

Family Tennis Initiative

Welcome to the Family Tennis Initiative developed by the Tennis Industry Association. The TIA is the not-for-profit trade organization for tennis in the United States. The TIA is THE unifying force for the tennis industry. The mission is to promote the growth and economic vitality of tennis by working closely with industry partners. These partners are the USTA, PTR, USPTA, and manufacturers and retailers. They have combined to make the Family Tennis Initiative possible. Through these collaborative efforts, one of the most exciting undertakings our industry has ever seen to grow tennis is being offered!

What is the Family Tennis Initiative?

- A program to increase beginner tennis participation in the United States.
- An initiative recommending a family tennis program. It encourages tennis facilities to offer instructional programs and activities where parents and children can participate together.
- A comprehensive guide to develop and retain a new generation of beginning tennis players. This comprehensive guide is meant to be a recipe book- a tool kit- for a multisession program where depending upon your needs, expertise, and budgets you can choose and use what is helpful to your program.
- The largest marketing campaign EVER to introduce new players to tennis!
- A program where new players will learn with an easy and fast method. The use of the new equipment, low compression red, orange and green balls and shorter courts is critical to make the first time experience positive and lays the foundation for proper skill development. This makes tennis an activity the whole family can play together!

Why should you be involved in the Family Tennis Initiative?

- It is a new and exciting program
- It will attract more people to your club, tennis center, or public park facility
- It will attract and provide activities for family units – adults and children
- It will create a demand for more lessons
- Can help fill existing programs or begin some new and fresh programs

Rarely is anything perfect in life. With tennis, we have a sport that is perfect. Tennis is

- The best overall form of exercise
- Can be played for a lifetime
- Is a great sport to be enjoyed by all members of a family
- Can be enjoyed on a social or competitive level

The TIA conducts extensive research. What does the latest research tell us?

- Tennis has had an estimated 70 million "samplers"- people who have tried playing tennis a few times in their life but never really got into the game.
- That many of these people simply left tennis after a poor initial "experience."
- Most had no instruction and just went out to play with another beginner and tried to play.
- New players who go through a multisession introductory program become committed, frequent players.

All of this tells us that there are plenty of eager players waiting for the information contained in the Family Tennis Initiative. Members of our communities who have not experienced our sport of tennis do not know what fun and camaraderie awaits them. So "Come Out Swinging" and together we can grow tennis! Let's get them engaged!

There are many content areas discussed in this initiative. We present ideas for sales, marketing, advertising, special events, and lesson plans. Put together your team for this initiative so nobody is overwhelmed. Assign a teacher who loves to teach this type of program.

Table of Contents

1. Success & Financial benefits
2. Building blocks of a successful program
3. Customer experience
4. Sales Ideas
5. Marketing Ideas
6. Branding & advertising ideas
7. Hosting kickoff & special events
8. Social activities
9. Model teaching program (the lesson programs)
 - a. Model teaching plans
 - i. Foundation principles
 - ii. Multisession teaching plans
 - iii. Explanation of singles & doubles play; rules; terminology; FAQ's
 - b. The use of teaching aids
 - c. Pathways
 - d. Home practice ideas
 - e. Administration
 - f. Success stories
10. Resources
11. Thanks to contributors
12. Appendix
 - a. Customer experience
 - b. Sales
 - c. Marketing
 - d. Successful events

Chapter 1. Success benefits for club

There are so many reasons to get involved with the Family Tennis Initiative.

- International Health Racquet Sports Association data tells us that clubs in the fitness industry on average lose 33% of their members each year. Tennis facilities that operate excellent tennis programs find only a 10-15% turnover. Increasing your tennis players increases your profits and sustainability.
- TIA industry research shows that 65% of players who begin tennis in introductory programming continue with the sport!
- The information contained in the following pages gives all the details on how to operate a successful program. If someone is less experienced- it is all laid out. There are still plenty of valuable ideas for the experienced teacher. There are hundreds of concrete suggestions as well as an entire teaching program.
- Industry statistics prove that retention is much higher for new customers who are engaged in programs when they join. Mike Barrell, the British 10 & Under trainer has found if a person meets nine other people within 90 days, there is a 90% retention level.
- New players need racquets, shoes, and additional instruction.
- A huge national advertising/ awareness campaign will be launched. Your advertising dollars can be saved.

Chapter 2. Building blocks of a successful program

- **The terms lessons and curriculum will not be used.** These terms should not be used with juniors or adults. It takes away the fun. We are developing models that are flexible for you.
- **Eliminate fear.** One major reason a participant will drop out of any program is due to the fear of failure and the desire not to look foolish. We can be creative enough to be challenging without embarrassing the new player. This is accomplished in a challenge based- not competition based model. The fear of losing takes over in a competition based program. People do, though, enjoy and want a challenge. Let them pick their form of competition and pathway. Let them find and have their own personal/ internal challenge. Build into the program how they want to play tennis. Craft activities where their passion is fostered. Fun and interest happens when the player finds their own challenge. When competing with another too soon-it kills the buzz.
- **The person's attitude matters more than the details of the program.** Sustained engagement will happen in a program that is caring, helpful, and authentic. Have a program that empowers & supports.
- **Success key- the instructor.** Have the best and best suited (passionate) pro teach. Assign ownership of this program to someone who loves to teach beginners. Try to get age appropriate teachers.
- **Program will be play based; play to learn.** The old style of teaching was to instruct the mechanics in a detailed way first. Players did not start playing points until well into the lesson sessions. We lose the players. Learning through a game based approach and playing points in the first meeting creates fun and interest.
- **Social.** This will be a necessary part of the model. Different social activities will be suggested. Facilities can choose depending upon their facility and budget.
- **Make it fun.** Fun is a result of activities. It is made up of various elements. It is an outcome and not just a word. Many activities that will make the program fun will be presented. Participants will be

involved for the enjoyment of the activity. This is why it should be personally challenged based and design programming that is fun.

- **Teach to the level of the student.** Let's be honest- tennis is difficult to learn at first. Therefore, players will be started with red, orange, and green balls on 36 foot courts progressing to larger courts as increased skill level permits.
- **The model follows this progression.**
 - Proficiency- Get student to want and believe they can do an activity. Have objectives for them.
 - Confidence- Break skills down so they will get there quickly.
 - Passion- Build this. This is not accomplished with a lesson 1st mentality. It is developed through play; success; social interaction.
 - Build to retention. People are attracted to things that support them in feeling strong, smart, and fabulous. It must be communicated what is realistic and authentic but also what is possible.

Chapter 3. Customer experience

Every facility wants members, and guests to associate you with welcoming and friendly service, professional staff, well-run programs, and a clean facility. We want our members and guests to perceive they are receiving a value. When someone believes they are receiving a value- when the perceived benefits exceed the cost-we have dedicated customers and excellent retention in our programs.

Consumers today are looking for an experience. It is becoming much more about a hospitality mentality more than service mentality. Elements that make up an experience in the tennis business are:

- The upkeep and quality of facilities
- The cleanliness of the facility
- The varied and unique classes and programs
- The professionalism of the staff
- The sincere effort at friendly and quality service
- The integrity of staff and ethical values

Performed well, these create an experience that is outstanding for the customer.

Very firm and clear standards of service need to be stated in writing to create an outstanding experience.

- These need to be organization wide processes, standards, and systems.
- It is through consistent effort and alignment (agreement) to a shared vision of service that excellence can be achieved. All staff must be on board or the lowest performing employee sets the standard.
- These need to be non-negotiable values. Values are the priorities that govern our actions.

A good starting point is to have a clear definition of service. One that is used often is to achieve “warm welcomes; magic moments; fond farewells.” ***See appendix for further explanation.***

The Ultimate Competitive Advantage

Every facility can sell the same racquets; buy red, orange, and green ball; and offer tournaments. Therefore, the only point of differentiation between businesses is the quality of the staff. Provide service, expertise,

and a quality program that stands out. Investing in staff and holding them accountable to clearly defined values will make any program a winner. This reaffirms why it is so important to have instructors teaching this class who truly enjoy it and are properly trained.

