



Career

WaterART Personal Training

Opportunity:

Why emphasize the need for Personal Trainers with specialized Aqua training? Can a certified Land Trainer not simply transfer their skills to aqua training? Simple answer – “No!” Land trainers must deal with gravity; aqua trainers can use buoyancy and other water properties to reduce the gravity effect and harness the inertia and mass properties of water to permit unique training that would be difficult on land. On land, upward movement is “hard” whereas in the water, upward movement in the water is easy. Because of these fundamental differences and several others, a personal trainer without this understanding may do more harm than good in the water!

Can a lifeguard not simply transfer their swimming skills to aqua fitness and/or aqua personal training? Again – “No!” Swimming (horizontal) and aqua training (vertical) apply properties of water quite differently. And of course, the lifeguard isn’t trained to assess and program for individual needs. Not convinced? Attend aqua fit programs in pools where lifeguards or land trainers are often seconded to lead aqua classes! Why are those hands up in the air? (as one example).



Aren’t group aqua training classes enough to meet client needs? Examine the land personal fitness industry. It is huge – the revenue is larger for most facilities than from group exercise programs. Why? Because consumers are willing to pay for individualized attention for land training. They feel that personal attention leads to faster progress, just as in the water, individualized swim lessons tend to produce faster progress.

We know that land training is huge, but the public and facilities are just discovering the water training market. Enlightened trainers and the public are realizing what most water professionals already appreciate: the aqua client can train with more intensity over a longer time, without the wear-and-tear on joints and spine that are possible from land training. There are huge market possibilities. It is astounding that many facilities still continue to utilize land professionals to train clients in the water or don’t take advantage of the market by offering personnel trained for this niche.

There is a huge difference between the two modalities: land vs. water. It is difficult to imagine that the land personal trainer would have the tools to assess and program individuals for water training. Equally difficult to imagine that a group instructor (land or water) would have the tools to assess and program for individuals.

There’s a clear need and opportunity for Aqua Personal Training because water provides the versatility to program safely and effectively for so many fitness levels and medical conditions.

For successful Aqua Personal Training, we need to really understand that:

- 1) Aqua Trainer responsibilities and capabilities are different from Land Trainers – they need to know understand and use water properties effectively.
- 2) Personal Trainers need unique skills compared to Group Instructors:
 - To motivate the unmotivated
 - To educate the uneducated
 - To give an alternative to group instruction
 - To produce results! Efficiently!
- 3) Marketing Personal Aqua Training is unique: an alternative to land, safe and
- 4) Effective when presented by a WaterART certified Aqua PT.

To design effective programs, an Aquatic Personal Trainer must be a master of the water environment and possess many water-appropriate tools to specifically target the various components of fitness. These programs are based on each individual's health needs, interests and desired goals. These are NOT generic programs or canned routines, but programs designed to attain specific goals developed from physical assessments, lifestyle questionnaires, program preferences and personalities. Programs may be designed, and are available, for any of the following: weight management, strength & endurance, flexibility, relaxation, mind & body integration, cardio-respiratory improvement, sport specific conditioning, martial arts training, special populations and/or medical conditions, or simply general health and maintenance.

An Aquatic Personal Trainer will help the client achieve his individual, specific goals whether they're starting a basic fitness program or aiming for higher fitness levels. Most successful people are busy and don't have time to spend on things that don't work. Personal trainers can empower client with exercise science researched programs that are safe and effective. They use specialized knowledge, specialized techniques, top of the line equipment, and they are part of the health care continuum.

Research confirms that land exercise movements cannot simply be dropped into the water environment – intensity and results will differ. Really understanding water properties and using water specific techniques and equipment are key to programs that are progressive, interesting and professional.

Personal trainers in the water educate the client how their body works; they empower the client with unique body awareness and balance. Paramount for results is to use progressive techniques to help the client learn and execute movements correctly. This is a cost-effective way to help individuals improve their body and quality of life.

Personal training provides advantages over group classes when trying to train participant to perform the correct, effective techniques that will lead to achieving individual goals. Group classes are usually comprised of athletes and beginners of all ages and levels of fitness skills. Although everyone is cued to go at their own pace and perform the exercises that feel good how can we expect that a client will fine tune their movement if they do not know joint action or exercise progression?

Sometimes the participant is suitable for the level of the class, but more often they are not. An instructor cannot watch all of the participants all the time. Even with the best quality teaching, imperfections develop leading to poor technique and body alignment. It is easy for a participant to get lost in a large group and never realize they are being offered corrections. Potential clients may come from a group class situation, so the personal trainer must sell a specific service that group exercise does not offer. The service offered is: specificity of training, or training for purpose, and for results.

Differences in Personal Training: Land vs. Water	
LAND PT	WATER PT
With gravity Work against gravity	With multi-dimensional resistance & buoyancy All upward movement is ASSISTED
Can fall on land	Built in protection – support against falls, bandage effect of hydrostatic pressure
Easier to facilitate	Need a pool i.e. Hotel, condo, backyard, club, school, YMCA
Pain & need 48 hours recover for strength training	Less pain Quicker recovery from anaerobic training
Breathing fatigues prior to muscles	Muscles fatigue prior to breathing
Sweat	Don't feel the sweat
Equipment more expensive: machines, bands, tubing, balls, steps, free weights, barbells, treadmills, elliptical, Stairmaster, bicycles	Equipment less expensive: belts, cuffs, kickers, bands, paddles, tubing, tethers, steps. However, underwater treadmills, bikes are available.
Indoors or outdoors No skin rashes	Indoors or outdoors Skin irritation possible: try saline pools (salt water pools) better on environment
Common – people know what personal training is = 40 billion dollar industry	Not popular- people do not know difference between swimming or land personal training = marketing potential
Require CPR – First Aid skills	Require life guarding skills unless in a public pool with a guard
Need to be extremely careful with elderly, new to fitness, medical conditions, hard for obese to “load” joints	Easier to program intensity especially for multi-medical conditions – orthopedic – obesity clientele
Loading from 0-100% (multiple by 4 times power or jumping)	Loading of joints from 0-50% of body weight (multiple by 2 for jumping or power moves if at waist depth)
Many types of programs: circuits, interval, jogging, ball, tubing, step, Pilates, yoga, sports conditioning, pre-natal, rehabilitation, martial arts etc	Many types of programs: circuits, interval, jogging, ball, tubing, step, Pilates, yoga, sports conditioning, pre-natal, rehabilitation, martial arts etc.
Orientation is always better but not critical	Need to teach basic water skills – orientation critical i.e. how to scull, how to balance, how to recover from a fall, how to change body weight, how to work with currents , how to travel