

"Excellence leaves clues."

These are the phrases we repeat to ourselves. We chant them while we're mopping. We accept them as answers to the question, "How do I run a good gym?"

Without a definition, excellence is a moving target. Without objective measurement, excellence will always be a wish.

Last month, I asked Greg Glassman for a metric that would define a "successful" gym. He didn't give me a hard number right away, but when pressed, he agreed that "Profit" is an undeniable part of excellence.

I took the question to the Mentoring Team at TwoBrain. The unanimous answer was "profit." There were dozens of others (like ARM and LEG) that are correlates of profit, and subjective answers like "perfect day." I agree with all of them.

Then one senior mentor said, "The ability to stay profitable long-term." So profit over TIME might be a better answer. As you and I have both experienced, it's all too easy to have one amazing month, feel like we're on top of the world...and then have a terrible month immediately afterward.

I think "Excellence" in the fitness business can be measured in 7 different ways:

First, numerically--both the most accurate and the most stark. Are you profitable, or not? If you're not profitable--including paying yourself a wage that supports your lifestyle--the rest doesn't matter, because it will all go away if you can't survive.

Second, subjectively (owner lifestyle.) This is the owner's "Perfect Day". We ask owners to define their "Perfect Day" before we start the Incubator so that we have a clear "Point B" to aim for. It's simply too easy to say "My life is pretty good..." and accept mediocrity unless you set a clear goal.

Third, Coach Education and Opportunity. No matter how great your gym, or how profitable in the short-term, if your key staff continues to leave, you'll always be fragile.

Fourth, Culture. Believing that you have a "good culture" isn't enough; that's intangible. Having a culture that matches your ideal client is the goal. If you have a fun, exciting culture that's mostly built on college students, you probably won't attract the 45-year-old professionals (except for the ones who want to hang around college students...)
Fifth, Client Experience. You can be the best coach in your gym if you want to. But does the client get the same experience when you're not there? If not, your gym can't sustain an upward trajectory. And you can't live forever.

Sixth, Resilience. Bad stuff is going to happen. Can your gym survive it? Going "scorched earth" and starting from scratch over and over isn't the correct answer. If you had a particularly bad month, how far would you backslide? Would you drop to your income level of two years ago? Would you have to remove a coach? Every step forward you take HAS to be solid enough to avoid sliding backward.

Seventh, long-term planning. This might be a correlate, but in my experience, NO gym without a long-term plan is a long-term success. Because no one is excellent by accident.

I break down the 7 Areas of Excellence more here:

https://twobrainbusiness.com/the-7-areas-of-excellence/

What about COACHING excellence?

Does the most-certified make the best coach? Richard Simmons had hundreds of thousands of adoring fans who would swear that he improved their lives.

In tomorrow's post, I'll discuss excellence in coaching, and how to measure it. In the meantime, you can read ahead here: How Many Certs Do You Need?

WHAT IS EXCELLENCE IN COACHING?

Yesterday, I wrote, What IS Excellence? and promised to follow up with a specific example of measuring excellence in the gym business.

Below, you'll find a sample Coach Evaluation Form from UpCoach.

This isn't a simple "scale of 1 to 10", but part of a larger conversation.

The first part of the conversation with your coach should be:

"What's your perfect day?"

Then follow with,

"If you could coach one thing all day, what would it be?"
Finally, help the coach draw a road map from their perfect coaching day to where they are NOW.

That's where the evaluation comes in: it's a snapshot of their starting line.

**Quarterly Evaluation Form**

**UpCoach Coach Evaluation**

The first two are followed by a "Coaching Inventory" and then a specific assessment of the coaches' strengths and weaknesses in weightlifting, gymnastics, endurance etc.

It's important to understand that Professionalism, Group Management, and Attitude all come before specific knowledge. These are GENERAL skills, which are more important than SPECIFIC skills. Specific skills can be taught over a weekend; general skills take years (maybe a lifetime) to develop.

The traditional 1-10 scale is less relevant for general skills, because a coach can sit at a 7/10 in "Presence" forever, and be satisfied. It's better to rate them as "Excellent", "Good" or "Satisfactory" because these subjective skills don't easily lend themselves to objective measurement.

**The key question: why be anything LESS than excellent?**

Usually, a coach is less than excellent simply because they don't have a clear picture of excellence. Their idea of "excellent" is different from your own, and probably for good reason: you've been coaching longer, you've seen REAL excellence, and you know what clients expect. They don't.

