



This is the Decade All About Your Staff

By Pamela Evans, Ph.D.

In the 80's we, as a profession, decided that teaching gymnastics to preschoolers could be a lucrative business (as long as we did not treat them like short 8 year olds). This decade marked the beginning of preschool curriculums and colorful mats. In the 90's the focus shifted to gymnastics as a business – a business that could be profitable. We began coordinating staff shirts and organizing budget sheets. The twenty-first century brought a surge in staff development and education. Certifications and conventions flourished. And now in the twenty-teens, the profession is finally all about staff.

What is the single most important component of keeping kids in your gym? Have a phenomenal staff. It is not the facility with the most mats, or the shiniest awards, or the largest space that draws the most clients -- it is the program with the most charismatic coaches. Students come to learn gymnastics, but stay because they love their teachers. So invest in your staff.

- Pay them a living wage, and offer benefits in the form of vacation, sick and holiday pay, pension programs, health and dental insurance.
- Provide them with education and development opportunities to increase their passion and understanding of the sport.
- Delegate responsibilities so that they feel an ownership in the company.
- Promote camaraderie among your employees, with holiday parties, Saturday bagels, or simply allowing opportunities for daily friendly interactions.
- Offer a variety of classes and work assignments to reduce burn-out.
- Accommodate their schedules to support family, school, and community commitments.



But most importantly, just be nice. Show your employees how much you appreciate their hard work, compassion, and commitment to the students and to your company. Pass along compliments from the parents. Value their opinions. Listen and try to resolve any conflicts or concerns. Not everyone on your staff has to be best friends, but they all need to behave professionally. A positive working environment is much easier to achieve when everyone loves their job. Do everything you can to help them love their job.

We will then all move forward into the twenty-twenties excited to face our next industry shift.

As quoted in Forbes.com, Jamie Gutfreund of the Creative Artists Agency (CAA) Intelligence Group determined that . . .

- 64% of millennials prioritize employment which makes a positive impact on the world.
- 72% would like to be their own boss, but if they do have to work for someone . . .
- 79% want their boss to serve more as a mentor
- 88% prefer a collaborative rather than a competitive work environment
- 74% want flexible work schedules
- 88% want “work-life integration,” intertwining and blending work into life instead of balancing the two

What Millennials Want In The Workplace (And Why You Should Start Giving It To Them)
by Rob Asghar (in Forbes.com dated January 13, 2014)



Dr. Pamela Evans is the owner of Gold Star Gymnastics, one of the largest clubs in Northern California. She began gymnastics classes when she was 6, and started teaching gymnastics in high school. Since this time Pam has coached across the country taking on a different facet of the sport in each gym. Her jobs have included: Preschool & Camp Director, Office & Gym Manager, Artistic Girls & Boys Head Coach (winning the Texas State Championship for Class 7 Boys in 1997!) She has a B.A. in Psychology from Carleton College in Minnesota, her Masters of Fine Arts in Dance from U.C. Irvine (her thesis involved implementing a dance and gymnastics program for children with Down's Syndrome), and a Ph.D. in Dance from Texas Woman's University. Her dissertation research took her into the public schools where she taught middle school students to choreograph. Pam now balances owning and managing Gold Star, presenting at Regional and National Congresses, and spending time with her husband and two children.