

A dark, moody background image showing a person from behind, sitting at a desk and working on a laptop. A pen is visible on the desk to the right. The overall tone is professional and focused.

HOW TO REMOTE COACH SUCCESSFULLY

OPEX

Introduction

Recently, remote coaching services have exploded in popularity.

The problem? The majority of fitness coaches and trainers aren't equipped with the principles, tools, and systems to effectively coach clients online.

The opportunity? Clients around the world are more open than ever to not only accept, but to demand, a remote coach.

OPEX Fitness pioneered the development of individual program design and remote coaching. In fact, if you were to look to almost all of the industry-leading coaches in the remote world, you could trace their origins back to OPEX education and mentorship from our founder, James FitzGerald.

Remote coaching is no longer a niche service offering for serious fitness enthusiasts and athletes. Today, it's become increasingly popular for all kinds of clients to seek out expert online coaching.

If you want to survive and then thrive online, you need to provide more than just any training program. With the entertainment factor of in-person coaching removed, you now need to create stronger personal relationships, connect them to lifestyle and nutritional habits, and deliver personalized programs that are clearly connected to your clients' unique goals and environments.


To help you navigate this new landscape we've put together this guide to give you the foundational knowledge to start a successful remote coaching business and deliver your clients a valuable service: **individual program design**.

This guide is broken into three sections representative of our [Coaching Certificate Program](#): **the Coach, the Client, and the Professional**.

In the **Coach**, you'll learn the principles that you need to know to be an effective remote coach.

In the **Client**, you'll learn how to put your knowledge into practice with a clear method of delivering remote coaching.

In the **Professional**, you'll learn how to create a remote coaching business with efficient systems.



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COACH

Remote or in-person, it's essential to understand the basic principles of behavior, exercise, and nutrition. On top of that, you also need to have your own principles as a coach.

YOUR PRINCIPLES

It is very easy to see remote coaching as an opportunity for easy cash or a lower cost way to deliver your service to clients, but that will not be good enough to sustain you in the long-run.

Why do you really want to coach clients online and what is your vision for your remote coaching business? To have this vision you will need to develop principles or fundamental truths that keep you grounded and moving forward.

Spend 5 minutes and write down why you want to coach clients remotely and what your principles are as a coach.

BEHAVIOR PRINCIPLES

One of the most important parts of remote coaching is being able to develop strong relationships online. For your clients to perceive value from your coaching, you must connect them to the “why” behind their program design.

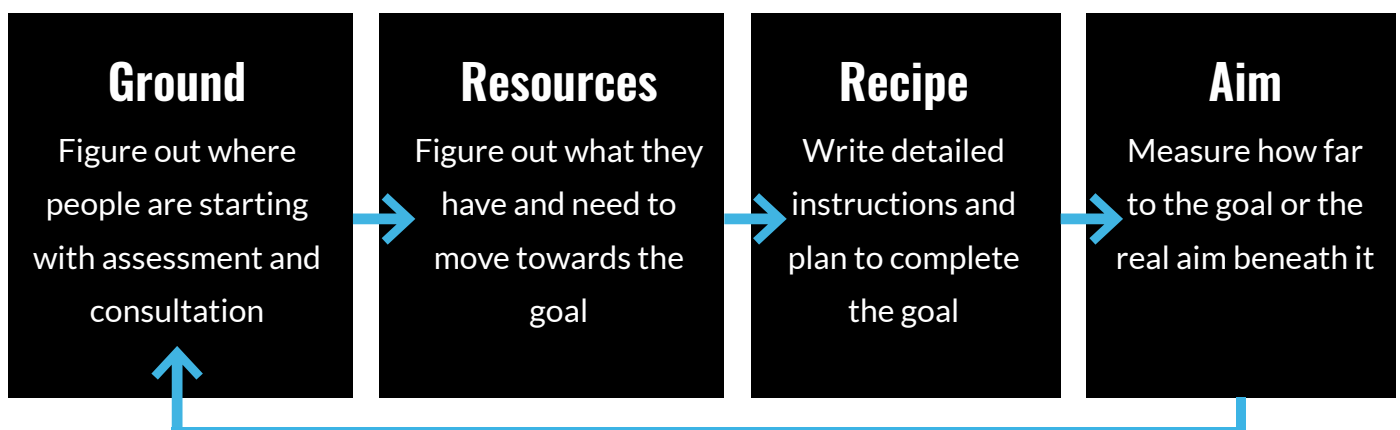
If you don’t understand the basic principles of human communication and relationship building, it will be very challenging to connect your clients to their training and nutrition programs, especially in an online setting.