The first sheet clearly spells out the expectations associated with an excellent coach. The second sheet is a simple ratings scale. Use it for followup evaluations if you like. But always make sure you've clearly defined "excellence" in every role at your gym. If not...everyone's shooting at a different target, and they're all moving.

**LOVE + LETTERS**

It's been incredible to watch the TwoBrain family embrace the philosophy of "Love Letters" over the last few months. They're getting new members, higher affinity from their current members, and more joy from entrepreneurship.

You can't get people into your business if you won't let people into your life.
If you haven't heard the term "love letters" before, that's okay. You're already familiar with them (you're reading one now.) Love letters are simply notes to your audience about the things THEY care about. They're helpful tips, answers to questions and intimate details of YOUR story.

They're not "newsletters".

They're definitely not "sales letters".

I write my love letters to YOU as answers to questions I receive from other gym owners. Every week, 10 of you book a free consultation to the TwoBrainBusiness site. We chat for half an hour. Sometimes I invite you to join our mentorship family, and sometimes I don't. But the questions are always good, and I always know that OTHERS have the same questions.

So I answer them here. The best love letters I've written came from the best questions I was asked.

For example:

"Why I'm Headed to CrossFit HQ"
"How Many 'Likes' Do You Need?"
"How to Say 'No' To Discounts"
"Why You'll Never Need 300 Members"
"How To Optimize Your Day"
...and literally hundreds more.

Last week on a podcast interview, I was asked, "What's the most important piece of content you've produced? Which one made the biggest impact?"

A better question would have been: "What YEAR of writing was your best?"

I wrote over 390 blog posts on DontBuyAds.com. Then I wrote Two-Brain Business.

I had over 300 posts on 321GoProject. They're gone. But most of them came from Two-Brain Business 2.0 and Help First.

I have over 400 blog posts on TwoBrainBusiness.com (and just over 20 on the new TwoBrain.com, which isn't gym-specific.)

We're nearing the 100th episode of TwoBrain Radio.

Our YouTube Channel is slowly growing as the mentoring team shares their OWN "love letters" over video.
How do we produce so much? How do we publish every day? How do we find so MUCH
to talk about?

The simple answer is, we can't NOT publish every day.

I can't NOT do free calls with affiliates who want to grow.

I can't NOT answer their questions.

I can't NOT care.

And that means I HAVE to share the answers. I'm literally compelled to. When a gym
owner asks a great question, I have to share my answer. I've skipped workouts, family
time and a TON of fun personal stuff to do so.

That, my friend, is love. Not the love of writing: but the love of The Movement, of your
potential to change lives, and the love of service.

What are you compelled to share with your friends? What will keep you up at night if
you DON'T tell them?

HOW TO TURN YOUR LIFE INTO A DISNEY MOVIE

You've heard of Walt Disney, of course.

You know many of the Disney stories--the Little Mermaid, Beauty and the Beast, The
Lion King, Aladdin...

You probably also know that many weren't written by Disney. But that doesn't matter.
What matters is this:

Every Disney story is the same.

Every single Disney story follows the same script. The characters have different names;
the funny sidekicks have different bodies and songs. But the plot follows one course
every time. It's called The Hero's Journey. Here it is:
This is the "Hero's Journey" as described by Joseph Campbell, a mythologist who died in 1987.

In his book, Campbell used the examples of classic myths and religious stories. You can download a version with updated examples from The Wizard of Oz, The Hobbit, the Lion Kin and Star Wars here.

And you can also live the adventure through entrepreneurship.

The call to our adventure is simply the gorgeous opportunity to be our own boss. CrossFit makes that remarkably simple for thousands of first-time entrepreneurs. I felt forced to take the leap because I couldn't make enough money as a personal trainer, so I opened a gym.

Supernatural Aid is the boost we receive from something other than our doing. In CrossFit, that's brand recognition (the first ten people through your doors after you hung your sign were drawn by the name.) In my case, a partner lent me $16,000 to buy equipment.

That's when I left the "ordinary world" of employee and became a business owner...kinda. I really bought myself a job. My "threshold moment" came on a park bench when I realized I was doing it wrong; that I really didn't know how to build a business; and that my family was suffering because my ego told me I'd just eventually "figure it out."
Enter: the Mentor.

My first mentor was Denis Turcotte. He'd just turned around a large industrial employer, saving thousands of local jobs and the short-term economy. In a Lee Iaccoca-like move, he had accepted shares in the company instead of a salary in his first year; and when share prices went from under a dollar to over $70 under his guidance, he retired. He decided his legacy would be to help a few local entrepreneurs. I was one.

