

The Personal Trainer Headhunter

Detailed evaluations, thoughtful consideration and a pool of top-notch trainers help Trina Lambe teach clients about living a healthy, active lifestyle.

Subject: Trina Lambe
Company: Train by Trina

Messages in the Malt. After finishing a career in professional figure skating, Trina Lambe changed directions and went to work for a local brewery in Toronto. “It was my first ‘real job’ and it was there that my entrepreneurial spirit was sparked,” she recalls. She began as the office manager for the start-up company, which, she says, allowed her to participate in the mechanics of business growth and success. At 25 she became a senior manager, but began to look beyond the brew business. “I put my thinking cap on and asked myself what brings me the most enjoyment. Being active! I took my passion for exercise, applied some business knowledge, and 3 months after quitting my corporate job I was fully booked as a personal trainer and had already hired my first trainer to work with me.” Though she has parted ways with her former career, Lambe notes that her former boss continues to be her mentor.

Trina Goes Headhunting. Lambe’s primary business focus is to truly inspire as many people to fitness as possible. “My mission in fitness is to ‘reach, teach and educate thousands of people on how to live a healthy lifestyle through activity,” she says. Her mission statement can be found all over her website, perhaps to ensure that her company’s clients recognize the breadth of her passion. With a full client schedule—and a desire to maintain a balance between her personal and professional lives—Trina found herself limited in successfully achieving her mission. “When I started this business, I was the only trainer. Eventually, all my time slots were filled, but I wanted to accommodate more clients. Realizing that I couldn’t do



this alone, but not wanting to reject new clients, [I decided] it was time to expand.” Lambe then focused on seeking out highly qualified and motivated trainers who could meet the demands of in-home training. “They are people who can think on their feet and don’t need every tool to create a great workout.” Lambe performs detailed, thorough physical and lifestyle assessments with each new client, and then turns to her database to determine which trainer within the client’s general area (she never asks her trainers to travel more than 15 minutes) is the best person for the job.

Condo Conversions. Lambe has also tapped into the burgeoning condo fitness-facility market, which she has found both lucrative and satisfying. “In Toronto, the condo market is very hot,” she says. “This sector is in dire need of quality customer service from a fitness expert.” Lambe believes that many condo facilities lack the personal touch that helps people develop long-lasting exercise habits. “This is where Train by Trina steps in.” She offers on-site group exercise classes and personal training (using the same client-trainer matching techniques she uses with her in-home clients), as well as health lectures and product information

nights. “Each [condo fitness facility] is very different and has a different demographic. We develop a strategic plan for each and every facility.”

Keen Business Sense. Train by Trina has experienced success not only because of excellent customer service, but also as a result of Lambe’s ability to set reasonable business goals and to know when to ask for help. “I complete annual strategic planning for setting challenging but achievable goals. I enlist the help of business consultants (business coach, accountant, marketing consultant, admin/bookkeeper and public relations representative) to provide advice and steer me toward my goals in running a healthy, viable business.” She performs periodic self-evaluations to make sure she is on track. “Business success and fitness success have so many commonalities, it’s scary,” she says. “When you pull clients out of their comfort zone after they have plateaued, you get different results. Do the same in your business. Get uncomfortable each day with tasks that are going to generate the outcome you want.” ■

Ryan Halvorson is the associate editor for IDEA and a certified personal trainer at Excel Sport and Therapy in La Jolla, California.