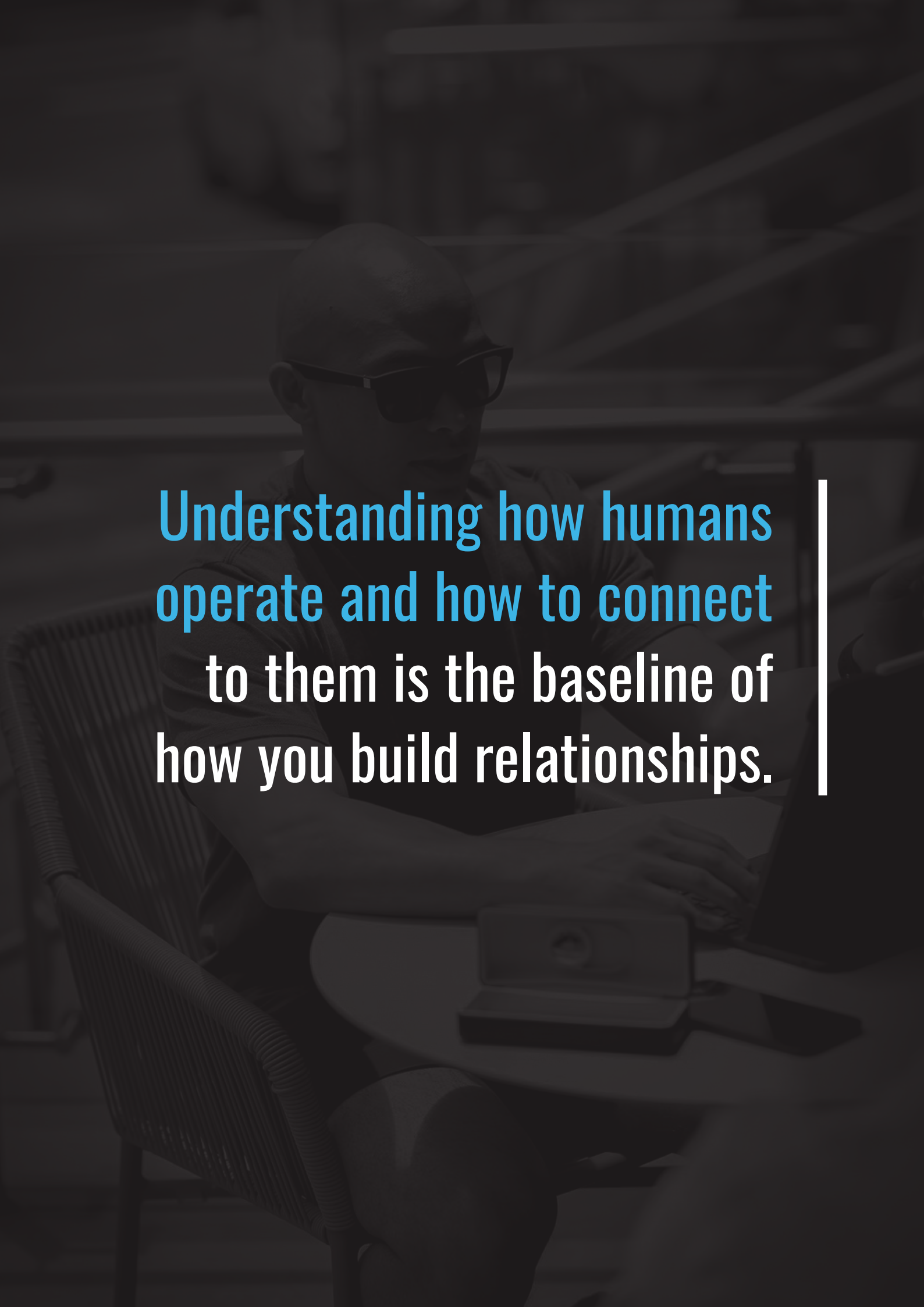
Behavior science principles

Understanding how humans operate and how to connect to them is the baseline of how you build relationships. Key principles include defining priority questions that will help reveal your clients true priorities, as well as learning to recognize the behavior spectrum and different motivation types.