I wrote about that journey in Don'tBuyads.com, and then in thousands of blog posts and three books. Challenges and temptations still abounded (I have a closet full of banners from business ideas that didn't work out) and then the Transformation came: I used my expensive experience to mentor other gyms, beginning in 2012.

What is my Atonement? Taking the calls of thousands of gym owners who wanted help. I still do it--usually ten to twelve times every week. And I carry their message back to CrossFit HQ. Or I lose sleep over it. Sometimes their troubles ruin my workout, because I'm so distracted by their problems. I skip meals, and get up at 4am to answer emails. But when I DO rest, I rest well, because I'm happily exhausted by my service to the community.

I have other mentors now. They charge far more than Denis did back then, because my challenges are no longer at the hundred-dollar level. Many TwoBrain clients are now on the verge of million-dollar businesses, and that means I enter the Journey again, searching for new mentors and experiences to help them reach it. Also to stay slightly ahead, if possible.

That's more than enough about me.

Where are YOU in the Hero's Journey of your life?

You already ARE the Hero here, after all.

Are you at the Threshold?

Have you already reached the Abyss, as my friend Brad emailed me about last night?

Are you challenged? Tempted? Starting atonement early?

PODCAST EPISODE 96: MENTORING YOUR STAFF

Ken Andrukow, a senior Two-Brain Mentor and owner of Reebok CrossFit Ramsay, joins us on the show today. Ken’s gym one of the top gyms in the world, and he attributes his success to his staff.
As we identify the “gold standards” in the gym industry, Ken is at the top of the leaderboard in many categories (including profit). One of these gold standards is staff retention. Ken’s metrics are great because his relationships are great. We all know that money alone does not keep a staff member satisfied. You must also find out how to deliver on their perfect day to keep them around. In this episode we talk about how to mentor your staff, how to setup goals with your staff, make sure they are on the right track, and how to make sure they can see a clear path to their perfect day.

Ken has done a remarkable job growing his gym from 300 members when he started as a TwoBrain client, to now reaching 500. His metrics (ARM, LEG and profit) are even more impressive. But from a staffing perspective, this can present quite a few challenges for a gym owner. At about the 200-member mark, Ken realized that he could not manage the gym alone anymore. It was at this time that Ken had to step away from coaching and focus on growing his businesses full time. Ken also realized that he had to completely replace himself in all roles to have time to grow the gym. According to Ken, “It’s about making sure all of your staff react to every issue the way you would.”

Ken’s core values include integrity, empathy, loyalty, and tenacity. Ken puts every one of his prospective employees through a training program on these core values to ensure they match up and will be a good fit. One of the ways that Ken conveys these core values to his employees is through stories. Stories about his childhood and life challenges are really important and meaningful in showcasing these values.

Another key item to have when operating a large gym is to have systems in place for your staff to follow. As Ken’s gym grew he assumed everyone else could read his mind and know what he wanted. He soon found out, however, that this was not the case. As more and more members were asking Ken directly for help, he knew that systems must be developed for his staff to handle. It wasn’t until he put systems in place and gave people the authority to solve problems that he had the time to grow his businesses.

Above all else, he says, staff really want to know they are making a difference in people’s lives. A large part of success is about mindset and if your staff can have the same positive mindset that you have the opportunities are limitless. Join us today as we dive into staffing questions and much more!

Timeline:
2:53 – Ken Andrukow Introduction
4:38 – Ken on growing his gym from 300 to 500 members
8:32 – The core values are important to Ken and his staff
12:42 – Mentoring your employees through one on one meetings
19:41 – How often should mentoring meetings be taking place?
23:05 – How does a typical mentor meeting go?
27:20 – What is it that truly motivates staff and keeps them around?
30:52 – What it is like to lose a team member to another gym?
34:03 – Helping another team member start out at a new gym

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HOW TO DEAL WITH YOUR COMPETITION

The nearest box is 800m away.

They charge less.

They copy EVERYTHING you do--right down to your color scheme.

What do you DO about it?

Don't turn to arson yet...there are several reasons to be EXCITED about competition, including this one: they're not hard to beat.

