



Certified Personal Trainer
CPT

2015 JOB ANALYSIS
Executive Summary

Schroeder Measurement Technologies, Inc.



JOB ANALYSIS

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In the fall of 2015, the National Federation of Professional Trainers (NFPT), one of the leading professional fitness organizations, began an exploration of the role of the Personal Trainer. To accomplish this, the NFPT set out to perform a research-based job analysis study to explore the following questions:

- Who is the Personal Trainer?
- What are the core competencies that Personal Trainers perform on-the-job?

Personal training is a diverse profession, and the professionals creating, designing, developing, and managing exercise and fitness programs have equally diverse résumés of education, training and experience. Despite this diversity, there is a core set of skills that are common among Personal Trainers, across the spectrum of experience, training, education, practice setting, and location. Identifying this core set of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) became the goal of the job analysis study. To support these efforts, the NFPT partnered with Schroeder Measurement Technologies, Inc. (SMT), a full-service testing company with staff experienced in the performance of job analysis studies. Together they assembled an Advisory Committee of subject-matter experts (SMEs) to provide content-area expertise and professional experience. The Committee comprised Personal Trainers representing the diversity of responsibility, education, experience, ethnicity, practice setting (e.g., fitness center, spa, private studio), geographic region of practice and more.

To begin the study, a comprehensive literature search was conducted which included review of approved texts, periodicals, rules and regulations, practice standards, training programs, blogs and social media information relating to the role of the Personal Trainer.

The results – an exhaustive listing of tasks performed by Personal Trainers – were presented to the Advisory Committee at a workshop in Dunedin, Florida, November 13–14, 2015. The workshop was led by Dana Anderson-Pancoe, Assistant Director of Assessment & Psychometric Services (APS) at SMT. Using the list as a starting point, the Committee removed, revised, and added tasks to create a comprehensive list of KSAs (also called tasks and/or knowledge elements) that the SMEs believed represented competent practice; the KSA list became the foundation for the job analysis survey. The Advisory Committee also developed a demographic questionnaire and established a rating scale against which the tasks could be measured for importance to and performance in practice.

The survey also offered respondents the opportunity to identify KSAs that may have been inadvertently omitted. The KSA list and demographic questionnaire were converted into an invitation-only, online survey.

Invitations to participate in a beta test of the survey were emailed to the Advisory Committee members in late November 2015.

Participants were asked to review the content and test the functionality of the survey. Minor edits were incorporated based upon the feedback, and the survey was finalized and made live on the Internet on December 3, with invitations issued to all of the Certified Personal Trainers (CPTs) within the NFPT database.

The survey included an incentive of 0.5 NFPT-approved continuing education credits. There were 7,933 invitations sent. The “bounce-back” or email return rate was approximately 1.4% (n=115). The survey was taken offline approximately six weeks later on January 11, 2016. During the administration window, 1,130 individuals logged onto the survey and entered data. Of these entries, there were 1,078 survey completions (i.e., data sufficient for analysis). This resulted in a return rate of 14.5%, with an adjusted return rate reflecting only complete responses of 13.8%. Both return rates are acceptable for an unsolicited survey.

The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient was 0.97. This statistic is bound between 0 and 1, with values closer to 1 indicating higher instrument reliability and coefficients greater than 0.70 deemed acceptable. The 0.97 calculation for this survey therefore indicates that the survey has very high internal consistency. Almost all respondents (99.3%) indicated that the survey either completely or adequately described the critical tasks required of competent practice of the Personal Trainer. This supports near perfect confidence that the survey depth was reflective of practice among various settings, geographic locations, and realms of responsibility. A second SME Advisory Committee meeting was held on January 29, 2016.

Rachael Jin Bee Tan, Ph.D., Director of APS at SMT, facilitated the meeting via webinar. The goals of the meeting were to present, review, and consider the results of the survey and to establish exclusion criteria to differentiate among the important and non-important, performed and not-performed tasks. Of the original 68 KSAs, none were removed from the outline based upon statistically-based decision rules. Based upon open-ended comments from the survey respondents, one KSA was added to the outline. This resulted in a final listing of 69 KSAs. The 69 KSAs were reviewed to confirm that all were assessable, and therefore appropriate for inclusion on the Personal Trainer competency task outline.

The final approved KSA listing was then translated into the CPT content outline, establishing the link between job performance of critical tasks and successful performance on the Certified Personal Trainer Examination. The Advisory Committee was asked to consider the five domains represented in the final approved content outline.

Discussion was held concerning the complexity and number of tasks included in each of these five domains, importance ratings, and time spent by Personal Trainers performing the tasks within each domain. Through this exercise, the Committee established final domain weightings for the examination. The Advisory Committee reached consensus on final content area distributions and weightings, as reflected in Appendix N (*CPT Detailed Content Outline*) of the full Job Analysis report.

Resources for More Information:

NFPT Certification Handbook: www.nfpt.com/resources

Exam Content Outline: available in the NFPT Certification Handbook

By request: Contact NFPT at info@nfpt.com to request additional information