BUSINESS SURVEY

First Impressions – what are you communicating to new and potential clients.

The old adage, “You never get a second chance to make a first impression,” holds a lot of truth. The first experience a new member has at your center might be a critical factor in their decision to become a permanent member. Setting your center apart from all other children’s activity centers could be just the strategy you need to increase your enrollment. Included in this Business Tip is a quick survey you can take to help you determine the experience of your first time members. The scoring system is from one to ten, ten being the highest.

SURVEY YOUR BUSINESS:

FROM YOUR MEMBERS PERSPECTIVE

Take a look at your registration procedures from the view of a potential member:

1. Do your potential members have multiple ways of enrolling? (Online, email, phone, visit the center) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Is your registration process simple or complicated? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Is your registration process quick or did it take a long time to complete? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Is the potential member communicated with, or sent a confirmation before their first class? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Is the new member greeted on their first visit? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Are the parent(s) of the new member made to feel welcome? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Is there someone available to answer questions and give directions to the parents of the new member? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. Is there reading material or other information for the new member to learn more about your center? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

YOUR FACILITY

Walk through your facility starting in the parking lot. Try to look at everything from the view of a parent that has never been to your center before.

1. Is your parking lot clean? (Trash, visual junk) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Is your parking lot well lit at night? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Is your center professional looking? (Landscape, exterior, doors, windows) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Is your entry way clean, bright, and does it depict the mission of your center? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Is your registration desk easy to find? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Is your registration desk clean and organized? (Professional looking) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Are your bathrooms clean and stocked? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. Is the viewing area clean and well lit? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
9. Is the children’s activity areas clean and organized? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
YOUR STAFF

Though I may not know your center, I would bet that the success of your program almost directly corresponds to the quality of the people operating your center: instructors, receptionists, managers.

1. Are your receptionists nice, pleasant, helpful, and professional? 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Do your receptionists look professional or appropriate for your center’s activities? 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Are your instructors nice, outgoing, well trained, and professional? 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Do your instructors look professional or appropriate for your center’s activities? 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Are your employees trained to give quality customer service? 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

After you have completed this survey you can do the math to determine how your center scores in these important areas.

I have operated my business since 1983 and have learned that students rarely quit for just one reason. Besides family’s not having enough money to continue, parents stop their child’s lessons for a culmination of reasons: Our phone was busy when they called; we were out of toilet paper once; our front entry was dirty; there were different instructors teaching class; and finally, their children don’t seem to be learning as fast as parents expect. The parents will tell us they are quitting because their child is not learning fast enough, but after further prodding we find we made a multiple of small mistakes that simply stacked up against us. What does this mean for us? Simply this: everything matters! There is no point in which we arrive and our work is done. Our work is never ending, and it is critical that we focus on all the aspects of our business if we want to thrive. How we welcome a new member is just the beginning.

How Can iClassPro Help You Welcome Students?

If you are using the iClassPro Parent Portal on your web site then you are allowing new customers to see your live class schedule and request a class. On the Home page of iClassPro you will see the activity that is happening from your web site.
On the Home page there is a tab labeled “Trial.” Click the Trials tab at the beginning of each day to see if you have new members coming today. Trials you entered manually and those that request online will appear in this list.

![Trials Table](image)

We can see from our Trials list that we have three students that will have their first class with us on January 8. Here is what we do with that information:

1. On the morning of January 8 (or the evening before), we print this list and post it where our instructors receive their attendance notebooks. Our instructors are trained to look at this list each day to see if they have a new member in one of their classes. The instructors are taught to greet the new member in the lobby, meet the parents and take the new member into class with them.

2. We write the names of the new members on our “Welcome” board in the front of the gym. Our Welcome board is a large white board that we have decorated. This simple procedure has proven to be a very positive marketing tool for us. We are trying to communicate that we are personal, and we are professionals that know who is coming each day.

3. We have the new member’s registration card partially filled out in advance for them when they arrive.

4. We give the new parent a one page brochure of the program pertaining to the class their child is experiencing. This brochure is both a description of the program and a resume of sorts, promoting our expertise and experience along with some basic gym policies. This gives parents something to read during their child’s class.

I hope these ideas help, or at the least stirs other ideas you can use to help welcome new members to your center and set you apart from your competition.

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