First, the problems, and the opportunities that come with them:

1. People quit your gym to go to their gym because it's a lower price. The reason is that the average consumer can't tell the difference between what YOU sell and what THEY sell, so they choose based on price. This is the definition of "commodity". If I'm selling vanilla ice cream, and you're selling vanilla ice cream, I'm going to choose the cheapest.
   Being slightly better isn't enough. Even if you have some sprinkles on your ice cream, I might not choose it; I'll have to decide if it's worth an extra .25 to have vanilla ice cream with sprinkles.
   The opportunity: be REALLY different.
   Don't do free trials; do consultations.
   Build in a unique measurement system (we use an InBody, which no one else can afford.)
   Start with nutrition instead of thrusters.
   There are a hundred ways to slice this, but start here: you sell fitness. CrossFit is your biggest tool. Group classes might be part of your delivery of fitness (or not.)
2. They're too close. The reason the other gym built close to you isn't because they wanted to be up in your grill--it's because you have the best spot, and they want to be in the best spot too.
In this case, the opportunity is to be the best gym. They're doing you a favor by teaching people in your area to LOVE CrossFit, and then asking them to run by the door of a better CrossFit gym every day on their warmup. They're basically running an OnRamp for you, and if done right, they'll keep all the troublesome clients and graduate the best up to you.

3. They copy everything you do. Here's the good news: you won't run out of great ideas. They already have. When your little brother played the "copycat" game with you as a kid, how did you shake him? You started moving faster. If another gym is copying your content, your website, your programs...do yours faster. Bury them. Clients will know. People are smart.

4. They're bringing a poor version of your service to the market. They're hurting people, or giving CrossFit a bad name. Tell yourself this: if you're going to compete with SOMEONE, you want it to be THEM. They're probably stopping a better competitor from entering your market. When a gym owner tells me he's going to expand because he's found a town with no CrossFit gym, I ask him to go back and look for towns with poorly-run gyms in them. Those are huge opportunities, because the bad gym has taught people to love CrossFit, and then given them less than the best experience. They've groomed your audience for you!

Trust me: I get copied. Former coaches try to attract my members to their programs. Personal Trainers try to tell people CF is bad for them.

Even though TwoBrain is a huge family, with gyms on every continent--or maybe precisely BECAUSE of our success--we have imitators. We have copycats. There are consultants giving mediocre advice. But these people actually help our mission (to make gyms profitable) because they teach gym owners that mentorship is important and easy to find. They also work with the clients we don't invite to the Incubator, and often help them become successful. Many gym owners "graduate up" to TwoBrain, which makes me immensely proud.

In 2016, Dave Tate told me, "The top ten percent will keep looking until they find you." I thought he was paying me a compliment. But he was really telling me to be the BEST. And I'm asking you to do the same: don't just be 10% better. Be SO different that you have a monopoly. Be SO different that no one thinks you're the same as the low-priced option. Be SO far ahead that everyone who cares KNOWS you're being copied.

You are more than enough.

Live up to yourself.
LET'S GET REAL OR LET'S NOT PLAY

I remember when I was young enough to know everything.

I was 100% sure that my way was the ONLY way. I thought that MY experience should be the same as everyone else. I knew that what I liked was what others would like, too.

I opened my gym thinking dozens of local powerlifters would want coaching. They did not.
My first website was dark and scary. I thought all the hardcore athletes in town would want to do CrossFit. They did not.
I tried to attract local firefighters by criticizing P90X--which they were all doing at the firehouse. I thought they'd see the light because of my infallible logic and science. They did not.

Eventually, I got tired of making bad guesses about what other people wanted, and started asking them. I've refined the technique now, and we teach it in the Incubator: which questions to ask your coaches, clients and spouse to find out what they REALLY want from you.

Most of us opened a gym because we wanted to coach. A year later, we might have wanted something else. But we made guesses about our clients based mostly on what WE wanted, or what worked for US.

I like training in a group. Many of my clients don't. That's fine.

Some people prefer a private introduction to CrossFit. Some people do not. That's fine.

The answer depends on the client. And that's why so many real experts in ANY field, when asked a question, will answer with. "That depends..."

The only ones who are ever absolutely sure that their opinion is correct to the exclusion of everything else are the newcomers. The evangelists for one training style, or one business "best practice" are usually the newcomers. They're also usually the loudest, because they're so assured of their conviction that they're comfortable shouting it from the rooftops. Data? Not necessary. Experience? That takes too long.

A sure sign of maturity--as a coach, a parent or even a mentor--is the willingness to consider that all options COULD be right, depending on the situation.

Our job--as coach, parent and mentor--is to compare the starting point of our clients against the "gold standard", and see what fits.
My gym does around $240k per year in Personal Training. Every client starts 1:1, because we're selective about our clientele and, frankly, we can afford to slow our intake process.

A gym owner in Manitoba, Canada called me yesterday. She has a waiting list (rightly so!) Some of those people would prefer a 1:1 intake. Some don't want (or need) it. Forcing 20 personal training sessions on those folks is counterproductive.