Goal setting

You need to understand how to tactically link your client’s goals to what you can offer them as their coach and how you can get them there. We break this into four steps: **Ground, Resources, Recipe, and Aim.**



A man with glasses is sitting at a desk, working on a laptop. He is wearing a dark shirt and has his hands on the keyboard. On the desk, there is a small, open, light-colored box. The background is a blurred office setting with shelves and other people. The text is overlaid on the image, with the first part in blue and the rest in white.

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EXERCISE PRINCIPLES

To deliver exercise prescriptions to your clients, you have to understand the basics of exercise principles.

Foundational Science of Exercise

It is very beneficial to understand how basic exercise physiology connects to what your clients are doing in the gym.

Assessment Principles

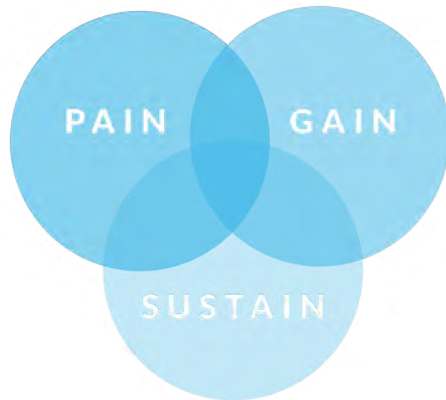
You have to understand where your clients are today to give them what they need. A thorough assessment includes three areas: OPEX Body, Move, and Work.

Read our guide, [Fitness Assessments for New Clients](#), for an in-depth explanation of the comprehensive OPEX assessment.

Program Design Principles

To design effective individual programs to progress your clients towards specific goals, it is important that you are guided by principles of Energy System Training and program design strategy.

Energy System Training is broken into three key areas:



OPEX Gain

Resistance training principles

OPEX Pain

Anaerobic training principles

OPEX Sustain

Aerobic training principles

Program design strategy is how you take assessment results and turn them into a thoughtful prescription. We explain this with the 3 Ps:



Read our guide, [Program and Progress Energy System Training](#), to learn principles of developing the anaerobic and aerobic energy systems.

To continue your program design education, sign up for the [Program Design Essentials Playlist](#) and learn the OPEX principles that have helped thousands of coaches design better programs. Use the code **PDMADESIMPLE** for 50% off your purchase.

NUTRITION PRINCIPLES

Understanding nutrition principles is an outstanding competitive advantage as an online coach. It is a powerful tool to understand how to prescribe a nutrition program that aligns with what your clients need and what they are able to be compliant with.

Nutritional Assessment

You need to understand where your clients are today to understand what the best nutrition prescription is. OPEX Coaches gather this information in the initial consultation and with a detailed food log.

Basic Lifestyle Guidelines Principles

99% of clients will achieve the health and fitness they are after if they honor the Basic Lifestyle Guidelines (BLGs), and these are the most powerful prescriptions you can provide as a coach. Click [here](#) to learn the BLGs.

Fueling Principles

Some clients will need specific prescriptions on the types of food they should eat. Understanding how to manipulate food quality and quantity in various ways will allow you to deliver this service.

Advanced Nutrition Prescriptions

Understanding how to prescribe advanced protocols for clients such as fasting and elimination diets will allow you to serve clients with more specific needs.

CLIENT

Now that you understand basic behavior, exercise, and nutrition principles, you have to understand how to implement these things is a must. In this section we will explain how to put principles into practice and coach your clients online.

EXERCISE PRESCRIPTIONS

The Platform

Use [CoachRx](#) to deliver daily training programs and for daily communication. Click [here](#) to watch a free course on how to use CoachRx to improve program design efficiency.

The Program

Every program design needs to start with an assessment. You can implement the OPEX Body, Move, and Work assessments detailed above online but you will need to give very specific instructions and make sure your clients submit videos and notes on their results.

When getting into programming, It is best practice to design 7 days at a time and on the same day per week for each client, for your productivity and for consistency. Take the time to write a training split for each client at the beginning of every new cycle, so that you have a skeleton guiding you and you aren't guessing when it comes to writing their weekly program design.

It is essential to be clear and detailed in your workout descriptions so that your client understands the intent and exactly how to execute every exercise. At the same time, the exercises you select for your clients should be ones that you know they can perform successfully and shouldn't require videos and cueing for forever.

For example, if your client is starting with back squats, write the exercise as follows in [CoachRx](#).

