

# THE TARGETED APPROACH

*How do you become more marketable in the fitness arena? The answer is simple: Expand your skill set. Focus your training. Attract new clients.*

*By Kerrie Lee Brown*



Whether you're a fitness instructor looking to boost your client list, or a facility owner wanting to increase revenue with more members - the key to getting people through your door is unique programming for special interest populations.



Specialty tracks are designed as a tool for instructors, allowing them to concentrate on a particular demographic and gain access to niche client groups. They also allow an instructor to acquire the skills needed to design specialty programming, modify exercises to meet individual needs, learn effective cueing methods and address the anatomical and biomechanical necessities of each instance.

"Specialty tracks give instructors the opportunity to set themselves above the competition by providing them with the knowledge and resources to appeal to clients with specific programming challenges," says Lindsay G. Merrithew, President and CEO of The Merrithew Health & Fitness Group.

Typically, specialty tracks are made up of series of workshops that provide an in-depth analysis of a particular topic, piece of equipment and/or physical condition and equips instructors with programming options, modifications and teaching tips to provide the best training possible to their clients. Common tracks include topics such as:



### ATHLETIC CONDITIONING

This is ideal for instructors who work with very fit, professional or amateur athletes such as runners, tennis or hockey players to name a few. Pilates with an athletic conditioning focus can improve strength, power and agility and add

in unique features that challenge unilateral movement, weight transference and torso rotation.

When an athlete performs repetitive movements or is required to focus on one side of the body, muscles often become unbalanced and the joints are thrown out of alignment. An effective, complete body workout can retrain these muscles and rebalance the joints, allowing instructors to take their clients to a new level of athletic performance.



### GOLF CONDITIONING

Golfers are always looking for that extra edge and ways to gain an advantage over their opponents on the course. Pilates with a golf conditioning focus include exercises that will help increase strength, balance, flexibility and power from

the ground up.

Addressing the particular training requirements for a golfer with Matwork and Reformer-based routines, instructors learn how to condition the entire body, enhance core stability and body awareness, and teach their clients how to engage the very muscles they need to drive the ball further down the fairway. Strengthening the mind-body connection will help refine their technique and create a lasting performance boost on and off the green.



### POST-REHABILITATION CONDITIONING

It's no secret that Pilates can be modified and personalized to meet the delicate needs of clients with injuries or special conditions.

Post-rehabilitation zeros in on the various areas of the body which are most often affected by injury or other health-related conditions. Learning the anatomy and biomechanics of an ideally functioning lumbo-pelvic region, shoulder girdle or knee, the dysfunctional patterns that can be developed when things go wrong as well as exercise progressions to rebuild normal muscle action and movement patterning are part of this type of training.