Establishing a set of "industry best practices" is my passion. That means careful (and very expensive) collection of data from a broad sample set (we have the largest in the industry.) In 2018, that will mean a total investment of close to two million dollars on my part--because it's the right thing to do. And no one else is going to do it.

But even with ALL that data, we'll never make a blind prescription to any client, because we're not the same.

Your clients trust you to make the best prescription for them--not just give them the same prescription as everyone else in your gym. You can lean on science to make those decisions. There are reams of data supporting or contradicting the best and worst methods in fitness.

My clients trust me to do the same. My experience and context are merely the lenses through which I view REAL data about what's working in the gym industry. I hate "opinion" given without that base of data and sold as truth, just like I hate the "super weight loss shake" zealots who want to sell crap in my city.

One final story about the power of asking people what's right for them, instead of making assumptions:
A year into owning Catalyst, I thought a key staff member was close to leaving. I'd heard a rumor that he was going to open his own gym, as I had done in 2005. I called my partners in a panic. One said, "Have you asked him?"
I hadn't.
That was 2006.
He's coaching the 7pm group at Catalyst tonight.

Guessing doesn't work. The fitness world has lots of data; your job is to translate it. The business of fitness is mostly lacking data; most can't afford to collect it (or simply don't want to.) We are. But in the absence of data, the most important question you can ask is, "What do you want NOW?"

**HOW SHARING JOY MAKES YOU HAPPY**

Your mom told you, "'Tis better to give than to receive."
I'm going to give you something better than anything you can buy. On the day North America goes nuts buying things, I'm giving you a promise:
Things don't make you happy (you knew that part already.)
Actions DO.
Service will make you happy. But happiness is gold, buried in the mine of your other emotions. You have to go looking for it and hold it up to the light.

While we, in North America, wait in lines to consume things, I'm going to give you something that will definitely make you happy: a weekly practice of mining happiness in your brain.

It's not Black Friday. It's Bright Spots Friday.

Every week in the private TwoBrain Facebook group (you can't join until you've finished the Incubator), we practice happiness. Around 100 gym owners will share their "bright spots" for the week: wins in their gym and their personal lives.

The purpose is twofold:
1) We all get to read hundreds (literally hundreds) of great ideas from other gym owners every week
2) In the act of thinking about "What worked well this week?" we take five minutes to reflect on the things that made us happy. And guess what? The act of looking for happiness makes us find it!

I can't tell you how many times I've heard this:
"I didn't think I had any Bright Spots this week until I went looking for them."

We also practice Bright Spots in the private Catalyst Facebook Group, and it's equally powerful.
You can't keep people in your gym until you let them into your heart.

I'm very careful about protecting the borders of both groups, because that's what you do when you love people: you keep their space safe. So I won't share any of their Bright Spots with you. Instead, I'll share mine:
BSF:
This is coach Miranda. She injured her ankle on a run last week. Rather than miss a single class, she bought a hands-free crutch. She has plenty of stress in her life, and serving others--especially teenaged girls--is her escape.

UpCoach meeting with my staff tomorrow. They'll get an hour of science and coaching from Ray, and breakfast in the Workshop from Mary.

Mary shattered her single-day sales record AGAIN. Pumped to see local entrepreneurs thriving on TwoBrain principles.
We held our first live seminar in the Workshop. Nine local entrepreneurs showed up. The seminar was on Facebook Marketing; some didn't even have a website. So I scrapped the whole presentation and said, "Here's what I do." I told them about Affinity Marketing, love letters and storytelling.

My Ignite coordinator gave birth 7 weeks early (baby Logan is fine, tiny and cute) and we found a teacher in the 6am CrossFit class to take over. She gave up her teaching job for the semester and came to work for Ignite full time until at least January. Went through the 101 course in a couple of days, said "I've got this" and is already coaching 30 hours per week.

A member showed up at the cafe with her husband. He shows up to help at Catalyst events, but won't work out. We dragged him onto the InBody and he signed up for a nutrition plan. They left, and he came back with a gift: two sets of bleacher seats from the Memorial Gardens, our city's historic hockey arena that was torn down ten years ago. We'll put them in the "hockey room"--one of our themed Incubator offices at the Workshop.

The 2018 Incubator modules are currently being re-shot. As you guys keep growing, the "best practices" of 2015 are now just "pretty good." Collecting the new gold standards has been incredible over the last few months, and I'm not done yet. We're also reorganizing and updating EVERY single Growth Stage module as we anticipate a move off Coaching Cloud.