Back Squat (with example video linked)

@30X0

6-8 reps x 4 sets

Rest 2 minutes

- *Focus on sitting hips back and big toes pressed into ground*
- *Please film last set from side*

Communication

Regular communication around your client's training is essential to develop the relationship and provide them with value. When you onboard each client be sure to set an expectation of how much they should expect to hear from you and how they need to communicate with you. For example, let them know upfront that you will respond to their messages within 3 hours during working hours and that the best place to ask you questions is in [CoachRx](#) messages.

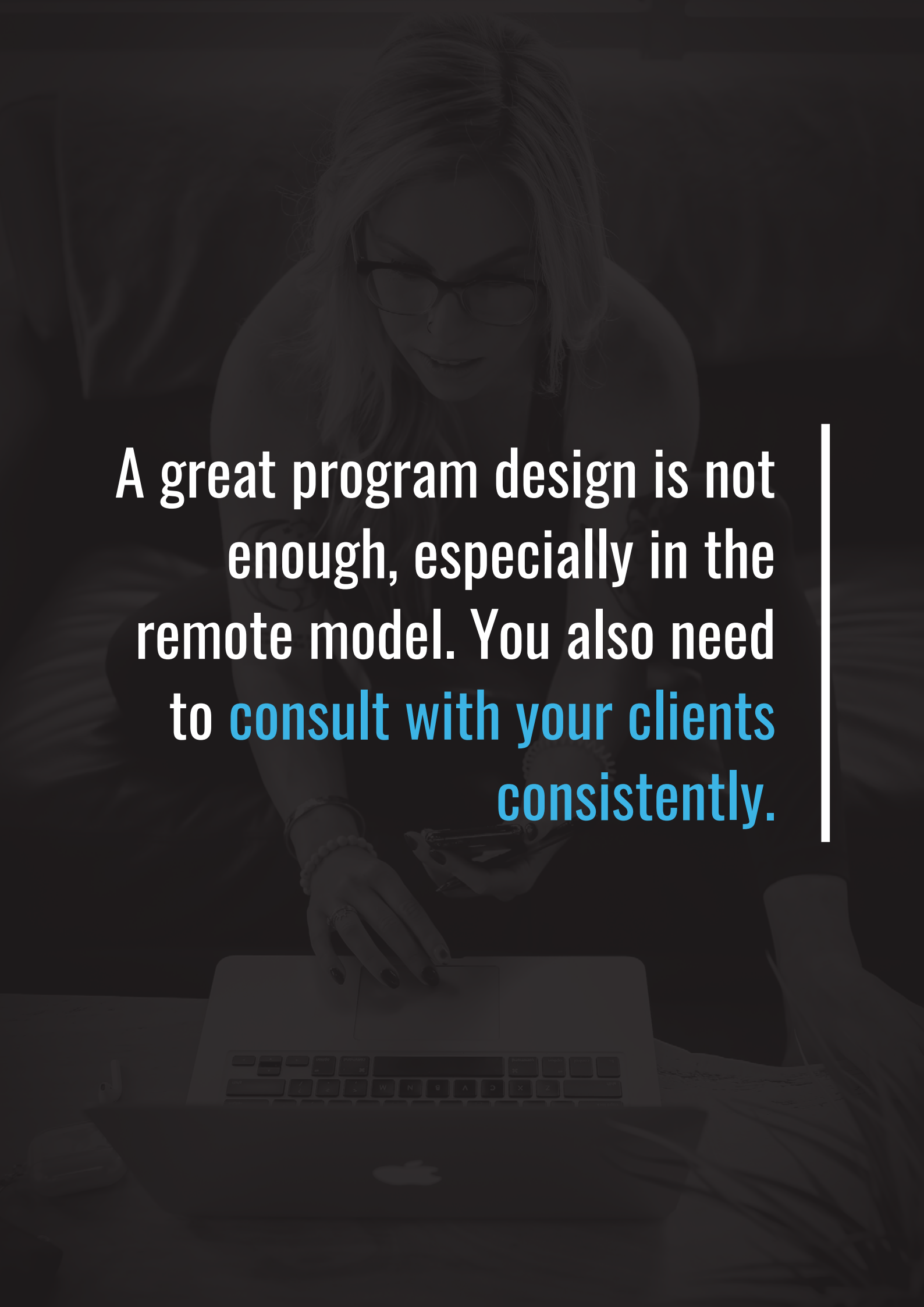
Leaving a comment on each training session, answering any questions or concerns raised in the client results, and commenting on your client's workout videos will help create consistent communication. Use the Loom integration in CoachRx to provide video feedback on your client's training sessions.