How to create customer loyalty

Gallup has conducted extensive polling and found only one characteristic that will create customer loyalty. It is to have real customer connectedness- to have an emotional connectedness. ***Emotional connectedness describes what you say and how you act to get people to link to you emotionally.*** Customer retention will happen when an emotional bond is created between your staff and the customer. Unfortunately only 18% of customers say they have an emotional bond to a business. What if we could get a 25% or even 50% score? It would keep our courts full. Here are some specific tips:

- Allow only an instructor who truly cares and enjoys teaching beginning lessons teach the class. This honest, authentic caring will show through.
- Educate the instructors about this principle. Make sure they understand that creating an emotional connectedness is part of giving a successful lesson just as much as using the correct color of ball. Make it clear this will have an impact upon their income as well. All instructors should know this is part of their job description.
- Have fun. Make it a contest. Have instructors reporting how they created a member connectedness experience at a staff meeting. They could say, "I found out Mrs. Smith was new to town. I got her into a beginning class." "I found out that two boys in my class both loved dogs. I told that to the parents and now the kids are playing together with their dogs."

Tips for a successful experience.

The following are some quick tips to ensure retention in your tennis programs:

1. Provide new players with options for your entry level programs if possible. Offer classes in the evenings for people who work, also offer daytime and weekend options.
2. Large groups are more fun. "The more the merrier" is true with these first impression programs.
3. Have a social element, having refreshments after the first session and/or several times during a multi-session course builds camaraderie and is a huge help in retention.
4. Register with payment immediately. When people call to sign up over the phone, get them to pay for the class right then with a credit card. Better yet, if your facility has its own website, sign them up online. Without a payment there may be a 20- 30% no show rate for the first class. No commitment often equals a no show.
5. Be prepared early to welcome new players. Provide red carpet treatment by greeting them in a well-identified meeting area with a friendly, courteous and well-informed staff member.
6. Have nametags for all participants, including players, staff and coaches. Use names frequently and learn all the names by the end of the first session.
7. Use experienced, certified coaches who are energetic, fun, compassionate and humorous and enjoy teaching entry-level players.
8. Introduce new players to other new players. Get to know a little bit about each person. Reassure these new players that they will have fun, get some exercise and meet some new people.
9. Provide a loaner racquet at no charge.
10. Students will arrive in a variety of clothing. Assure them that comfortable workout attire is acceptable.
11. Spend time with new players, both before and after the lesson. Provide a tour so they are comfortable with the facility, and introduce them to all the staff. Show them how to reserve court time and encourage them to play between sessions.

12. Arrange time at the end of the lesson to answer questions. Beginners often have questions about rules, equipment, footwear, attire, injury prevention and how to find partners. Provide handouts and information support for new players, such as PlayTennis.com, Rules of Tennis, Guide to Dynamic and Static Stretching, etc.
13. Capture pertinent information such as name, address, phone numbers and e-mail address. Ask permission to provide updates of upcoming events and related programs.
14. Thank them for coming and tell them when they should be back. The exit experience is as critical as the welcome experience.
15. Create a "club within a club" environment. New players need to feel special. Use photos and designate a specific area for their information.
16. Create phone lists and campaigns to make sure everyone is invited to events and programs.
17. A personal invitation is the best way to insure they feel special and invited to attend.
18. If possible, offer free or discounted use of the ball machine or court time between sessions.
19. Schedule opportunities with other groups as part of the session, such as a play session or a mixer with another class or even another club. Remember, the biggest problem in retention is finding partners at the same ability level.
20. Have sign-up forms available for the next session midway through the present session.
21. Respond to inquiries promptly.

See appendix for further information on how to create superb customer experience.

Chapter 4. Sales

The first concept to understand is that there is no magic involved in getting someone to sign up for a tennis class. Successful sales persons -in any industry- apply proven techniques. Let's discuss a few key ideas.

Know why people want to play tennis

This is a major concept that cannot be misunderstood and must be passed onto all staff. People do not play tennis for tennis! ***People play tennis for the benefits that tennis brings them.*** There are many reasons to play tennis

- for the exercise
- for the mental challenge
- to meet a new group of friends
- for the competition
- to enjoy a family time together
- to make business contacts
- to enjoy time with friends
- for the fun of playing

See appendix sales section and the Why People Play Tennis article by Dr. Jack Groppe that lists 33 benefits of tennis.

It is critical to understand why someone would have an interest to take up tennis and then make sure we match the benefit to their need. If they are looking for new friends- make sure they meet people. If they want to just have fun- get them involved in play days. If they want exercise- show them how to use the ball machine. ***This is the essence of selling- matching benefits to needs.***

A second major point to understand is that we are in the positive lifestyle change business. Tennis is a sport that provides many positive, healthy benefits. It sells itself. New players come to your facility for a reason

known to them. It is your job to gain knowledge of what that reason is and match elements of your to benefit them.

Selling Skills

1. Understand first, that a sale is about creating a relationship. Therefore, good communication is essential. The elements involved in communication are tone, words, and nonverbal (body language).
 - Tone is having good inflection and projecting enthusiasm in your voice. Be aware of the speed at which you speak and also your volume. 38% of communication.
 - Be aware of your words. Eliminate “you know, things like that, that sort of thing.” Choose words to make them powerful and eliminate unnecessary words. 7% of communication.
 - To have self-awareness and self-management over body language is mandatory. 55% of communication. Be aware:
 - Head nodding- connotes affirmation
 - Eye contact- connotes interest
 - Smiling- creates a bond and safety
 - Proximity of space- when walking between spaces- walk next to the person- not ahead of them
 - Gestures- can express enthusiasm
 - Posture- carry yourself with good posture
 - Dress- communicates a level of professionalism
 - Initial handshake- communicates strength

The most powerful form of communication is through body language. It is worthwhile and time well spent to discuss and train interpersonal communication skills. Conducting role playing exercises under supervision and perfecting good body language is critical.

A study from Harvard claims that 80% of communication that takes place in the first minute or two is done through body language. Good nonverbal communication skills are critical to establish a safe and positive relationship. Body language plays the dominant role when we meet someone new.

Biggest concept. What is the most important idea in selling your beginning tennis program? If people feel it is a value- they will join. A value is when a customer feels the product meets or exceeds their expectations. Deliver a professional program and you will be successful.

See appendix for further details on selling skills.

Chapter 5. Marketing

There are many ways to create new business.

Lead generation. This is where you proactively seek new players. Gone are the days when sufficient customers would walk in on their own. There are many organizations to approach to find prospective customers. *See appendix for further details.*

Marketing strategies for little or no money. As you read through these keep in mind that 70% of membership sales of new customers still comes through referrals of current customers or members. Word of mouth is still powerful.