The "Task Survey" was full of amazing ideas, and--even better--Erin is going to jump in to help me prioritize some of them. We'll start with three VERY helpful things to help those in the TwoBrain family. One hint: imagine an "intake evaluation" where a stranger tests your website for the Two Clicks To Book principle; times your responses to emails and phone calls; does a virtual NSI with your staff; and gives you a report card with action items for improvement. I'm going to be the first one to sign up!

Robin and I are off today to pick up our little tractor, a new snowblower for the rink and my repaired chainsaw. Lots of wood to cut at the cottage and (soon) lots of snow to blow in our neighbors' yards. Some people might call that stuff work; I'm lucky to have a different context of "work" after working 17-hour days for so many years!

I'm thankful for you all, and I'm going to eat one piece of pie for each of you in 2018.

Those are my Bright Spots for today. Imagine a hundred of those...every single week.

The best part: it's not bragging. I literally started writing with one Bright Spot in mind, and up popped another, and another...and now I feel amazing!

What effect would that have on YOUR gym family?
A bit of warning: if your members aren't used to open sharing like this, it could be hard to get Bright Spots Friday—or any practice of gratitude—started. But THAT is a sign, right? Start with Love Letters, and then intro BSF in a few weeks.

As our culture becomes wealthy to the point of hurting ourselves, we’ve lost the ability to find happiness. We eat ourselves sick and stress ourselves awake. The practice of gratitude and reflecting on WINS will make you—and your members—happy. It’s part of a larger process of changing lives, but a critical one.

EPISODE 97: RETAIL READY!

Tickets to the 2018 Summit are now available! BONUS: When you sign up for the Summit before December 31, you’ll get ALL of the session recordings from 2017—both the Coaches’ Track AND the Owners’ Track! You’ll have immediate access so you can watch while you wait for June!

On today’s episode, Matt Albrizio of Forever Fierce shares his best practices for selling retail items at Christmas; how to buy gifts for your coaches; and how to create a Retail Plan for 2018.

Matt was on last year to share his strategies on Preorders and using templates instead of designing t-shirts from scratch. Following his plan, we increased our retail profit by $3200 at Catalyst this year…it it took me NO time. Instead of wasting hours trying to find, copy, alter and design t-shirts, I did nothing except paste his signup links.

I start the conversation with a surprise question: as a non-owner, what’s Matt’s perspective on “Black Friday” deals, presales and membership discounts?

Matt’s top strategy to avoid tying up your capital in inventory is STILL the pre-order. Forever Fierce does all of the form creation for you (another skill you don’t need to master.)

Matt then discusses, in a general form, the value of an annual calendar that includes a retail plan. We’ll come back to that.

Greg Glassman has spoken many times about his experience at a globo-gym, where an owner referred to his “PIFs” (Paid-In-Full Clients) as his best clients. Greg hated the idea. In this article, I discussed why we don’t do pre-sales or discounts or PIF deals at TwoBrain gyms. Clients already asking for discounts because you’ve sold them in the past? Here’s how to say no.

I shared a story (anonymously, of course) about an incredible affiliate owner and coach whose gym is in trouble because of their Black Friday deals in the past.

Matt then gave us another series of amazing retail nuggets:
He talked about using templates to sell designs that have been proven to work (instead of just projecting YOUR tastes onto other people)

Setting an annual retail plan so you don’t miss opportunities
What to get coaches for Christmas
When SHOULD you hold a small inventory, and of what?
What I do for my coaches at Christmas to create a “peak moment” in their lives
How to plan your retail for 2018

The picture below is where WE order. The exercise to plan your year is one we do with all TwoBrain gyms, and you can see on this drawing that we have our events in red, specialty groups in black, and retail in purple (4 orders.) Those aren’t the complete calendar (not even close,) but if you plan those things first, retail ordering becomes easy.

Final note: I signed up for Matt’s email-reminder program last year, and for once I had solid Catalyst hoodies to sell ON TIME for my clients. They’re wearing them around right now!

Email: matt@foreverfierce.com to get your plan together. It takes about 15 minutes.

WHO ARE YOU ACCIDENTALLY EXCLUDING?

Our Varsity program at Catalyst used to have 11 teen girls and only one boy.

One time, I pulled him aside and said, "Hey man, it's totally fine to invite some of your male friends to this group if you want."

He replied: "Why in hell would I want to do that?"

I laughed. He was trying to exclude competition, and I didn't realize it.

Most gym owners are excluding clients and don't realize it.

Even worse, they're probably blocking out the BEST POSSIBLE CLIENTS they could have.

