

# How to Make Money in Fitness with High-Intensity Personal Training

Starting a fitness business is challenging. However, it may also be a very profitable industry to work in. If you're wondering how to make money in fitness, whether you're someone who is passionate about exercise or high intensity training (HIT), or a business owner who wants to venture into another industry, here are ideas on how to start your HIT business.

## What is High-Intensity Training (HIT)?

High intensity training is so ambiguous. It means so many different things to so many people. Everybody has his own version of what HIT is and assume it's the same, but it rarely is. So, let's start off by defining what is high intensity training?

The high intensity training that I'm referring to is the original high intensity training popularized by [Arthur Jones](#) and a few other names like Mike Mentzer, Dorian Yates, Ken Hutchins, Dr. Ellington Darden, and then most recently Dr. Doug McGuff and John Little in their book [Body by Science](#).

Basically, it's training to muscular failure with lower volumes and lower frequency, once or twice a week, and sessions usually last about 30-minutes on average.

In a business context, a typical high intensity training business is focused on 1-on-1 and small group training (3-5 clients per trainer). Clients are normally being supervised by a personal trainer or an expert coach. Typically, these are small boutique studios ranging from 500 to 2000+ square footage and they will use an array of different equipment. The most popular equipment models are [MedX](#) and [Nautilus](#) exercise machines, which have great resistance curves, low friction, and shorter weight travel which means less momentum. Generally, these machines are of higher quality, safer to use, and produce results more effectively for clients.

## Why high-intensity training as a business?

There are a number of reasons why this business model is superior to other fitness concepts out there.



Firstly, if you're passionate about delivering effective, efficient, safe workouts and making a massive impact in people's lives then there is really nothing else out there as appealing as HIT.

When you look into the actual research such as Brad Schoenfeld's paper titled [No Time to Lift?](#), which shows how effective 13 minutes of high intensity resistance training can be. What we are starting to see is less is more. In fact, you produce all the benefits that you want from exercise including cardiovascular fitness, fat loss, cognitive health, bone mineral density and anti-aging benefits from a very small, focused dose of high intensity safe exercise.

Next thing is HIT business strongly appeals to high-income demographic, so it allows for a premium price point. Now, a lot of our competitors are charging a fee per hour so they could be charging \$60 for a 1-hour personal training session. But a HIT session is typically 30-minutes so you can charge \$60 for per session, then you are looking at \$120 per hour a day. That's a 2x advantage right off the bat. So, if you're thinking how to make money in fitness, this business model is a no brainer.

Relatively, high intensity training business has also high revenue per square footage versus other fitness businesses. The square footage of a HIT studio is typically quite small ranging from 500 to 2,000 sq. ft. And yet, the revenue per square foot in some cases is 10x greater. To give you some real numbers on this, there are high intensity training studios which are around a thousand sq. ft. earning \$1 million to \$1.5 million per year. That's approximately \$1000 per sq. ft., which is a very high revenue per square footage.

It requires a relatively low capital investment. You can get started with as little as \$10,000 to \$20,000 in terms of leasing a small space, getting some basic equipment, and getting a relatively low rent. Obviously, you can invest a lot more if you want to buy lots of equipment like a whole line of [MedX](#) and [Nautilus](#) and you want a beautiful studio in an optimal location. If you spend around \$100,000 to \$200,000 then you can really start with something great. Again, another strong reason to consider a boutique fitness business as well.

The next thing to touch on is strong cash flow. In a HIT business you can charge clients at the first of the month and have a recurring revenue. While in a construction company you must spend hundreds of thousands and millions of dollars on the project and not

actually be paid on that project for the next 30, 60, 90 days following completion. You are getting cash revenue ahead of those sessions for that month, so it's got a much stronger cash flow from that perspective.

Lastly, it's a long term attractive saleable asset. The cool thing about a high intensity training studio is that it is valued and sell for high multiples especially if you have clients on recurring subscription memberships and you have good systems. Maybe you're planning for retirement you want to be able to sell your business for as high a figure as possible.

### **How do you actually get started?**

Hopefully at this point you understand what high intensity training is, what a high intensity training business is, and why it's a very, very attractive business concept. So how do you actually get started?