- Write a tennis column in a blog or for a local newspaper. Connect it with a contest. For example, place your name in a drop box at your facility for a free lesson. Have them write a key word or thought from the column on the entry card.
- Have a “Tennis tip of the week” appear on your local television station. One of your tennis professionals can film a tip. Television stations loves the uniqueness. Connect it with a contest. People send a post card to the station with the tip of the week on it. Name is drawn on the next show for a free lesson.
- Speak with a local retailer to see if they would allow you to set up a booth in their retail space to promote your program. The store can receive a few free spots in the program in exchange.
- Speak with local businesses to see if they would allow you to set up a booth in their cafeteria during high traffic times. Offer a free company clinic or tennis party in exchange.
- Offer sponsorship of your program to a retailer. Tell them it will not cost them anything. The promotion is “Store X brings you the Family Tennis Initiative!” They look good to their customers and you get in front of a huge market at no cost.
- Provide new players with a "temporary membership" while they are in the entry-level class.
- Give players a couple of guest passes so they can bring a friend or family member.
- Offer various special events to complement your programs, such as exhibitions, demo days, bring a friend day, US Open parties, USA Tennis Month jamborees, etc. This will give new players a chance to meet socially off-court and you can show off your facility to their friends.
- Take a friend promotion-Includes ads, direct mail, fliers, etc. Get local tennis publications and CTA newsletters to publish “Take a Friend to Court” ads for free. Distribute flyers and coupons to existing players at tournaments and league nights. Insert coupons in member statements and publish in newsletter. Mail a Take a Friend to Court flyer or coupon to existing players.
- Alumni members. Send a letter to all past guests and past members to sign up themselves, and their family members or friends.
- All employees can take class for free or at a discount as long as they are not the last person in the class.
- Offer to all facility partners to sign up their employees or friends at 50% off.
- T-shirts (or buttons) worn by all employees three weeks ahead of the program to promote.
- Initiate a bonus system in place for referred registrations by staff.
- Send letter to members to up sign their family members and friends.
- Incentive marketing- One of the best ways to lure or get people to come back to your facility is to offer them some sort of incentive. Anything from a free wrist band to a T-shirt to a free racquet to a free lesson on their next visit will ensure a better retention rate. You could incorporate these expenses in your cost for your tennis program.
- Sponsorships- Pursue local businesses for sponsorships. Sponsors can provide media support, cash, products and/or services and participants. First, try to obtain media sponsors (newspaper, radio and cable), that can provide free ads or matching ads (free ad with every paid ad). Second, spend time pitching companies where you have contacts. Third, pitch companies with an avid tennis player. Cold-calling companies should be a last resort.

Below is a list of benefits you can offer a potential sponsor. Please make sure to weigh the benefits you provide to your sponsor with the ones they provide to you. Don't sell yourself short! For more information on sponsorships, go to www.partners.tenniswelcomecenter.com

- Sponsor logo in newspaper, TV, or radio ads
- Sponsor banner hung at your facility
- Sponsor logo on fliers/coupons distributed
- On-site product sampling or hand-outs

Chapter 6. Branding & Advertising Strategies

Branding

Everything we do tells a story. Every action by an employee tells the customer who you are. Your story is your brand. It is who your customers perceive you are. It is the compilation of all your interactions. It is the overall impressions we create over time.

Why is it so important to create a positive brand? Because at the essence- a brand is the emotional engagement point for customers. It is the indescribable strong emotional tie you want with your customers. It is why they determine if they want to do business with you.

What will a good brand recognition do for your facility? It describes the way your product or service is defined for your customers. It will inspire loyalty and enjoyment among a wide variety of customers. It will increase revenues and value over time.

Every business needs to present a clear identity to their customers.

Advertising

The sole purpose of advertising is to get results- to drive business into your facility. There are five secrets, five questions, which must be answered to create effective advertising.

1. **Who else can or will say that?** If others can make the same claim, do better. Stand out.
2. **So what?** Give a meaningful answer to "What is in it for the customer?"
3. **What is more than "I would hope so?"** A doctor should not say, "I have been to medical school." We expect that- we hope so! Tell them why you are more than average, more than "I hope so." Tell them why you are a cut above.
4. **What is the single most important idea?** This is your unique selling proposition. What is the single most important idea to communicate? What has the strongest appeal to your target audience? What distinguishes your product from the rest? Identify this and communicate it clearly.
5. **What is the WOW factor?** What makes your appeal pop? This should describe what you say to get people to link to you emotionally.

Keep this in mind when setting up your advertising strategy.

These require a budget.

SOCIAL MEDIA – Social media websites and applications allow users to create and exchange user-generated content where people talk, share information, participate and network through technologies such as blogs and social networking sites. Within the last decade, social media has become one of the most powerful sources for news updates, online collaboration, networking, viral marketing and entertainment. Currently, some of the more popular Social media sites are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, InstaGram, Google+ and Tumblr.

(Note: The millennials have a particular affinity to Instagram and Snapchat)

NEWSPAPER ADS- The newspaper with the highest circulation provides the greatest exposure. Repetition is key! You should look to have several ads (5 at a minimum) in the newspaper prior to the start of your program. You don't necessarily need a big ad, but rather a small ad that appears in the paper often. You might also look into doing flier inserts (a loose flier inserted into the paper) which will be a less expensive alternative to placing print ads. For sample ads or help on negotiating ad buys, go to www.partners.tenniswelcomecenter.com!

Do not place in the sports section but place in the women's section.

RADIO ADS- Talk to radio stations with high demographics for women 25 through 50. Typically, Adult Contemporary radio stations will prove to be the best stations in which to advertise. Moms tend to make sign-up decisions for themselves, their husbands and their children. Again, repetition is the key. Try to get shorter commercials more often. Try to work in some of the following ideas when placing an ad buy with a radio station. For sample radio scripts, go to www.partners.tenniswelcomecenter.com!

Have remote interviews on site. Have a disk jockey attend a special event. It could be in conjunction with a tennis carnival. Offer prizes- have a lesson racquet giveaway; caller #30 gets a free racquet, etc.

TELEVISION ADS- Contact your local cable affiliates (Adelphia, Warner, Comcast, etc.) advertising department. Television typically is more expensive, but it does work well in some markets. The idea with television ads is to place the ads in a variety of key local and cable channels. Channels such as TLC, Lifetime, HGTV, ESPN, MSNBC, Fox News, CNN, Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon tend to attract the right audience for tennis. For a sample television ad, go to www.partners.TennisWelcomeCenter.com

FLIER/COUPON DISTRIBUTION- Flier/coupon distribution can be a good and less expensive way to get the word out about your tennis programs. Determine sites and discuss a plan for distribution. Secure retailers, grocery stores, schools, fast-food chains, etc. (Once you have determined the sites, you need to determine the quantity and have them printed.). Offer an exchange. You will present their flyers to the new players and they will present yours to their customers. Here are some suggested sites to contact For sample fliers/coupons, go to www.PlayTennis.com!

- Fast Food: McDonalds, Burger King, Dominos, Pizza Hut
- Sporting Good Stores: Sports Authority, Dick's, Oshman's"
- National Chains: K-mart, Wal-Mart, Target
- Schools/Colleges/Universities: PE Teachers, School Newspaper
- Video Stores: Blockbuster, Hollywood Video
- Health Clubs, Gyms
- Health Food Stores: GNC
- Bank Statement Stuffers
- Theaters: AMC, Cineplex, Loews
- Boy/Girl Scouts, Home School Group

DIRECT MAIL- This is mailing a flyer or coupon directly to homes in targeted neighborhoods near your tennis facility. Be willing to bulk mail to specific zip codes. Contact a bulk mail company (found in the yellow pages) to assist you. We do NOT recommend ValuPak and other coupon packs because the lesson program coupon offer typically gets lost in the pack with so many other coupons. For a sample Direct Mail piece, go to www.PlayTennis.com! Results with this approach can be spotty. Start small and track returns carefully. Have a carrier route analysis done on a 4 mile radius of the club and pick the ideal member profile as your targets. The cost of the mailing should be about \$.50 each (list, postage, and design included). This should produce up to a 1-2% return. Therefore, 5000 should produce 50-100 inquiries. Print 500 more than needed for send outs.

BILLBOARD ADVERTISING- Contact local billboard companies from your yellow pages under "Advertising". Billboard advertising has been successful in some areas when it has been done in conjunction with other marketing vehicles such as newspaper ads, radio spots and/or flyer distributions. This method of advertising is relatively inexpensive in markets where it's been tested. For a sample billboard ad, go to www.partners.tenniswelcomecenter.com

NEWSLETTERS- Talk to health plans, large corporations, alumni organizations, professional organizations, charity organizations, etc. about listing your tennis program offer in their monthly newsletter. Corporate Well ness Programs are always looking for new ideas. Be willing to hold your tennis program at convenient times and tailor it specifically for that group.

- HMO's, PPO's, and Health Plans
- Blue Cross, Kaiser, HIP
- American Heart Association
- Parent Teacher Association
- Alumni organization's
- American Cancer Society
- American Diabetes Foundation
- Booster Club
- Accountant & Lawyer
- Churches

MOVIE THEATER SCREENS - Check with local theaters about advertising prior to the start of each movie or call 1-800-SCREEN. We have found that this is only successful when the theater agrees to pass out your tennis program information at the ticket booth and concession stands.

