

## Personal Trainer and Personal Training – The Historical Perspective

Personal training and personal trainers only came into existence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Various cultures from the past including the ancient Greeks, the ancient Romans, and the ancient Mayans had athletic events, athletes practiced the events they participated in, and athletes back then were revered. Working out and having someone help you workout back then was most likely strictly reserved for soldier training for warfare. Working with certified personal trainers, and using professional fitness experts is a new field that only just came into practice during the 1900's.

During the 1800's there were several destination resorts with health spas that offered exercise with a focus in the health spa on working on complete body fitness and health. However many of these resorts used, for those days, contemporary methods of exercise that were unusual and questionable in many regards compared to today's methods of fitness and exercise. The first real fitness expert or personal trainer was the famous health club and fitness guru, Jack Lalanne. Mr. Lalanne was per him, addicted to sugar, which made him "mean and weak" as a kid.

When Jack Lalanne was a teenager he attended a lecture about nutrition. That one lecture changed Jack Lalanne's life along with millions of other people in the California where he was from along with millions of Americans across the United States. After that lecture Jack Lalanne became a dedicated health enthusiast. He stopped eating sugar, changed his diet to a high quality nutrition diet, started working out on a regular basis and he joined several sports while attending high school. When Jack Lalanne turned 22 in 1936 he started the very first health club. He was considered to be a health nut by many doctors.

Jack Lalanne was an aggressive savvy business man that knew he needed clients. To get clients he worked in his community and approached people and let them know if they worked with him that he could help them get in the best shape they had ever been in their lives. By working directly with his health club members essentially Jack Lalanne invented the personal trainer career. In addition to starting the health club industry, developing the personal trainer industry, he also developed or really invented several pieces of exercise equipment. Many of the pieces of equipment invented by Jack Lalanne are a regular fixture in health clubs and university athletic facilities today.

When you see a piece of workout equipment with a pulley system for lifting the weight you are looking at one of Jack Lalanne's inventions. After Mr. Lalanne opened his first health club in Oakland, California he continued to open more clubs. Each club had the early version of a personal trainer working there. The staff at Jack Lalanne's health club worked with clients and gave them instruction on how to use the machines properly, how many repetitions to use and how much rest to take between sets. Later on Jack Lalanne sold his entire chain of health clubs which were renamed Bally's after the sale went through.

Close to 20 years after Jack Lalanne opened his first health club the American College of Sports was founded. The idea behind founding this organization and goal was to encourage fitness professionals to become certified, encourage fitness and encourage health in the United States. The American College of Sports was the first organization in the United States to certify personal trainers. Starting in the 1980's, personal training careers became admired and in many instances a great way to make a living or make a fortune depending on whose personal trainer career you looked at. Jack Lalanne and countless others of celebrity personal trainers have made millions offering personal training at local health clubs and offering personal training through video tapes and now DVD sets. In 2011 there are personal

training studios and personal trainers at giant health clubs all offering the direct benefits of using the services of a personal trainer to get fit and stay healthy. If you think about it everyone in the personal training industry has Jack Lalanne to thank for the existence of the industry. Jack Lalanne was truly the father of personal training and the personal trainer industry.