The first thing I'd recommend you do is read the book [Traction: Get a Grip on Your Business](#) by Gino Wickman. This book is going to help you create a long-term vision and plan for your business. So, a high-level business plan which is going to help you narrow your focus, help you with decisions around marketing, pricing, and other aspects of business.

Now that you have a business plan. The next thing you need to create is a basic financial plan which is going to help you understand the approximate investment and time to break even and generate a profit in the business. Basically, the nitty-gritty on how to make money in fitness. If you need financial planning and cash flow templates, please go to [highintensitybusiness.com/free](http://highintensitybusiness.com/free) and get started in that financial planning right way.

The next thing you want to focus on is to invest in getting certified and building your skills in high intensity training. I would look at [hituni.com](http://hituni.com) for their personal training courses which are wonderfully put together and really easy to work through. If you want a 10% discount of any of those courses just use my coupon code which is HIB10 or just go to [hituni.com/HIB](http://hituni.com/HIB).

Next step is read [Body by Science](#) to really learn the science and rationale behind this fitness concept. Now, the [HiTuni](#) courses will give you the information and learning but reading [Body by Science](#) will deepen your understanding of the value of the type of fitness service that you'll be providing.

Once you have completed all those steps, the next thing you want to do is find a location to start your business. Again, the square footage that we're looking is ranging from 500 to 2,000 sq. ft. You could look at providing building a virtual business providing virtual 1-on-1 personal training to clients. You could also work inside an existing facility to earn your stripes and get some experience or train people at their homes. There's a number of different permutations that this business can take.

### **Objections and Challenges**

Obviously, with the way technology is moving and things like COVID causing all these lockdowns, online fitness has really, really taken off. However, online fitness programs aren't very competitive and quite hard to sell. That's the first barrier. Although they can be very profitable if you've got a private website where you got content and build a client base to access that content.

The other concern I have for an online fitness business concept is accountability. For high intensity training to actually work for most people needs accountability. Clients need supervision from a trainer or a coach. Otherwise, it's really low compliance. They won't do the workouts and that's going to produce poor results.

Now, in person training and online services don't have to be mutually exclusive. As long as you have positioned yourself appropriately and explained that the value is in the expertise of the trainer then your clients will pay the same for *virtuals* as they will for studio.

The other concern that might be on your mind especially where we are today is the fear of recession. There're some understandable fears around starting a business and retaining clients in this type of economic climate.

Again, this is the great thing about working with higher-income, busy professionals – their personal training spend is relatively small for them. The fact that the expense of personal training is not that meaningful to our target market combined with the significant ROI in health and time, it's very well protected against the recession.

The last thing is how do you acquire your first clients? Obviously, that's the biggest problem in almost any business: how to generate leads and grow the business? Once you've read [Traction](#) that's going to help you define a strong value proposition and



strategic niche for your business and help create differentiators as well which is going to resonate with the busy professional target market.

However, just like any business, if you start your own business you have to be comfortable with selling or partner with some who are. You need to deliver great workouts and service, but you also need to be comfortable and practice asking for referrals.

Also, networking is a big game changer. You can go to networking groups and help people with their business and ask for referrals. And you have to be comfortable making telephone calls to people on services like [Bark.com](https://www.bark.com/). If that's something you don't want to do, then maybe entrepreneurship is not the best thing for you. Starting a business does require yourself or someone in your team to be very good at sales in order to convert customers to train.

## **Summary**

Just to recap, the first thing you need to do is read [Traction](#). At least complete the vision component to create your business plan called as the Vision Traction Organizer (VTO). The next step is to create your financial plan, your cash flow forecast. You can get templates for that over at [highintensitybusiness.com/free](https://highintensitybusiness.com/free). Then, get certified and buy a personal training course with [HITuni](#). You can go to [hituni.com/HIB](https://hituni.com/HIB) or use the discount code HIB10 for 10% off. Lastly, read [Body by Science](#) and then just get started.

## **Do you struggle to get more clients for your strength training business?**

HIT Business Membership provides how-to guides from successful studio owners so you can start growing your business with confidence.

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