Groupon, Living Social,

WEATHER CHANNEL ADVERTISING- Check with local cable affiliates to advertise on the Weather Channel. The Weather Channel enables advertisers to buy time to put local messages on a scrolling bar across the bottom. This is typically inexpensive and is valuable only if you have leveraged your marketing and advertising in other areas, such as newspaper and flyer distributions.

We invite you to also please share your successful ideas with us at info@tenniswellnesscenter.com

Chapter 7. Hosting kick off & special events

It may be advantageous to host a special event to kick off your Family Tennis Initiative. The goal is to create an attractive event with a valid reason for a new participant to want to come. Here are some ideas to consider.

Tennis carnival

A tennis carnival (usually not longer than 2 hours) has been used successfully to draw participants to tennis programs. It is a great kickoff event for your Family Tennis Initiative! Here are some ideas.

- Have a fun and festive atmosphere with balloons, posters, music, banners, and prizes.
- Many prizes can be inexpensive. Local business may help. Posters, tennis balls, key chains, fruit, movie tickets, cap, pencils, water bottles, bookmarks, gum, drink boxes, food coupons, visors, pens, stickers, wristbands, T shirts, sun block or other samples.
- Courts can be set up as stations.
 - Ring toss- Drop over a cone or tennis ball can
 - Beat the pro
 - Hit to targets. Hang targets on the side curtain (clown face; stars; banner) or back fences. Have players drop and hit toward these targets. Set targets such as hula hoops above the net. Players try to hit or hit through. Place targets on the court and have players hit them. It could be a prize- if they hit it- they keep it. Adjust difficulty for age and skill level of participants.
 - Activities off a ball machine. Use the slowest setting. Drop and hit into a teaching cart.
 - Demo court- coordinate with a racquet manufacturer, pro shop, or sporting goods store.
 - Balloon activities. Bump up- see how many times they can hot balloon without touching the court. Play relay games with balloon sandwiched between two racquets.
 - How many balls in the cart? Closet guess receives prize at conclusion of event.
 - Walk the dog obstacle course. Have player roll a beach ball or playground ball with a racquet along a path of cones, court lines, under benches, through gates, etc.
 - Obstacles course. Place ladders, clones on the court for a fun obstacles course.
 - Stamp a passport after they conclude activity on each court. Small prize awarded for certain number of courts stamped.

Sponsor

You must decide if your event is the appropriate venue for having a sponsor. Would having a sponsor make your event more special? If so, consider

- **Why do want to have a sponsor?** It creates a buzz. It brings added exposure. It brings positive attention. There is a good connection. It reduces costs.
- **What does this event (or program) have to offer?** Is it tied to a charity? Is it an annual event? What is the local appeal? Who is the target audience? What are the demographics of the participants?
- **Why would someone want to be a sponsor?** Feel good for them. It will increase their brand awareness. It will drive business for them. Good public relations in the community. Their competition does similar things. There may be a “launch party” involved.
- **Budget.** How much do you want to raise?
- **Do you want to barter or want money?** You can barter for food and drink; media attention; SWAG- stuff we all get.
- **Clearly define the sponsor package.** Are their levels? Is it easy to read and follow? What will they receive? How many “touches” will they receive? What will their ROI be?

- **Create maximum attention for your sponsor and yourself.** Have a photographer. Place on social media (Facebook; Twitter; Instagram). Use internet marketing and place on your website. Have a celebrity spokesperson. Submit press releases and media alerts.
- **Celebrity spokesperson options.** Mayor or politician. Radio or TV personality. Police or fire chief. Musicians, singers, actors. Professional athletes. Military personnel. Local business persons or person with local success stories.

A planning calendar could look something like this.

Three months before event

- outline what the event looks like and the benefits for the community or facility
- make contact with
 - the person in charge of coordinating all lifestyle activities
 - the person who coordinates newsletters, and publicity
- make contact with director of tennis or person in charge of tennis activities
- set a time and date for all parties to meet

First Meeting

- Decide on event location that is open to the public with lots of parking, easy access to courts, a place for refreshments is offered and set up with enough seating for everyone
- Decide how to publicize event. (Direct Mail, Flyers, Newspapers, etc.)
 - Decide on what Equipment and Materials for General Event, Food and Socializing, On-Court Activities
- What funds are needed
- Establish the goals of the event
 - Is this just for the members or can individuals outside attend?
 - The event is for new players. Explain how will this benefit the tennis community
 - Establish the goal number of participants
 - Will there be a fee?
- Set responsibilities
 - Who is in charge of
 - rackets/giveaways- can local businesses be solicited?
 - event programming
 - volunteer training and site prep
 - shirts for volunteers and possibly participants
 - instructors or pro's for event
 - securing site
 - marketing -- flyers , ads, banners
 - food
 - securing sound system and set up
 - registration and collection of fees
 - securing sponsors
 - securing instructor for warm up
 - securing volunteers for the event

- coordinate volunteers attending volunteer training
 - nametags
 - promoting the event through current members or customers
 - providing the follow up program
 - helping with event set up
- Weekly Follow -up
 - make contact with all workers to make sure on task
 - contact tennis director to make sure event is organized and staffed
 - make sure publicity is being handled

Day Before the event

- check site and supplies
 - Tables for materials, registration, and program sign up
 - Participant seating
 - Name tags for EVERYONE
 - Shirts for volunteers
 - Goody bags for participants
 - Door prizes
 - Flyers for programs, Sign up sheets
 - Coolers/ice, paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups,
 - Large drink dispensers
 - Large Trash Cans
- hang banners and signs
- go over last minute details with key decision makers
- go over check list
- conduct volunteer training
- on-court
 - racquets
 - low compression balls
 - water
 - ball hoppers

Day of

- arrive 2-3 hours before event take care of last minute details and set up
- lead volunteer pep rally
- go over on court training with the pro's
- lead or observe the event
- tear down, clean up, pack up

Follow - up

- thank you e-mails or letters
- check on final sign up numbers
- pay all bills
- request final report from the host site

- debrief- analyze event to keep or adjust for next time

No matter what type of event you are hosting, make sure you are offering the next step. Present the pathway to all participants at the event.

There are four stories of successful events detailed in the appendix.

Chapter 7. Making the program social

A key element for the success of a beginner program is the social component. We are by nature social creatures, but we are living in a society where people are becoming more isolated. It is important to understand that social interaction is a crucial part of a successful beginner program.

Many students have time for the class and then rush off. There are ways to interject social interaction within the class or after the class.

- Provide ample opportunity for players to interact with each other and learn names.
 - Have them say their name when they throw balls or rally with each other as they catch or contact the ball. Then say their partner's name. Say their high school; the name of their college mascot, the name of their pet; the town they live in.
 - Find a partner with a birthday close to theirs.
- Offer food and drink
 - Around themed parties for your groups.
 - If it is an eight week program, dedicate time toward the end of class on the fourth and eighth week for a social time.
 - Provide time and space after each session for off-court socializing. Getting your group around a table with lemonade keeps the group together, builds relationships and gives them a comfort level with both classmates and the facility.
- Use creative formats- Century Mixed Doubles, Super Bowl Tennis Tourney, Beat the Pro night, etc.
- Allow local food companies, restaurants, or food trucks to sponsor a party.
- Pick up balls with a partner and have them discuss a topic. For example- "How easy or difficult do they think learning tennis is?"
- Have a day where they wear a T shirts that reflects something about themselves. For example, their college T shirt.
- Do a social activity around holidays and seasons.
- Take a trip to a nearby pro tournament or tennis resort with your clients.
- Arrange play days with other groups.
- Bring in celebrity pros or local media to play with your group.
- Music is fun and breaks the ice. Music is especially good during the warm-up phase of the session.
- When possible, provide a class roster so they can contact each other out of class for play.
- Hold a season/session-ending party or mixer event.
- Offer a ½ hour free tennis or ½ hour free fitness evaluation

Appendix- here are chapters with more detail

Chapter 3. Customer experience

Every facility wants members, and guests to associate you with welcoming and friendly service, professional staff, well-run programs, and a clean facility. We want our members and guests to perceive

they are receiving a value. When someone believes they are receiving a value- when the perceived benefits exceed the cost-we have dedicated customers and excellent retention in our programs.