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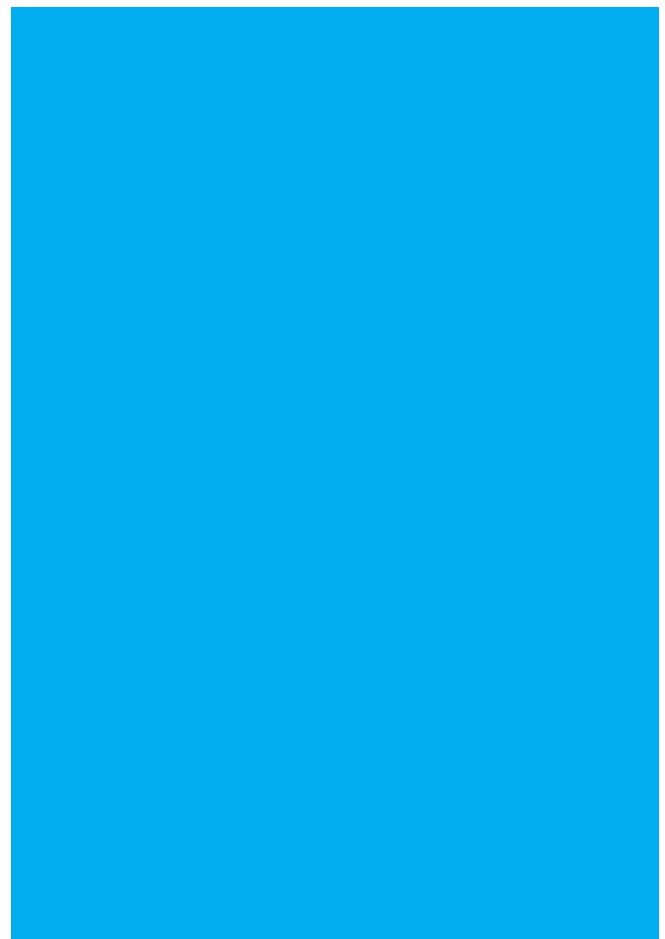
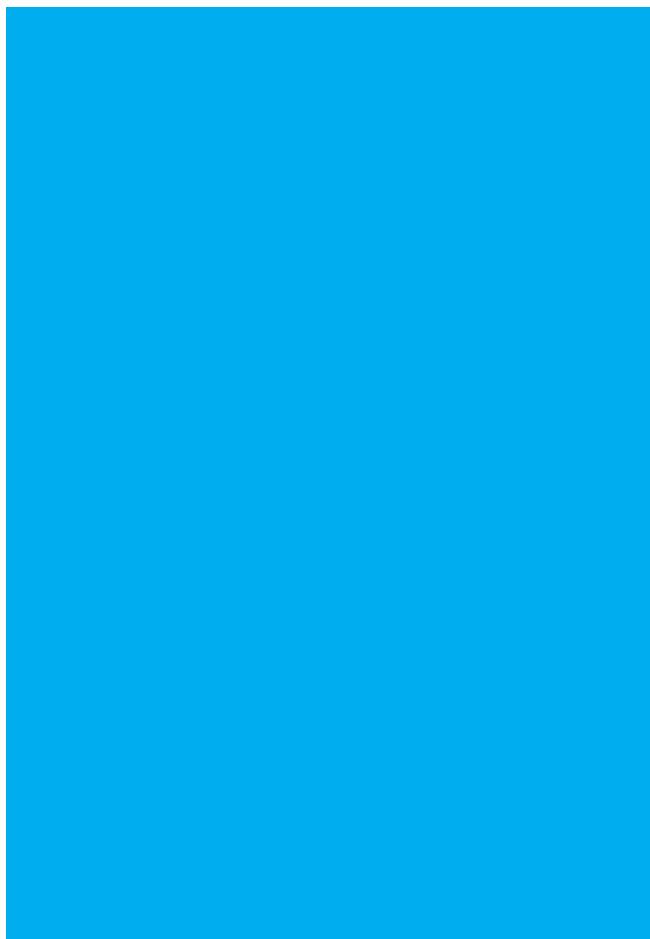


### ACTIVE FOR LIFE

Pilates is an exercise method for a lifetime and this program will

teach instructors how to develop programming geared towards the active aging population. These workshops will show participants how to adapt Pilates principles, and modify essential-level exercises to create workouts for older clients. Exercises target wide ranging clientele from the active Boomers to those with severely restricted mobility who are better suited to working in a chair.

For these individuals, instructors learn how to develop Matwork-based or seated workout routines on other pieces of Pilates equipment, aimed at strengthening the muscles of the core,



torso, arms and legs which in turn can increase mobility, flexibility, balance and endurance, to help prevent injury and improve function in daily activities.



### PRE & POSTNATAL

Pilates is a great way to help pre and postnatal clients stay in shape and maintain a healthy weight. By focusing on current medical information, exercise guidelines and research available on pregnancy and movement, instructors can learn how to consider anatomical and

physiological changes, risk factors and movement restrictions when designing safe and effective workouts for all trimesters.

Appropriate exercise adaptations, incorporating a variety of tools and equipment are discussed, considering factors such as pre-pregnancy fitness level, health concerns and fitness goals. Postnatal programming focuses on reactivating the pelvic floor, transversus abdominis and obliques as well as increasing lumbo-pelvic stability and restoring ideal postural alignment.

### WHERE TO TRAIN

Some facilities seeking to attract a specific client demographic opt to host specialty track workshops at their locations. By doing so the entire staff receives the training simultaneously and become specialists in a particular area, strengthening the facility's marketing campaign.

It's also a great way to introduce a Pilates program, maintain instructor credentials through Continuing Education Credits and to generate extra revenue and exposure.

As a Pilates or fitness instructor you know that each client is unique. Specialty tracks are a great way to acquire the knowledge and skills you need to provide safe and effective workouts to individuals with very diverse challenges and specific requirements. Becoming more marketable will enable you, or your club's personal trainers, to attract new clients and retain them for long-term. That's what this business is all about. **OSF**

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