CLIENT CHECK-INS

A great program design is not enough, especially in the remote model. You also need to consult with your clients consistently. We recommend a 30-minute video consultation once per month through a platform such as Zoom.

In this consultation, your aim is to hit on the client's behavior, exercise and nutrition to see how prescriptions are going and where you can upgrade. Sometimes the client will steer this conversation and priorities are naturally identified during the consultation, so do not be afraid to spend 30 minutes where the client needs it.

Outside of the monthly consultation, we also recommend weekly client check-ins. Weekly check-ins can be assigned in [CoachRx](#), with personalized questions on the client's nutrition, exercise, and lifestyle.

A woman with blonde hair and glasses is sitting at a desk, looking down at a laptop. She is wearing a dark top and has a bracelet on her left wrist. The background is dark and out of focus. The text is overlaid on the image in white and blue.

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BEHAVIOR & NUTRITION PRESCRIPTIONS

When designing behavior and nutrition prescriptions, prioritize what your client needs and what will bring them closer to their goals.

As coaches, it can be tempting to overcomplicate this, so ensure you are not giving them a prescription outside of what they are capable of or ready for.

Be sure to share your plan with your clients so they understand what is in front of them. If you discuss the plan in a consultation, then send them a message with the key actions after the call.

If prescribing nutrition protocols, use appropriate systems to do so. Cronometer or MyFitness Pal are good platforms to track macros and [CoachRx](#) includes a Lifestyle program design feature that makes tracking healthy habits easy for your clients.

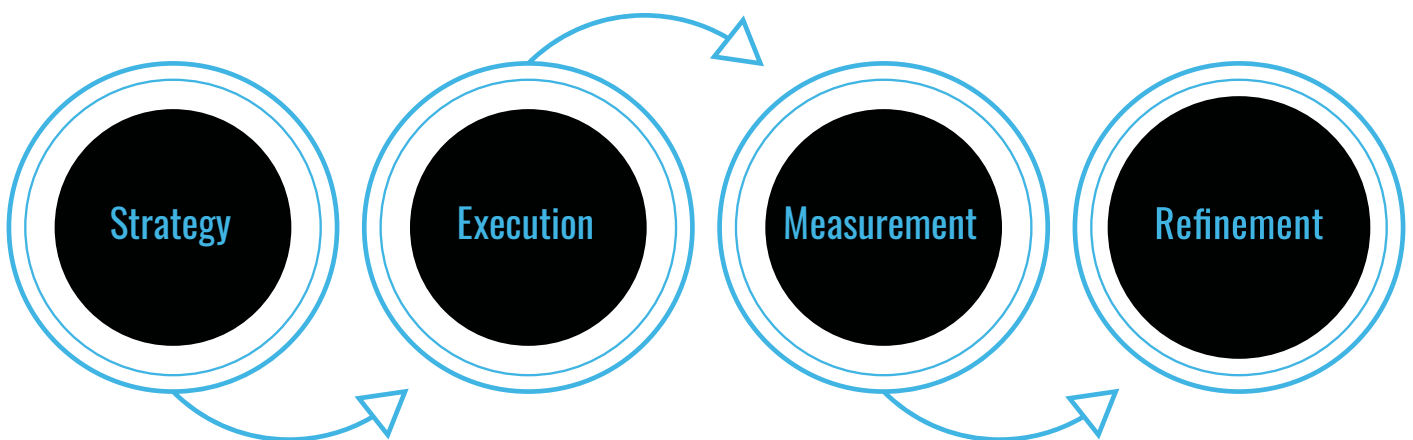
As mentioned above, weekly check-ins on nutrition and behavior compliance are a great way to ensure connection with your clients. For example, ask them the question, “*Did you only have alcohol 1 night this week?*”, if this was a behavior you are working on.

PROFESSIONAL

Once you understand what you want to do, why you want to do it, the principles of delivering that service effectively, and the method you're going to deliver, it's time to develop the brand, client retention and acquisition strategies, and systems to deliver your service effectively and consistently.

That is what Professional coaches do for their coaching businesses.

Your remote coaching business relies on **SEMR**:



Answer the key questions for each below to evaluate your remote coaching business.

STRATEGY

What is the message you're going to send out to your clients and audience everyday?

This message will determine your brand.

What strategy will you incorporate to retain your members remotely?

This includes the systems of coaching explained above.

What strategy do you have to acquire new clients?

We believe in marketing in to out. This means starting with people you know and slowly moving outside of that group.

