

steps to success

WORKING TOGETHER WITH YOUR CURVES INSTRUCTORS CAN HELP YOU REACH YOUR FITNESS AND WEIGHT-LOSS GOALS. ○ BY GARY HEAVIN

Ken Blanchard, author of *The One Minute Manager*, defines leadership as “the capacity to influence others by unleashing their power and potential to impact the greater good.” Blanchard is working with us to develop a new Curves leadership model that will help us do just that.

One thing we’ve learned that I would like to share are the four stages that people move through as they begin a new task such as exercise and weight loss. Each stage is characterized by various levels of competence and commitment. Competence includes the knowledge and skills needed to do a task well, and commitment is a combination of confidence and motivation.

To improve competence, Curves provides training and information, and you will gain experience as you exercise. To sustain commitment, we will encourage and motivate you in many ways, and you will gain confidence as you achieve results.

Stage 1: Enthusiastic Beginner

People begin most new tasks with a low level of competence but a high level of commitment. As an enthusiastic beginner, you need more *direction* from us so that you can learn to exercise effectively, but you need less support.

Stage 2: Disillusioned Learner

As the newness wears off and you see the “work” in workout, you move to the second level. At this stage your competency is still low to medium, but your commitment may be low. You need *both* direction and support or *coaching* from us. We will work with you to set goals, make sure you don’t miss workouts, and remind you why exercise is so important to you.

Stage 3: Cautious but Competent

As your competency improves, your commitment may still vary. We refer to this stage as cautious but competent. At this time you need less direction from us, but we need to be more *supportive*. If we can praise and encourage you, help you work through the conflicts of getting to the gym, and support you effectively, you can make it to the ultimate stage.

Stage 4: High Achiever

The ultimate stage of a task is the high achiever. At this level you are highly competent and highly committed. You’re skilled at effective exercise and weight management and are fully committed to making them part of your daily life.

Most everyone goes through these stages as they take on new challenges. Your ability to recognize which stage you’re at will

help you understand your needs and overcome frustration. We’ll do our best to anticipate your needs and provide you with the appropriate levels of direction and support so that you can reach your goals. Be sure to ask staff members to address your needs. Proper instruction on the equipment combined with goal setting, fun activities, weight-loss classes, friends on the circuit, and many other efforts are available to help us both meet our goal: to strengthen you—to strengthen women. ●

GARY HEAVIN, the cofounder of Curves, holds a bachelor of science degree in health and nutritional counseling and is the author of numerous books, including the *New York Times* best-seller *Curves*. He has been counseling exercise and weight management for more than 30 years.



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