

ROLE AND SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR THE PERSONAL TRAINER



READING ASSIGNMENT

You should now have completed the reading of Chapter 1 of the *ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition*. Carefully review the Summary Review below, as this content highlights valuable information that is particularly relevant to fitness professionals, both in importance and frequency of application or occurrence in the practice of personal training.

Then, answer the Chapter 1 Review Questions and check your answers using the corresponding Answer Key. Review the section in the *ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition*, associated with any questions you may have missed.

SUMMARY REVIEW

Personal trainers must be prepared to work with clients ranging in age from youth to older adults, and ranging in health and fitness status from overweight and sedentary to athletic.

Personal trainers should have a solid understanding of the research linking physical activity to health, as well as knowledge of guidelines for physical activity, such as the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* developed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

THE ALLIED HEALTHCARE CONTINUUM

Personal trainers should understand the roles of the professionals in the following specialty areas within allied healthcare, as well as the role of fitness professionals in relation to other members of the healthcare team:

- Physicians/nurse practitioners
- Rehabilitation professionals
- Nutritional support
- Mental health practitioners
- Alternative healthcare (licensed) professionals
- Trainers/coaches/instructors

THE ACE PERSONAL TRAINER CERTIFICATION

A qualified and effective ACE Certified Personal Trainer has an understanding of the following concepts:

- Definition of “scope of practice”
- Scope of practice for ACE Certified Personal Trainers
- Knowledge, skills, and abilities of the ACE Certified Personal Trainer
- Education and experience required to service clients
- Preparation recommendations and testing requirements for sitting for the ACE Personal Trainer Exam Certification
- Professional responsibilities and ethics
 - ✓ ACE Code of Ethics
 - ✓ ACE Professional Practices and Disciplinary Procedures

- ✓ Certification period and renewal
- ✓ Client privacy
- ✓ Referral
- ✓ Safety
- ✓ Supplements and other nutrition-related concerns
- ✓ Ramifications of offering services outside the scope of practice

ACCREDITATION OF ALLIED HEALTHCARE CREDENTIALS

The ACE Certified Personal Trainer should understand the importance of third-party accreditation from a credible organization like the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, as well as the following concepts related to the advancement of personal training within the allied healthcare environment:

- Recognition from the fitness and health industry
- Recognition from the education community
- Recognition from the department of labor

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Every personal trainer should have a general idea of the career path that he or she wants to follow. After setting a career plan, a personal trainer can use it as a template for researching and selecting continuing education to work toward his or her goals by understanding the opportunities available in the following areas:

- Continuing education
 - ✓ Advanced knowledge
 - ✓ Specialization
- Degrees
- Additional fitness certifications
- New areas of expertise within allied healthcare

GETTING STARTED

This chapter introduces the role of the ACE Certified Personal Trainer within the healthcare community and provides guidelines for staying within the defined scope of practice. This chapter also covers safety concerns in a fitness facility, as well as consultation and privacy issues. After completing this chapter, you will have a better understanding of:

- The knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with being a successful personal trainer
- The ACE Code of Ethics
- ACE's Professional Practices and Disciplinary Procedures
- How the ACE certification has received recognition from the fitness and health industry, the education community, and the department of labor
- The importance of a career-development plan

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- The **PRIMARY** purpose of professional certifications is to _____.
 - Provide the professional with additional education to enhance his or her knowledge, skills, and abilities
 - Enhance a professional's resume for employment and/or higher compensation
 - Protect the public from harm by assessing if candidates meet established levels of minimum competence
 - Confirm a candidate's understanding of key concepts following the completion of a bachelor's degree
- Which of the following is **WITHIN** the scope of practice for personal trainers?
 - Counseling clients through life experiences that negatively impact program adherence
 - Screening clients for exercise limitations to facilitate exercise program design
 - Evaluating client injuries while designing rehabilitative exercise programs
 - Recommending effective supplements for clients who skip meals
- Which of the following is **OUTSIDE** the ACE Certified Personal Trainer scope of practice?
 - Developing exercise programs for clients who have type 2 diabetes and medical clearance for exercise
 - Providing guidance, motivation, and feedback to empower individuals to adhere to their exercise programs
 - Implementing post-rehabilitative exercise programs for clients following their physicians' recommendations
 - Compiling detailed nutritional programming and specific meal planning recommended by their physician
- At what point does a candidate for the ACE Personal Trainer Certification (or any other ACE certification) agree to uphold the ACE Code of Ethics?
 - While registering for an ACE certification exam
 - Once the candidate earns his or her first ACE certification
 - Upon receiving a printed copy of the ACE Code of Ethics with the printed ACE certification
 - When accepting his or her first job as an ACE Certified Personal Trainer
- ACE Certified Personal Trainers must complete a minimum of 20 hours of continuing education every two years to maintain their certifications. The **PRIMARY** reason ACE has established this minimum continuing-education requirement is to help ACE Certified Personal Trainers _____.
 - Earn promotions so they can advance their careers
 - Increase their earning potential by adding new specialty certificates to their resumes
 - Enhance their résumés to attract more clients
 - Stay current with the latest exercise science research and guidelines for fitness and health
- Which of the following is **WITHIN** the ACE Certified Personal Trainer scope of practice?
 - Helping clients gain a better understanding of portion sizes and healthful foods so they can make better choices
 - Providing clients with recipes and shopping lists for four weeks to get them on track with healthful eating
 - Conducting 24-hour dietary recalls to help clients learn where they have micronutrient deficiencies
 - Educating clients about resting metabolic rate (RMR) and the need to consume fewer calories than RMR to lose weight

