

Finding Hidden Gems in the Health and Fitness Industry

There you are: all dressed up, ready to work in the fitness field and not sure where to go. There's no reason you can't find that perfect job, the one that lets you grow as a person, professionally, and with a great career path.

The health and fitness industry is beckoning with such jobs as a personal trainer, personal training manager, fitness director, studio managers and more.

In fact, there are an almost infinite number of jobs in the fitness industry, including lots of positions you may never have thought of. That's because many applicants limit their search to health clubs, which are the mainstream of the industry. That leaves lots of other fitness-related businesses begging for good candidates.

Consider these possibilities:

1. Medical Fitness Centers. This country features more than 1,000 medical fitness centers throughout the U.S. Developed and run by hospital groups or health care systems, they are designed to merge healthcare services, wellness, and fitness programs to prevent illnesses or to manage diseases.
2. Municipal park and recreation departments. Cities around the country provide wide-ranging programs for their residents. Positions there vary from lifeguarding, activity coordinators, personal trainers and more. Many park and recreation departments have full blown health clubs with fitness, court sports and aquatics.
3. Golf and country clubs. You don't have to pick up a club to find a good position on a golf course. An estimated 65 percent of private clubs provide fitness programs for their members, including fitness centers, tennis courts and aquatics.
4. Retirement communities. One of the fastest growing segments in housing, an estimated 74 percent of these communities provide a formal wellness program, according to the International Council on Active Aging. These communities need someone to oversee wellness, fitness and social activities as well as assistants for all those posts. They pay well, too.
5. Hotels and resorts. Many offer fitness and aquatic programs. In a resort community like Ormond Beach, where I live, these positions are both bountiful and readily available.
6. Jewish Community Centers and YMCA's. In this country, there are more than 1000 such centers that provide a wide array of fitness programs, aquatics, courses, and activities for people of all ages. These organizations also have their own certification programs as well.

7. Colleges and Universities. Almost every institution of higher learning provides fitness programs for students, faculty and staff. That could be a gym, workout facility and a pool, all of which need fitness personnel.

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