Consumers today are looking for an experience. Elements that make up an experience in the tennis business are:

- The upkeep and quality of facilities
- The cleanliness of the facility
- The varied and unique classes and programs
- The professionalism of the staff
- The sincere effort at friendly and quality service
- The integrity of staff and ethical values

Performed well, these create an experience that is outstanding for the customer. The Disney Corporation does this very well. Their formula is:

- **Prime the Pump:** Show a movie or have attendees walk thru an entertaining environment that gets them excited for the upcoming ride.
- **Make an Impression:** Deliver an amazing & memorable experience on the ride.
- **Close the Sale:** Have the attendees walk through the gift shop/photo display to capture the sale while they are still excited from their experience.

Very firm and clear standards of service need to be stated in writing to create an outstanding experience.

- These need to be organization wide processes, standards, and systems.
- It is through consistent effort and alignment (agreement) to a shared vision of service that excellence can be achieved. All staff must be on board or the lowest performing employee sets the standard.
- These need to be non-negotiable values. Values are the priorities that govern our actions.

A good starting point is to have a clear definition of service. One that is used often is to achieve “warm welcomes; magic moments; fond farewells.”

Warm Welcomes

This is the initial greeting every employee gives each time they interact with a member or guest. It sets the mood or tone for the entire visit.

- Begin every encounter with direct eye contact and a sincere smile.
- Extend a friendly greeting.
- Seek out the customer to give assistance if appropriate.

Magic Moments

This is the heart of the customers visit. It is teaching a class, handing out a towel, answering a question, serving someone in the pro shop. The most powerful “moments of truth” are interactions with staff, but everything counts- everything tells a story.

- Display appropriate body language at all times
- Give professional service- be knowledgeable in your area
- Resolve any issue or find the answer

Fond Farewells

Everyone enjoys feeling special. To say goodbye contributes to that.

A definition of service is a living theme- not just a phrase on a page. It clearly:

- Defines behaviors
- Communicates a unified performance standard for every employee
- Is one element every employee has in common.
- Is your promise to fulfill to your customers.

A facility is able to give their customers “the WOW factor” they are searching for when it pays attention to the tiniest of details, sets high standards that are adhered to by all staff, and follows processes critical to meeting or exceeding expectations. This takes work to establish a positive culture and organized training programs. Why is this important? The next two sections highlight why.

The Ultimate Competitive Advantage

Every facility can sell the same racquets, buy red, orange, and green balls, and offer tournaments. Therefore, the only point of differentiation between businesses is the quality of the staff. Provide service, expertise, and a quality program that stands out. Investing in staff and holding them accountable to clearly defined values will make any program a winner.

How to create customer loyalty

Gallup has conducted extensive polling and found only one characteristic that will create customer loyalty. It is to have a real customer connectedness- to have an emotional connectedness. Emotional connectedness describes what you say and how you act to get people to link to you emotionally. Customer retention will happen when an emotional bond is created between your staff and the customer. Unfortunately only 18% of customers say they have an emotional bond to a business. What if we could get a 25% or even 50% score? It would keep our courts full. Here are some specific tips:

- Allow only an instructor who truly cares and enjoys teaching beginning lessons teach the class. This honest, authentic caring will show through.
- Educate the instructors about this principle. Make sure they understand that creating an emotional connectedness is part of giving a successful lesson just as much as using the correct color of ball. Make it clear this will have an impact upon their income as well. All instructors should know this is part of their job description.
- Have fun. Make it a contest. Have instructors reporting how they created a member connectedness experience at a staff meeting. They could say, “I found out Mrs. Smith was new to town. I got her into a beginning class.” “I found out that two boys in my class both loved dogs. I told that to the parents and now the kids are playing together with their dogs.”

Create the bond with the customer begins at the first interaction. Here is an example of a telephone procedure.

Make sure everyone answering the telephone at your facility is prepared to answer questions and sign-up callers. The goal is to make every caller feel important; welcomed and excited about trying tennis. Therefore, each staff member needs to understand a few basic facts about your programs, be positive, helpful and informative.

When a caller inquires about your tennis programs, we suggest asking and going over the following:

1. How did you hear about us?
2. May I get your name, address and phone number?
3. Give the caller available lesson or program dates and times and ask which time will be most convenient for them. Do you prefer morning, evenings or weekends?
4. Do you know how to get here?
5. Review any particular facility regulations. Let them know what to wear and bring.

6. Remind the caller to have his or her friends and family sign up. This is the easiest way to get additional participants to the facility.

7. Thank the caller for signing up and welcome them to tennis.

Sample Phone Call:

Staff: Thank you for calling ABC Tennis Center, this is Melissa, how can I help you today?

Caller: Hi, this is Sharon. I was calling to get more information about your tennis lessons.

Staff: It would be my pleasure Sharon. Can I first have your full name, address and phone number please?

Caller: Yes, it's Sharon Jones . . . 16 Aces Court, Tennis City, VA 22302 and my phone# is 555-555-5555.

Staff: Thank you Sharon. What we have is an adult entry-level program. It is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7-8:30 pm or we have a weekend program that is on Saturdays and Sundays and starts at 9am. Do you prefer mornings, evenings or weekends.

Caller: Saturday and Sunday at 9am is perfect!

Staff: Super, I will put you down for this Saturday and Sunday at 9am.

Staff: Do you know where we're located Sharon?

Caller: I'm not sure exactly.

Staff: We're located just at the intersection of Agassi Ave. and Sampras Rd. Just look for the Tennis Wellness Center banner. You can't miss it.

Staff: Sharon, do you mind if I ask you how you heard about us?

Caller: Oh sure, I went and saw it online at www.TennisWellnessCenter.com

Staff: Great! Thanks! Do you have any other questions about us or our programs?

Caller: Actually ... yes. What do I bring?

Staff: Good question. Just bring your racquet and dress casual ... shorts and T-shirt with tennis shoes and we'll handle the rest. If you don't have a racquet, we can provide a loaner racquet at no charge. Also please tell your friends and family to sign up! We have a lot of programs that are really fun and easy to learn.

Caller: Sounds wonderful. I will!

Staff: Thank you so much for calling us today, Sharon. We look forward to having you.

Caller: Thank you. Good bye!

Immediately after completing the call, send out a reminder postcard confirming the day and time of their lesson.

Make reminder phone calls to each participant the day before the lesson. This will reduce no shows considerably and make the participant feel welcomed at your facility. If payment is to be made, collect it upfront during the call.

Chapter 4. Sales

The first concept to understand is that there is no magic involved in getting someone to sign up for a tennis class. Successful sales persons -in any industry- apply proven techniques. Let's discuss what those are.

Know that athletic club industry sales statistics prove that a person is 50% sold before they come into your facility. They would not make the effort to contact you if they did not have some interest. Much of whether they become sold can depend upon how staff handles the interaction.

Relax. Enjoy! You have nothing to feel uncomfortable about. You are introducing them to the best sport they can play. View yourself not in sales- which can have a negative connotation. View yourself in customer services. You are sincerely interested in what is best for the customer.

Know why people want to play tennis

This is a major concept that cannot be misunderstood and must be passed onto all staff. People do not play tennis for tennis! ***People play tennis for the benefits that tennis brings them.*** There are many reasons to play tennis

- for the exercise
- for the mental challenge
- to meet a new group of friends
- for the competition
- to enjoy a family time together
- to make business contacts
- to enjoy time with friends
- for the fun of playing

It is critical to understand why someone would have an interest to take up tennis and then make sure we match the benefit to their need. If they are looking for new friends- make sure they meet people. If they want to just have fun- get them involved in play days. If they want exercise- show them how to use the ball machine. This is the essence of selling- matching benefits to needs.