What strategy do you have to grow your business?

Do you want to grow to multiple coaches or any additional staff?

A well laid out strategy builds on itself quarter by quarter and year by year. The goal is for you to think about kaizen: constant improvement. You pick the biggest priorities and continue to build on them.

EXECUTION

Based on your brand strategy, how often will you communicate, with whom will you communicate, what language will you use, what type of images and video will you use, and what is the style with which you'll conduct your daily business?

What technology will you use to work with your clients?

- **Exercise, nutrition and lifestyle programming and client communication:** [CoachRx](#)
- **Billing:** [CoachRx](#)
- **Scheduling of appointments:** Calendly or Acuity
- **Video calls:** Zoom

What does your calendar look like so that you can efficiently work with your clients?

You need to schedule program design time and availability for client consultations.

What marketing platforms will you use and why? When will you post? How will you set up your content calendar to properly get that message across?

You need to know where to communicate with your target market and the type of content they will respond to.

What standard operating procedures will you teach yourself, your coaches, your staff, and your clients in order to deliver your service, onboard, and offboard your clients consistently well?

What contracts and waivers will you use for your clients, coaches, staff?

Proper execution means that you take your strategy and put it into play with absolute consistency. With each successive execution of a part of your process, it should become easier, more consistent, and take less of your brain power to accomplish.

MEASUREMENT

How will you measure and what will you learn about your monthly retention percentage?

How will you measure and what will you learn about your monthly new client acquisition?

How will you measure and what will you learn about your monthly new sales leads?

How will you measure and what will you learn about your monthly revenue, expenses, and profit?

REFINEMENT

Based on all of the data that comes from your measurement, why is your business growing or not?

Based on why your business is growing or not, where do you need to make improvements?

This is where the loop begins again. Now that you know how well your strategy ultimately worked, how well you executed on the plan, what the results were and why the results were what they were, you can start from a “higher” strategy next time.

The more times you complete this **SEMR** loop, the stronger your business will become.

NEXT STEPS

In this download we introduced you to the principles, tools, and systems that a successful remote coach needs to know. If you are starting a remote coaching business then take inventory of how your service does or does not meet the essentials listed above.

The reality is that it takes experience and education to be an efficient and effective remote coach. In the [OPEX Coaching Certificate Program \(CCP\)](#), you'll learn how to design individualized exercise, lifestyle, and nutrition programs, as well as the best business systems to deliver them. We even offer ongoing 1:1 mentorship with our experienced team of head coaches for those who want to grow their remote coaching business.

Spots are going quickly and our next CCP mentorship group won't be open until the next quarter, so act now and apply to speak to a coaching advisor today to learn more and secure your spot.

APPLY NOW

THE PROGRAM DESIGN ESSENTIALS PLAYLIST

Are you a coach struggling with writer's block when designing training programs? Do you find yourself spending too much time pondering squat variations and rep ranges, only to feel overwhelmed by the entire session you're creating?

Designing the perfect workout that balances enjoyment and effectiveness while delivering consistent results for your clients may seem like a daunting task, but it doesn't have to be that way. Embracing a principle-based approach to program design can simplify the process significantly.

Discover the power of the OPEX Method, a comprehensive program design approach that will make even the most challenging client's goals attainable.

If you're not yet ready to fully commit to the complete [OPEX Coaching Certificate Program \(CCP\)](#), we have the perfect solution for you. Dip your toes into continued education with the [Program Design Essentials Playlist](#) course bundle. Unlock the knowledge of OPEX principles that have already helped countless coaches like you design superior programs. Plus, here's a little extra incentive: **Use the code PDMADESIMPLE and enjoy a 50% discount on your purchase.**

Empower yourself as a coach and take your program design skills to the next level with OPEX's principle-based approach. Don't let writer's block hold you back—create exceptional training programs with confidence!

BUY NOW

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BASIC LIFESTYLE GUIDELINES



There are 24 hours in a day; apply work and rest appropriately.



You will one day die; get over it and get living.



Water: 1/2 of your bodyweight in ounces per day, as a starting point.



Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day to maintain a great circadian rhythm.



The earth spins and the sun and moon correlate with our energy patterns. We need sun exposure, and to sleep with the moon.



Water, moving blood, and proper digestion are essential daily routines.



Recovery: blood flow facilitates recovery and healing faster, get moving every day.



Digestion: food is a 36 to 44-hour investment. Sit down, chew your food, set the phone aside and have a conversation.