I'm going to tell you exactly what the problem is. But first, here's the path a client takes to find their way to you. Please note that at ANY point, they could take any action, or even NO action.
"I'm too fat."
"I am going to lose weight."
"Should I go on a diet, or start exercising?"
"If I exercise, should I just start jogging, or join a gym?"
"Should I just join the cheapest gym in case I don't like it?"
"Should I get a personal trainer? Or a class?"
"Will I lose weight faster with Pilates, Barre, CrossFit, or a bootcamp?"
"Which one is the easiest?"
"If I pick CrossFit, which gym should I attend?"

---- and I'll interrupt there. Because THIS is where a lot of gym owners blow it.

I've written extensively on your intake process, the first impression on your website has to make, and avoiding the appearance of selling a commodity. I won't cover those again.

Instead, I'm going to mention the signals you're sending to your target audience.

When I opened, I thought I was my target audience: the 25-year-old "grinder" who wanted intensity in their life, who didn't care about clean bathrooms or diet, who wanted to wear old t-shirts with obscure slogans and black skulls. I was flying a black flag. I was counterculture on purpose—and that made me counterCLIENT.

There were a few others like me, of course. But they were all doing shift work, or had budget restrictions, or were overconfident in their abilities. They didn't want coaching; they just wanted heavy weights and aggressive rap.

Meanwhile, my Personal Training studio attracted professionals aged 35-to-55, who never had a problem with my rates. We wore collared shirts and played Top 40 music and combed our hair before a session.

I'd work the morning at the Personal Training studio, and then all night at my CrossFit gym. None of my clients from the former followed me; I didn't understand why.

When I combined both gyms, I lost a bunch of amazing Personal Training clients. Some of them, long-term seed clients, told me that my new bathrooms were dirty, and they didn't appreciate the music or swearing at my new gym.

I started to see the light, but it was too late; I lost some long-term, excellent clients, who I NOW realize were my target group all along.

We, as humans, are wired to find belonging. We seek tribes and packs of people LIKE us so we won't be excluded. If I walked into a biker bar today, I'd immediately know that I didn't fit in, and leave quickly. The same would be true if I walked into a ballet recital.

If an excellent potential client finds their way through that maze of questions above, and finds YOU, will they turn back when they hear the gangster rap in the parking lot?

Will they come back after the seventh F-bomb? Will they quit after the ninth?

You might wear your hat backward every day. That's cool with me. But it might not scream "health care professional" to someone over 30.
Your shirts might be the envy of other box owners. Great. But if a prospective weight loss client sees your "fuck shit up" t-shirt on their first visit, they might head to Planet Fitness.

If you spout your views about religion or politics on social media, I understand--but more than 50% of your audience won't.

I'm not telling you to be pablum. I'm telling you to be thoughtful and considerate.

People in your city might not be scared of CrossFit; they might just be scared of YOU. Or your gym.

I have a huge inventory of unsold t-shirts with Mark Twight quotes on them, and a boatload of regrets about clients I've lost but shouldn't have. Their schedules didn't change at work; they didn't reconsider their budget. I simply excluded them by doing things an expert wouldn't do.

Remember: it's better to be the only person overdressed than the only person underdressed.

It doesn't hurt to be the most polite person in the room.

And if you want to serve highly-educated people, check your spelling on Facebook.

**Group or Individual Training: Do You REALLY Have To Choose?**

The two most-discussed podcast guests I hosted this year were Greg Glassman (of course) and James Fitzgerald, founder of OPEX.

James was my first CrossFit hero. Greg is my business hero.

What I didn't anticipate was that gym owners would perceive such a wide rift between 1:1 training (or individual program design) and CrossFit, because I don't.

I found CrossFit after spending 9 years as a personal trainer. That was 2007, the same year Fitzgerald won the Games. I owned a 1750sqft personal training studio, with beautiful natural light and a good location. We ran noon classes, but that was the only one. Everything else was 1:1. We sent clients to globogyms to do their homework.

I opened our CrossFit gym as our second location. Unfortunately, it suffered mightily (I was trying to sell a ton of group memberships, using free intros and discounts.) But I survived on the revenue from the PT gym. And soon realized that the best path for the client was NOT the group-only model. In early 2008, the idea of just selling group memberships was popular but not the default. Now it is.
We combined the two gyms, switched our OnRamp back to 1:1 from group, and sold fitness delivered two ways: individually, or in a group. The group classes followed CrossFit programming overtly; the individuals did constantly varied functional movement performed at high intensity. They came to our gym to do their homework. Some people did both groups and 1:1 training, depending on their preference and budget.