A second major point to understand is that we are in the positive lifestyle change business. Tennis is a sport that provides many positive, healthy benefits. It sells itself. New players come to your facility for a reason known to them. It is your job to gain knowledge of what that reason is and match elements of your to benefit them.

There are three elements needed to be a successful salesperson.

1. Your personal enthusiasm. If you sincerely believe in the product and project that sincerity and confidence to the buyer, there is obviously a greater chance to close the sale. The best way to project this is to just be who you are.
2. Product knowledge. A sales person must thoroughly understand every aspect of the product they are selling.
3. Selling skills. There are definite skills to understand and master that do have a dramatic impact on creating a greater number of successful sales.

Make sure the person discussing joining your tennis program with a prospective player understands these three elements and the selling skills listed below.

Selling Skills

1. Understand first, that a sale is about creating a relationship. Therefore, good communication is essential. The elements involved in communication are tone, words, and nonverbal (body language).
 - Tone is having good inflection and projecting enthusiasm in your voice. Be aware of the speed at which you speak and also your volume. 38% of communication.
 - Be aware of your words. Eliminate “you know, things like that, that sort of thing.” Choose words to make them powerful and eliminate unnecessary words. 7% of communication.
 - To have self-awareness and self-management over body language is mandatory. 55% of communication. Be aware:

- Head nodding- connotes affirmation
- Eye contact- connotes interest
- Smiling- creates a bond and safety
- Proximity of space- when walking between spaces- walk next to the person- not ahead of them
- Gestures- can express enthusiasm
- Posture- carry yourself with good posture
- Dress- communicates a level of professionalism
- Initial handshake- communicates strength

The most powerful form of communication is through body language. It is worthwhile and time well spent to discuss and train interpersonal communication skills. Conducting role playing exercises under supervision and perfecting good body language is critical.

A study from Harvard claims that 80% of communication that takes place in the first minute or two is done through body language. Good nonverbal communication skills are critical to establish a safe and positive relationship. Body language plays the dominant role when we meet someone new. This is why the phrase, "You never get a second chance at a first impression" is so true.

2. Listening. People listen with less than 50% accuracy. People remember less than 50% of what they hear. It is critical to be better than this. It is of paramount importance to understand the essence of good selling is to ask questions- listen well for the answer- and then match the benefit of tennis with the needs they told you. So, selling is so simple to understand. It is important to collect all the data. Listen to their answers; read their body language accurately; respond well to their talk.

Understanding social styles is such a big part of listening. You must talk the language by how they view the world. For example, a driver wants to know about results so he or she can utilize their time efficiently. An amiable wants to know how friendly the other players in the class are- how nice the staff is.

Driver- give shorter, goal oriented answers

Analytical- task oriented, talk to people with facts

Amiable- use feeling words, emphasize team environment

Expressive- they like relationships and ideas

Use words and answers consistent with their social style. Understand how they view the world/make decisions. Hone your skills to sell to a person's personality. Notice how they are dressed; the type of eye contact they gave you; how firm was the handshake; how outgoing are they; how engaged are they; what kinds of questions do they ask. Customize your message to their personality.

3. Create a relationship. Understand that every buying decision is made to fulfill an unfulfilled need or solve a problem. Most buying decisions have an emotional base. Focus on their needs. The conversation should be 70% listening. Ask nonthreatening, closed and open ended questions used to identify their needs and state of mind. Open ended questions open up the response. "So, tell me why did you come to the tennis area today? What is your opinion of how much fun it would be to learn to

play tennis? Closed ended questions elicit a specific answer. “Have you ever tried tennis before?”
“Have you ever been in a group sports program before?” You are conducting a needs analysis.

4. Overcoming price objections

Understand that questions and objections that are legitimate are ok. A person may be intimidated by joining a program. A person may not be familiar with your facility or ever been in a tennis facility. They may not be ready to make a decision to either join or start an exercise program. One way to put them at ease is to “*Reduce to the ridiculous.*” This reduce the entire price into smaller pieces. It will seem reasonable to them. For example, if your program is \$60, say, “Each class is only \$7.50. I am sure that seems reasonable to you.”

5. Create a strong visual of “Down the Road.” State “We will partner with you and in a few short weeks will feel so much better; be playing better; seeing the changes in your game; have more energy; be connected with new friends; developed new tennis partners. When that happens- it just fuels the fire! Is that what you are looking for?” (This is a trial close). Again- you are building desire.

6. Create differentiation. Explain to them why your program is a quality offering. Tell them of your certified and trained staff of professionals. Tell them of the exceptional culture in your facility.

7. Give the A/B solution. Never ask if they want to sign up, instead ask: Would you prefer to take during the day or evening? Never ask if they want to sign up, instead offer solutions. Steer them to an answer and program.

8. Closing. This is what is uncomfortable for some tennis professionals and staff talking to a prospective player. They feel as if they are imposing on someone by asking them to join the group; that they person may react in a negative way; that- maybe – their lessons are not worth as much as they are charging.

Develop a close- the ability to ask them to join the beginner’s class- with a phrase that flows and you feel comfortable with. Set their thinking : “If you chose to join our program”; “Can you see yourself as liking that?”; “Can you see yourself as a successful player?”; “Our members tell us...”

So what is important to remember?

- You have an excellent product- be confident in it’s worth. Compared to what other professional level services charge- tennis lessons are very reasonable.
- Prospective beginners are there because they made the positive decision. They were not dragged there. They are probably eager to get started or get going.
- They expect – at the end of a group lesson- to be asked to take another. This will not offend them.
- You are providing them with expertise or an activity that they are seeking. You will be doing them a favor when you meet their needs. Tennis Corporation of America has been operating a very successful beginner tennis program for many years. Their statistics- which are supported by other well run programs- show that 50% of the people who are in your beginning program will sign up for the second program and that 20% of the original participants will become serious tennis players.

Biggest concept. What is the most important idea in selling your beginning tennis program? If people feel it is a value- they will join. A value is when a customer feels the product meets or exceeds their expectations. Deliver a professional program and you will be successful.

Questions

1. Since nonverbal communication skills are the most powerful form of communication, do you have a training program to teach this skill?
2. Are you confident your staff understands that people play tennis for the benefits of tennis and for the positive lifestyle change?
3. What do you do to create value in your beginner program?
4. Do you think your tennis teachers or persons responsible for selling your tennis program can recognize the social style of someone they speak with?

Chapter 5. Marketing

There are many ways to create new business.

Lead generation. This is where you proactively seek new players. Gone are the days when sufficient customers would walk in on their own. There are many organizations to approach to find prospective customers.

People like to sign up with others like themselves. Contact notable corporations, small businesses, real estate agencies, churches, apartment buildings, property management companies, academic institutions, young business persons clubs, chamber of commerce; have a staff person speak at various service clubs to describe the program, adult single clubs; offer classes to boy or girl scouts.

Combine new leads with existing leads and contacts into one comprehensive database.

Identify which People specific leads expected to be most promising and prioritize database as such. Contact highest priority leads first.