7. A personal trainer who wants to provide massage to help clients who have tight or sore muscles can do so **ONLY** if _____.
- A. The personal trainer has extensive knowledge about the benefits of massage
 - B. The client gives his or her consent for the massage
 - C. The personal trainer becomes a licensed massage therapist
 - D. The massage therapist is not available and the personal trainer has some training
8. What do most allied health certification programs, such as the credentials for registered dietitians, occupational therapists, and nurse practitioners, have in common with certifications from the American Council on Exercise?
- A. They require a bachelor's degree as a minimum eligibility requirement
 - B. They are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies
 - C. They share the same collective scope of practice in allied health
 - D. They meet the competency-based exam requirement for licensure in most states.
9. Which of the following is **MOST** accurate regarding personal trainers recommending supplements to their clients?
- A. The personal trainer should only recommend those supplements covered under his or her professional liability insurance.
 - B. Unless the personal trainer has other credentials such as an R.D. or M.D., he or she does not possess the qualifications to legally recommend supplements.
 - C. The personal trainer should become educated about the specific supplements before making any recommendations.
 - D. Due to potential complications from taking supplements with other medications, personal trainers should recommend only plant-based supplements.
10. ACE Certified Personal Trainers looking to advance their knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond their ACE Personal Trainer Certification would be **BEST** served by completing what type of continuing education?
- A. A second NCCA-accredited personal-trainer certification
 - B. A workshop that focuses on how to incorporate supplementation into a nutrition plan
 - C. An online personal-training certification from an organization that is not NCCA-accredited
 - D. An advanced fitness certification that is NCCA-accredited
11. As a general rule, ACE recommends that candidates allow _____ of study time to adequately prepare for the ACE Personal Trainer Certification Exam.
- A. 1 to 2 months
 - B. 3 to 4 months
 - C. 5 to 6 months
 - D. 7 to 8 months

ANSWER KEY

1. C. Protect the public from harm by assessing if the candidates meet established levels of minimum competence

The primary purpose of a certification is always to protect the public from harm by assessing if the professional meets established levels of competence in the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the job in a safe and effective manner.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 7

2. B. Screening clients for exercise limitations to facilitate exercise program design

Personal trainers screen clients, design exercise programs, coach, and refer to more qualified members of the healthcare continuum as necessary. Fitness professionals do not “counsel,” “rehabilitate,” or recommend supplements to clients.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 9–10

3. D. Compiling detailed nutritional programming and specific meal planning recommended by their physician

Personal trainers can show clients how to utilize the tools available at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov or educating them about the recommendations in the *Dietary Guidelines*. Clients looking for more detailed nutritional programming, such as specific meal plans, recipes, or recommendations for nutritional supplements, should be referred to a registered dietitian.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 8–9

4. A. While registering for an ACE certification exam

Every individual who registers for an ACE certification exam must agree to uphold the ACE Code of Ethics throughout the exam process and as a professional, should he or she earn an ACE certification. Exam candidates and ACE Certified Personal Trainers must have a comprehensive understanding of the code and the consequences and potential public harm that can come from violating each of its principles.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 13

5. D. Stay current with the latest exercise science research and guidelines for fitness and health

Continuing education is a standard requirement in healthcare to help ensure that professionals stay up-to-date with the latest research in their respective fields for the protection of the public. By completing continuing education, ACE Certified

Professionals can stay current with the latest findings in exercise science and keep their services in line with the most recent guidelines for fitness and healthcare.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 13–14

6. A. Helping clients gain a better understanding of portion sizes and healthful foods so they can make better choices

Personal Trainers can show clients how to utilize the tools available at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov or educating them about the recommendations in the *Dietary Guidelines* to help them gain a better understanding of healthful foods and make better choices. Clients who are looking for more detailed nutritional programming, such as specific meal plans, recipes, or recommendations for nutritional supplements, should be referred to a registered dietitian.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 8–9

7. C. The personal trainer becomes a licensed massage therapist

A personal trainer can provide education about the benefits of massage, but cannot perform hands-on massage therapy for the client, as this would constitute the practice of massage without a license. A personal trainer can teach the client self-myofascial release techniques, such as using a foam roller.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 16–17

8. B. They are all accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies.

The NCCA has reviewed and accredited the certification programs for most professions within allied healthcare, including the credentials for registered dietitians, occupational therapists, athletic trainers, podiatrists, nurses, nurse practitioners, massage therapists, personal trainers, group fitness instructors, and advanced fitness professionals.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 18

9. B. Unless the personal trainer has other credentials such as an R.D. or M.D., he or she does not possess the qualifications to legally recommend supplements

Personal Trainers can show clients how to utilize the tools available at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov or educating them about the recommendations in the *Dietary Guidelines* to help them gain a better understanding of healthful foods and make better choices. Clients who are looking for more detailed

nutritional programming, such as specific meal plans, recipes, or recommendations for nutritional supplements, should be referred to a registered dietitian.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 8–9

10. D. An advanced fitness certification that is NCCA-accredited

By gaining advanced knowledge and skills in a specialized area, a personal trainer can enhance the training services provided to clients. Areas of specialization should be selected by the personal trainer based on his or her desired career path, interests, and client base. The area of specialization should also fall within the scope of practice, or provide the

trainer with knowledge that is complementary to what he or she does within the scope of practice.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 21

11. B. 3 to 4 months

There is no single course of study for individuals looking to enter the profession of personal training. Each candidate must select his or her own path based on time, financial resources, learning styles, and personal factors. As a general rule, ACE recommends that candidates allow approximately three to four months of study time on average to adequately prepare for the ACE Personal Trainer Certification Exam.

ACE Personal Trainer Manual, 5th Edition, p. 11