



The Activity Preferences form, provided in the web resource, will help you establish a productive personal trainer–client relationship by identifying your client’s expectations, likes, and dislikes.

As a Personal Training Specialist, you will sometimes notice that what your clients want and what they truly need are two different things. Clients typically come to a Personal Training Specialist with past training experience and some degree of knowledge. Some clients have been influenced by trends or by quick fixes advertised through the media. The Personal Training Specialist has the choice to ignore these desires and preconceptions or work with them to build rapport and a stronger alliance with the client.

When you find yourself in this type of conflict with a client, an educational approach is often helpful. You can often explain why you have chosen a specific exercise or programming concept.

In general, you should deal with potential conflicts ahead of time so that clients know what their boundaries are before they start a program with you. When situations occur afterward, and they inevitably will, you should deal with them immediately. Clients can construe any lack of feedback as an indication that their actions are acceptable, which only makes them more difficult to deal with later. These problems should always be dealt with in a

one-on-one meeting when possible so that clients are not made to feel more uncomfortable than they probably already do.

Appropriate Behaviours for Personal Training Specialists

As a Personal Training Specialist, you are responsible for acting in a professional manner. The following are a few behaviours to practice throughout all interactions with clients:

- Maintain a strictly professional relationship with all clients.
- Give exercise-related advice to clients only in areas in which you have received formal training.
- Design programs only for clients who are relatively healthy and free of any special conditions or diseases, unless you have been trained to work with this type of client or are working closely with the client’s physician or the appropriate qualified health professionals and following their guidelines.

You need to draw a clear line between what you are trained to do and what you are not. The *canfit-pro Standards of Practice and Professional Code of Ethics* elaborates on this, but in some situations you need to use your professional judgment about how you should proceed.



Self-Reflection

As you begin your journey as a Personal Training Specialist, you should reflect on yourself and what you can bring forth to service your clients. Many Personal Training Specialists have initiated their desire to become a fitness professional with a keen interest in optimal health and a quest to share this passion with others in a helpful manner. You should identify other successful Personal Training Specialists, model their positive behaviours, and implement some of their training techniques and methodologies. By watching and listening to others, you can learn skills and attributes that you would like to emulate. Along with modeling behaviour of successful Personal Training Specialists, you can assess yourself to help guide your journey as a Personal Training Specialist. Knowing where you are and what your *Standards of Practice* are can help define a path of development. Take the time to write down a list of your existing skills and abilities. This inventory will help you understand your unique offerings as a fitness professional. You can also begin to chart your ideas on how you want to develop and evolve your skills and abilities as a Personal Training Specialist. Having a solid grasp on where you currently are and where you want to go can strengthen relationships with your clients and help you stay engaged and motivated throughout your journey as a Personal Training Specialist.