

Best Practices for Tough Client Conversations

Scenario 1

CLIENT: "What do you eat every day? I need to eat what you eat."

Trainer Response Option 1: "My activity level is very different because of what I do all day. My diet would not be appropriate for you. If you are interested in changing your diet, I can recommend a few great nutritionists."

Trainer Response Option 2: "I love that you want to try to eat healthier. My diet works for my body and might not be the best for yours. Here's the name and number of a nutritionist that I recommend."

Scenario 2

CLIENT: "I need to do extra ab work today. I drank too much last night and my stomach is fat."

Trainer Response Option 1: "Have you had enough water today? Drinking more than normal can definitely make you feel bloated, and staying hydrated will help."

Trainer Response Option 2: "Did you have fun? Life is all about balance, so allow yourself to enjoy a few drinks every once in a while. You don't need to punish yourself. Let's get moving and I'm sure you'll start to feel better."

Scenario 3

CLIENT: "How many miles do I have to run to burn off the extra slice of pizza that I ate last night."

Trainer Response Option 1: "In reality, I'm pretty sure you have already metabolized that slice of pizza! Did you consider that maybe you were just extra hungry last night and your body needed a bit more fuel than you thought?"

Trainer Response Option 2: "What kind of pizza was it? Did you enjoy it?"

Trainer Response Option 3: "If you are interested in getting onto running, we can certainly talk about it, but not as a means to punish yourself for eating pizza."

Scenario 4

CLIENT: "I need to lose 30 pounds before my wedding."

Trainer Response Option 1: "First things first, where did the number 30 come from? When is your wedding?"

Trainer Response Option 2: "I'd be happy to help you improve your health and fitness before your wedding. I'm not sure that a 30-pound weight loss is appropriate for your body and I don't want to promise something that I don't feel is safe to deliver."

Scenario 5

CLIENT: "Here's a picture of the body I want."

Trainer Response Option 1: "What is it about this body that makes you think it's preferable to the one you have?"

Trainer Response Option 2: "There are a lot of factors that determine what our bodies look like. A lot of them are things that you cannot change through diet and exercise- like genetics, height and limb length! I would love to help you improve your fitness, so let's sit down and come up with some realistic and attainable goals for the body that you have."

Scenario 6

CLIENT: "I've done some research and I am considering going dairy, soy and gluten free to help me lose weight more quickly. What do you think?"

Trainer Response Option 1: "If that's something you want to do, I would recommend consulting with a registered dietician or a nutritionist to ensure that you are able to get all of your daily needs."

Trainer Response Option 2: "Your rate of weight loss has been very consistent and you are doing a great job working towards your goals. Why do you suddenly want to make these drastic changes?"

Scenario 7

CLIENT: "I'm so disgusted with my arm fat. How do I get rid of it?"

Trainer Response Option 1: "I'm sorry that you're feeling that way. As you continue to strength train, your body composition will continue to change. What can you point out that you like about your body?"

Trainer Response Option 2: "You have been working so hard, give yourself some credit for your dedication. I know it can be frustrating sometimes, but try to focus on how far you have come. Remember when those arms could barely do one push-up? You did 10 today!"

Scenario 8

CLIENT: "I'm going out tonight, so work me extra hard. I want to earn an extra glass of wine."

Trainer Response Option 1: "You always work hard, so today won't be any different!"

Trainer Response Option 2: "I am happy to work you extra hard, but not because you need to earn a drink. Just be sure to drink an extra glass of water so you aren't dehydrated for tomorrow's workout!"