Develop a calling and emailing schedule with weekly target goals. Document those leads where a contact is made - meaning email, phone, or in-person conversation. An unanswered voicemail does not count. **Goal: make contact and set an appointment, their place of business, or other location.**

Chapter 7. Hosting kickoff and special events

Here are ideas from tennis industry veterans who run successful events

Bill Rennie Objectives for TennisFest located in San Diego

1. Offer a FREE, Open House style event, 1-day/year, to the public where we can showcase all tennis has to offer a community
2. Feature:
 - a. Clubs
 - b. Pros
 - c. Programs
 - d. Products
 - e. Ancillary/support services

3. Attract a healthy mix of people from newbies to advanced players to create atmosphere, with a heavy focus on new, curious newcomers to the game

Requirements:

1. Create an organizing committee of 5-10 people (hopefully key people that can help with influence the requirements necessary to hold the event)
2. Find a club, large enough, that will donate their courts for $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ of a day.
3. Pick a date on the social calendar, during “tennis month” that doesn’t conflict with too many other community events (we picked the 1st Sunday in May), which is before Mother’s Day.
4. Pro’s – to showcase pros from throughout the community, along with their clubs/facilities. Need enough Pros to have at least 2 on each court
5. Underwriter/sponsor to cover essential costs
 - a. Welcome bags (combination of purchased and donated items)
 - b. T-shirts
 - c. Admin costs for printing flyers, “day of”- ice, water, etc.
6. Sound system for announcements and music
7. Find someone to Emcee the event
8. Determine different court activities for each court that speak to all levels and ages of attendees
9. Onsite first aid
10. Raffle prizes – to hold attendees interest until the end

Format:

1. Offer online and paper registration to track attendees for admin purposes, open 6-8 weeks in advance of the event
 - a. Ask for basic personal information, for communication purposes, along with a description of their tennis interest
 - i. Examples of how we ask: Are you curious about tennis but have not played? Are you an occasional player? Do you play with friends and participate in leagues, Do you play in tournaments?
 - b. Close registration 1.5 days before or when enough registrations are taken to guarantee welcome bags to those who register
 - c. Email out occasional reminders throughout the registration process reminding and or updating registrants on TennisFest
2. Provide check in for pre-registrants the day off so they can receive their Welcome Bags
3. Create a Welcome event/Orientation to kick off the day, where you can explain what’s going on, introduce the Pros, Clubs, Sponsors etc. and format
 - a. We created a community award to give away to someone recognized for “lifelong commitment to tennis in the community”. We named the award after a well-known tennis personality in the community
4. Organize some sort of entertainment to:
 - a. Open the event - exhibition while people are assembling or music etc.)
 - b. During the event - music, announcements, etc.
 - c. Close the event – another exhibition or fun on-court activities while raffle prizes are given away
5. Create “festival-like” atmosphere where people can go to any court at any time, to watch or participate
6. Provide off-court activities as well, to maximize space and appeal to beginners who may not want their first experience to be on-court in front of others

7. Allow vendors to set up their own pop-up tents and displays around the “common area” where people will naturally adjourn to meet, like where the “Opening Welcome Event” occurs
8. Event starts with Check-in at 11am, Opening Ceremonies/Welcome at 12noon-12:45, players and pros go to courts at 12:45-1:00pm, on-court activities from 1-3, Closing event/Raffle 3-4pm

Promotions/Advertising:

1. Lo-no cost includes:
 - a. posting flyers in sporting goods stores
 - b. Posting event to online social calendars, usually offered by local media channels – TV, Radio stations, Chambers of Commerce, etc.
 - c. Sending out flyers to all clubs, parks and recs, media outlets, service groups like Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimists Clubs, High School Tennis Coaches
 - d. Set up a facebook page
 - e. Encourage all tennis folks to invite friends they know who’d like to try tennis, along with their kids
2. Things we’ve done through the years to keep the event fresh are:
 - a. We’ve spent money “Celebrities/Entertainment/”Names, etc”

Facts about San Diego Tennis Fest:

1. We are about to have out 16th Annual in May 2016
2. Committee starts to meet in January to plan. We meet once or twice a month to plan and update
 - a. Key things to do is get commitment from facility and pros and primary sponsor (we locked these down after a few years, so now it’s smooth sailing from year to year)
 - b. Committee spends the rest of the time reaching out to the community:
 - i. for raffle prizes, donations for hit for prize courts, VIK items like donations from drink/energy bar companies who’ll come on site to give away samples, hotels, restaurants, gift cards, etc.
 - ii. Dropping off flyers
 - iii. Talking with local movers and shakers, like pro sport teams, media outlets etc., promoting the event and raising awareness
3. We have pretty much maxed out our 25 court facility with 1,000+ attendees + 60-70 local teaching pros, + 30-40 sponsors/vendor booth participants
4. Event duration approximately 5 hours
5. Committee meets the evening before the event to stuff welcome bags in preparation for check-in the next day
6. We close online registration when it gets to 800 (so we can guarantee welcome bags to those who register and budget accordingly), then we take walk-ups which total 200+ but we don’t guarantee them welcome bags and we don’t disrupt check in for those who’ve registered because of walk ups...they must wait
7. We always take a group picture of all the pros who show up that we promote year round (we make the day all about the pros and the experience they provide for those who attend)
8. Our primary sponsor/underwriter is the San Diego District Tennis Association
9. Our budget has grown to \$7K, which goes mostly to T-shirts and a can of balls that we give everyone, plus some other items for the welcome bags
10. We offer a \$250 honorarium to local colleges who provide players for exhibition matches
11. Everyone who attends get receives:
 - a. A welcome bag – can of balls, promotional items, t-shirt, a flyer that has a list of all sponsors, all pros, clubs and contact info, sun screen, energy bars, over-grips, etc.
 - b. Two raffle tickets for closing event

Here's a link to some tennisfest pictures: http://sandiegotennis.com/Tennis%20Fest/2015_tennis_fest.htm

This is from Peg Connor "Welcome To Tennis" Family Tennis Festival Recap

Date: Saturday, October 17th from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm

Location: Markward Recreation Center in Center City West, Philadelphia

Weather: Temps in the mid/high 60's, sunny, slight breeze

Facility Type: Public Parks & Recreation facility in downtown Philadelphia

Facility Details: 2 full size tennis courts

Event Details:

1. This was a drop-in festival-style "Welcome To Tennis" type of event held in conjunction with an annual local community Fall Festival.
2. Annual fall festival draws ~1,500 people annually, depending on weather
3. Many festival activities cost money but tennis is free
4. Activities were provided with levels for everyone

Promotion:

1. Advance promotion was mostly handled by the festival through flyers but also posted thru social media to local parks & recreation groups, CTAs & other tennis folks
2. During the event, the festival DJ made multiple announcements about the tennis activities. Jokingly said there was a famous player on the courts & that brought people over to inquire and most stayed & played.
3. See attached flyer & social media posts.

Equipment:

1. Twenty eight (28) Assorted racquets, mostly 19", 21" & 23" racquets
2. Three (3) dozen Red Foam & Felt balls
3. Six (6) Butterfly net racquets & bean bags for little ones
4. USTA Schools Activity Station Signs
5. Cones
6. Hula Hoops
7. Jump Ropes

Personnel:

1. Two-three coordinators (tennis people)
2. Two-three volunteers (non-tennis people)

Keys to success:

1. Keep everyone safe
2. Make everyone feel welcome
3. Keep everyone happy, moving & having fun
4. Be flexible...let people be self-directed & move to the areas they prefer
5. Stand by with suggestions & advice...but no teaching at this event.
6. Have everyone identify as a tennis player at the conclusion of the event
7. Get a name & email address of interested parties to follow up
8. Hand out materials with local tennis resources listed.

Three key parts to the event:

1. Welcome:
 - a. Welcome participants & distribute Kid's Club booklet
 - b. Assessment & Racquet Match
 - c. Overview/Guide to activities
2. Activities:
 - a. The USTA Schools Curriculum was utilized to establish 3 "zones" on the court & also to match up with the Kid's Club tennis activity booklet that was distributed.
 - b. Stations (1/2 court)
 - c. Small courts with cones & jump ropes (1/2 court)
 - d. One full-sized tennis court set up with six (6) 36' courts & pop-up nets
3. Goodbye:
 - a. Sign-up sheet for email & program type (Adult, Youth, Family, Other)
 - b. Gather racquet & ball.
 - c. Delivery of Kid's Clubs Materials with local tennis websites listed.

Results:

1. Approximately 200 people come through the courts.
2. Families played together, sometimes multi generations on one court.
3. Very low key, no instruction, people moved to & thru activities on their own.
4. A total of 22 people signed up for more info.
5. The 22 people indicated interest in the following tennis program types:
 - a. Adult: 6
 - b. Youth: 19
 - c. Family: 8
 - d. Six (6) of the people indicated an interest in all three program types.

Follow-up:

1. Sent an email to participants after the event.
2. Posted pictures of the event on local parks & rec & CTA social media sites.