CrossFit has always been the "budget option", because I believe that 1:1 training is still the fast-track for client success.

We have 220 clients. Around $240k of our annual revenue comes from 1:1 training.

At intake, we ask people, "would you be more comfortable exercising 1:1 or in a group?"

Sometimes, at goal reviews, we'll ask people "Are you making progress as quickly as you'd like?" If they say no, we might recommend PT; or we might not. There's no up-sell; just coaching.

Before he registered crossfit.com (thereby 'naming' his process), Greg did 1:1 training. Then, when his schedule was filled, he did 1:2 training, and then 1:3, 1:4...and, eventually, groups. That's what happens when you're the best trainer in town: you fill up. It happened to me, too. The only way we could grow was to encourage some people to train in a group.

Luckily, they do better in a group. Many like the group more (including me) but NOT everyone, and not most people all of the time.

We are selling fitness. We are delivering fitness by designing meaningful programs, and then delivering instruction and encouragement in a private setting OR in a group setting. That's our business. Catalyst is our brand, CrossFit is our message, dogma is our anathema, and "what do YOU want?" is the most important question we ask.

**Who Sells?**

The next time you're in a staff meeting, look at the faces around you and ask, "Which of these people is in charge of sales?"

If you can't name the person responsible for selling, bad news: it's you.

There are between 12 and 15 roles in every gym. But there are three "META" roles that really make the business run:
Finance
Operations
Sales.

Finance is your accountant and whoever sets your goals and targets.

Operations is how you coach your clients and clean your bathrooms.

Sales is how you keep your business alive.

Gino Wickman writes about these "three chairs" (which I call meta roles) in his books "Traction" and "Get a Grip". Other authors have said the same.

Sales includes offering your services to past clients, current clients, and future clients. When you're selling to strangers, that's called marketing.

Most business owners don't hire salespeople.

Gym owners hire coaches. Butchers hire assistant butchers. Chefs hire prep cooks. Instead of hiring to fill the holes in their business, they try to duplicate themselves. And that's okay--IF they plan to take the sales role themselves. But most never do.

If selling is "everyone's job", it's no one's job.

Someone has to get good at this. Now, that doesn't mean they have to be dishonest, or slimy, or greedy. It means they have to do their client the ultimate service: they must discover how they can help FIRST, then help MOST, and then help FOREVER.

I certainly want someone to tell ME what to do most of the time. I don't want to figure out how to change the oil on my new truck. I don't want to repair the roof on my cottage,
or change the chain on my chainsaw. I want someone to say "I've got this. What's your credit card number?"

If you own a gym, your clients don't want to figure out nutrition on their own (they've probably already failed at it.)

They don't want to figure out how to avoid an injury. They don't want to figure out how to do a power clean correctly, or how to climb a rope. They want you to solve the problem. That, my friend, is selling.

And it's your job.

2018

When I think of the future, I don’t picture calendars: I picture ceilings.

I ask, how high can I get, on this current trajectory, before I hit my head on the top limit?

In the case of the gym owner, the ceiling is hard to see. When we’re stuck in the day-to-day of incremental gain and then hear Martell say something like “It’s easier to 10x your business than to 2x your business” it almost sounds ridiculous. We’re working hard, looking at our hands—and it’s hard to look up and beyond.

I’m fortunate enough to sit at a great vantage point now. As we enter 2018, a new gym joins the TwoBrain family almost every day. That gives us the leverage to demand better from everyone—our partners, our teachers, our brand and ourselves.

To many gyms, we’re a tugboat. To some, we’re a life raft. To a few, we’re a party cruise (you know who you are.) But we can all navigate by the North Star if we remember to look up.

Sixty short years ago, the sky was more than a backdrop: it was a limit. We used the sky as a map for navigation and a canvas for inspiration. But when we punched through the sky to find NEW skies beyond, our scope changed. Limits changed. The sky changed. Our heads didn’t bounce off after all. Away went our ceiling.
Many gym owners in 2017 look at a gym with 500 members and think, “Look at all those stars.” They limit their imagination to the hard and heavy: the bricks, barbells and bros that make up their current business. We talk about skipping ropes and supplements and fifteen-foot ceilings instead of asking, “How do I train people in Italy?” or “Will I be replaced by a hologram in two years?” or “What will a client’s blood test tell me about their potential aerobic capacity?” or “How will I manage 10,000 clients?”

Some folks are asking those questions now. I want to be one of them.

Will you join me?