
Instagram 101 for Fitness Professionals

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Please feel free to print this handout so you can write notes all over it for yourself and use it for planning your own Instagram strategy based on prompts used in some of the sections.

Part 1: Introduction and the benefits of Instagram for fitness professionals.

- It's a lot easier for your content to get discovered by thousands of users who may be looking for exactly what you have to offer.
- Instagram provides a better engagement rate than other social media platforms.
- There are many ways to get your content seen by the right people who will engage with it.
- Important points: your follower count is irrelevant, it's important to determine your niche, know what to post and when, as well as utilize hashtags to get your content seen.

Part 2: Why your follower count is relatively irrelevant and some pitfalls of Instagram

- On Instagram- engagement is king and the more engagement you get, the more likely you are to get discovered by potential clients.
- There is no point in having a lot of followers if they don't engage with your content or if they aren't interested in what you post/offer.
- You can build a sustainable and profitable fitness training business with 10,000 followers (or even significantly less), provided that the people who follow you are genuinely interested in the solution that you offer & the content you post.
- The ultimate goal is not to collect followers but to acquire leads (leads can come through DM's emails, subscribers to your newsletter).
- The only benefit of having 10,000 followers or more is to get the swipe up feature in stories, which will allow you to share your links in stories so that you can direct your Instagram followers to specific pages that you want them to see (since the only other place Instagram allows link is your bio).
- Some people buy followers as a shortcut-but that will not build your business and will ultimately drive your engagement down. The followers that people buy are fake and they do not engage with your content nor buy from you.

Part 3: Determining your niche & attracting your ideal audience

- Your niche should be something that you are passionate about and something that you are knowledgeable about (for example, in my case, it's running because I love to help beginner runners cross finish lines and achieve personal victories)

Brainstorm a few ideas for niches/topics that you would like to cover on your account (things that you are knowledgeable and passionate about:

- Your Instagram bio should summarize what you do and who you help based on what your chosen niche is and, if possible, include how you're qualified to serve that crowd; include any media features you've been in for social proof because people looking at your profile will see you as an expert (i.e. Seen on CTV, Oxygen Magazine)

Basic Instagram Bio Format

- I help *(target audience based on your niche)* to *(achieve the goal that your target audience wants to achieve)*
- I help *(target audience based on your niche)* to *(solve problem XYZ)*

Examples:

I help new runners safely cross their next finish line.

I help busy moms lose the last 10 lbs. so they can feel confident and empowered.

Practice a few Basic Bio Outlines here based on the niche that you've defined for yourself:

- Find big accounts/relevant influencers in your niche (i.e. who already has your idea audience?) and interact with the users who comment/interact with that person's/company's posts
- Search hashtags that are relevant to your niche and interact with the content that's posted there (don't just say "nice pic", but post meaningful comments that would inspire other users to check out your account)
- Making authentic and genuine connections with your target audience is what leads to sales (not spamming, nor doing the follow/unfollow method)

Part 4: What to post & when?

- Take advantage of the Instagram analytics (you must have a business account to do that), which will tell you when your audience is online and which posts generate the most engagement
- Try to post whenever the majority of your audience is online
- If you don't have a post scheduler to use, you can create "drafts" of posts which get saved and then you can post them at the chosen time
- Types of posts that generate engagement: authentic, inspirational, aspirational, passionate, transformational, questions for your audience (to encourage them to comment)

Content Ideas (list some content ideas that will inspire your audience, illustrate your passion for the subject, and show your own transformation):

- Be authentic without airing dirty laundry/posting about personal issues, religion, politics (leave that off the business page)
- Offer solutions/tips to help your target audience get some wins/take inspired action, which builds trust and rapport with your audience (if they get a win just by following your free tips, they will be more likely to pay you when they are ready to get to the next level)
- Write meaningful captions that add value for your audience (share a personal transformation, you can share your challenges and how you overcome them as they relate to your target audience but do not complain about your challenges); they need to feel like you "understand their situation" because you've been where they are (i.e. in my case, I couldn't run a block when I started...)
- limit CTA (call to action) posts to once every 4th post or so (you don't want to oversell your audience)
- add variety to your content (video, photo, reel, IGTV) but the goal should always be to add value to your audience (workout videos that have unique, safe and fun exercises work very well and you can encourage your audience to "save" your posts to try later)
- post high quality photos (they don't need to be professional, but at a minimum should have good lighting)



Ideas for businesses that you can potentially partner with for giveaways and shout outs:
