

Health Clubs Rely on TeamWork to Keep Scheduling In-Shape

CLIENT

In-Shape

LOCATION

Stockton, CA

WEBSITE

inshape.com

With 67 full-service health clubs throughout California, In-Shape employs 11,000 part-time instructors who teach 12,000 health and fitness classes each month.

Those part-time instructors bring an almost infinite array of individual skills, experience, contact information and availability to the scheduling mix. In the past, one of the biggest headaches has been ensuring that there is actually an instructor at the front of the room for each of those 12,000 classes each month. Almost one-third of the classes — or about 4,000 every month — require finding substitutes to fill in because the scheduled instructor can't make it.

It all sounds like a scheduling nightmare. And as recently as three years ago, it was.

Goodbye to Barbaric, Manual Processes

When a new fitness operations manager joined In-Shape Health Clubs in 2015, “they didn't have any technology around scheduling,” she recalled.

Instead, she walked into a situation where:

- Schedules were created on paper, then entered into a Word doc to be posted in the club.
- Managers maintained lists of instructors' contact information and skills by hand in Excel spreadsheets or Word documents, “depending on how organized the manager was.”
- When instructors needed to swap classes because of scheduling conflicts it was all done by phone, with managers calling instructors whose skills matched those needed until someone agreed to take the class. Then, of course, the schedule would be updated by hand.
- Any updates regarding classes required managers to log into the In-Shape website and make the changes manually.

For the previous eight years before she went to work at In-Shape, the fitness operations manager had worked at another fitness chain with hundreds of gyms across the United States that relied on TeamWork, the workforce management software developed by ScheduleSource, to handle its complex scheduling needs.

Because of her experience, one of the first things she did after starting at In-Shape was reach out to ScheduleSource for a solution to replace what she called “a very barbaric, manual process for all pieces of scheduling.”

“We wanted something simplified on our end,” she added.

Within three months, In-Shape had successfully implemented TeamWork, fully automating scheduling and eliminating a ton of frustrating and needless administrative work.

‘We Don’t Have to Manage That’

Before TeamWork, In-Shape had to employ an army of part-time managers to handle the tedious, manual process of scheduling. Now, it has a core management team of 10 who focus on improving the member experience in group fitness classes — rather than scurrying to simply make sure someone is there to lead the class.

Using templates specifically configured by ScheduleSource for In-Shape’s needs, managers do scheduling on a quarterly basis. “The template feature is very helpful,” the fitness operations manager said. “It’s very easy to update mass amounts of shifts if we change a format or change a time during the year.”

The self-service nature of TeamWork makes it possible for instructors to pick up additional classes that need a leader, teach at multiple clubs or swap classes with someone else if they need to — all without manager involvement, with the exception of some last-minute substitutions that arise. And even then, TeamWork provides managers the key to all of their instructors’ contact information and specific skills, making it easier to quickly find a replacement instructor.

“Our instructors usually teach one or two times per week,” the fitness operations manager said. “It’s very part-time. Our system allows them to be more involved if they want and pick up as many classes as they want — or don’t want. We don’t have to manage that.”

In addition to all that TeamWork does to automate internal scheduling, it also provides a “consumer-facing” advantage. The system automatically feeds updated information to the website for In-Shape customers, eliminating the need for managers to log in and make the changes themselves.

“The system is easy to work with,” she said. “It does exactly what you need it to do, whether you’re managing 11,000 employees or managing a couple of hundred. It’s scalable. And it’s great from a management perspective.”

Great Customer Service

“Today,” the fitness operations manager said, “TeamWork is part of the culture at In-Shape.”

“The hardest part was getting the instructors to start using the system to self-serve,” she said. “After that six-month period of making sure people were getting in there, it has been seamless.”

She created a PDF primer for managers and instructors that tells them everything they need to know to get the most out of the system. “That’s all we’ve needed. I’ve never been asked for anything more.”

“The ScheduleSource support team,” she adds, “is easy to work with, provides great customer service and is very responsive. They answer the ‘Why is this happening?’ questions quickly and easily. You don’t have to worry about following up with ScheduleSource staff.”

Contact ScheduleSource today to get started.

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