3. Involved the local CTA – South Philly Tennis Association.
4. Involved USTA sectional staff – USTA Middle States.

Things to consider adding to improve the next “Welcome To Tennis” event:

1. Racquet height chart to make it easy for parents to identify correct equipment
2. Fun banners to take pictures in front of with web address and/or hash tag on them...make it more of an exciting atmosphere & people will share thru social.
3. Pro players on banners...show examples of Bry Bros & Monfils from DC tourney. Again, creates more of an exciting atmosphere & people will share thru social channels.
4. Add more volunteers to welcome people & to ensure that we capture emails and hand out materials to all participants.
5. Music at this festival was provided by the DJ. If no DJ, make sure to have music playing to add an exciting atmosphere.

Chapter 9 Family Tennis Initiative Teaching Program

Components of this section contain:

- Teaching principles. These are major foundation points that are critical for the beginner to understand to be successful.
- Session models. These are examples of how to teach a beginner program.
- Drills. There is an extensive list of drills and games to play.
- Pathways. This is a list of suggestions how to move the students along.
- Thoughts on teaching aids
- Take home drills to give to the participants.
- Off court administrative checklist.

What is **not** included is a discussion on sending skills. Grips, footwork, and stroke production techniques are so varied that this is not the forum to discuss the differences. It is left to the instructor to determine how the mechanics of a stroke is taught.

Teaching Principles

These are major nonnegotiable principles that must be communicated to the beginner. Implementation of these will rapidly improve their success and enjoyment. Lack of clarity on these points will severely limit their progress.

The Essence of Tennis- Contact Point

If you could teach only one idea- the most important idea- the building block to construct a teaching system upon- what would it be? The answer is contact point. The entire purpose to cover the court better and to develop a reliable stroke pattern is to be able to consistently strike the ball at the optimal spot. ***Where a player makes contact with the ball is the most important concept to understand.*** The contact point determines what shots are possible or impossible to hit. There is an ideal or optimal

contact point for each stroke. Making contact at this optimal point will enable a player to put forth the minimum amount of effort to achieve the maximum amount of power and control. Making contact at a less than the ideal spot, does not mean a player has to miss the shot, but that they must choose a less difficult target or hit with less pace or both. ***Beginners will have no idea how to develop a consistent and optimal contact point. This must be taught. All lesson plans should be developed with the contact point as the starting place and players should continue to develop their contact point awareness.***

View Video

The Foundation of Tennis- Balance

Tennis is a sport where you must control the moving parts. The moving parts are the ball; the racquet; the body. Since the body holds onto the racquet and the racquet hits the ball- the starting place is to control the body. ***Balance- or body control- is the foundation of tennis.*** We are trying to create players who can hit shots with a maximum amount of body control and be stable (and load) whenever possible. Beginning players must be taught what good balance feels like. ***Many beginners will not possess the self-awareness skills or understand the necessity to be balanced during their shots.***

We cannot take for granted beginners will be stable on their shots because balance is a result of their contact point. Judging a ball correctly is a developing skill. Therefore, contact points for beginners will be all over the place. Stability and balance will suffer. An ideal contact point will allow for perfect body position and body control. Body adjustments will have to be made during the stroke if the contact point is awkward. The more sudden, unplanned adjustments required during the stroke, the more errors that will occur. Good footwork-striving to get in good position for every shot-is important. The ability to control the ball is directly related to a player's ability to control their body. We must notice, and if necessary correct, errant body movement in our students. Notice if the player is stable; falling backwards; pulling away prematurely; lifting up on their toes; balanced or awkward while hitting a shot on the run; too tense. The quickest and simplest way for a student to gain self-awareness is to ask them to hold their finish.

Key principle: Have your players hold their finish until total body awareness, stability, and control is achieved. If a player is unable to hold their finish with stability it will be due to an awkward contact point that forces them off balance; lack of self-awareness; a mechanical flaw that forces poor balance.

View video

The Difficulty of Tennis- Receiving or Reading Skills

Tennis is a difficult sport to master for the beginner. This is because no two balls ever come the same way twice. Every incoming ball presents a unique mixture of spin, speed and trajectory (depth and direction). Recognizing all of those variables to get in the best position to strike it at the optimal contact point is critical. Without good reading skills, sending skills can never develop. ***Tennis is a game of reception then projection. Most technical problems are a result of perception / tracking issues. Teaching a new player "to read" the flight of the ball is equally critical if not more important than teaching sending skills.*** Reading skill- whether reading a book or the flight of a tennis ball- is measured by speed and

comprehension. If a new player can comprehend the variables in the flight of a ball that travels 25 miles per hour and lands 10 feet away, they will get to it in time to set up for an optimal contact point. Striking the ball well and controlling the ball should be relatively easy. If their reading skills, though, are slower and they are only fast enough to comprehend a ball traveling 20 miles an hour an 8 feet away, they will not be there in time to execute an efficient swing pattern. It is critical that a player can recognize the trajectory of the ball, decipher where it is going to land and efficiently move to the optimal contact point with a minimal amount of lag time. It is easy to see if we can increase reading speed and improve comprehension, it will increase productivity. Reading the ball sooner, will allow a player to cover more court and have adequate time to set up for their "ideal" contact point.

This principle cannot be overstated. Most beginner players quit due to frustration because their ability to "read" the variables in the flight of the ball is not fast enough to keep up with the reality of the play.

It is possible to teach a new player to dramatically improve their reading speed and comprehension of the variables of the flight of the ball. An entire system – a teaching method with dozens of drills- to accomplish this and get amazing results with your students is contained in the appendix. This is worth the study.

View video

The Secret of Tennis- Head still. The great majority of mishits occur due to the head pulling up prematurely. It is a strong human need to see where the ball is going as soon as possible. Players have to be made aware of and trained to keep their head still. Players must be looking at the point of contact until the stroke is complete. ***Therefore, training players to be aware whether their head is still or moving during the stroke should be an important part of teaching.*** The head also has a great influence upon balance and shot direction. The shoulders open too soon when head looks up early. Traveling down the kinetic chain, the direction of the hand at contact will be affected and then the direction of the racquet face will be altered. The head must stay down throughout the entire swing. The head should not look up until the stroke is complete. There is no reason to "Think about hitting the second shot while still hitting the first shot!"

View video

The Essence of Teaching

Ask as an instructor

The major responsibility as a teaching professional is to "***create self-awareness***" in your student. Your goal is to increase the self-awareness and self-correction skills for an ever increasing number of skills. The best way to accomplish this is to continually do a "temperature taking" and ask the player what they know, feel, and are capable of. Of course, a professional must tell or explain teaching points, but to also ask for their awareness level is important. Many times, try to tie it to their social style. For example, if they are a "touchy, feel" type of person- ask, "Can you feel your back foot lifting up?" if they are a competitive person, ask, "Can you hit 5 serves keeping both feet still for balance?" If they are analytical, ask "Can you see if your shot is landing behind the service line?" Involve them in their own learning.

Teach to the Level of the student

- **Beginners are looking for movement.** Be active immediately. Teaching with lines should be used as seldom as possible. Incorporate play in the first day. Begin with tossing and catching games and progress to rallying.
- **Start on the 36 foot court or the service lines for adults.** Playing on a shorter court is appropriate

- for all beginners.
- **Start with red, orange, and green balls.** Remember, reading the ball in the limited time available is the most difficult aspect for beginners. These balls give them the time they need while developing their reading skills.
 - **Eliminate fear.** This bears repeating. One major reason a participant will drop out of any program is due to the fear of failure and the desire not to look foolish. We can be creative enough to be challenging without embarrassing the new player. This is accomplished in a challenge based- not competition based model. The fear of losing takes over in a competition based program. People do, though, enjoy and want a challenge. Let them pick their form of competition and pathway. Let them find and have their own personal/ internal challenge. Build into the program how they want to play tennis. Craft activities where their passion is fostered. Fun and interest happens when the player finds their own challenge. When competing with another too soon-it kills the buzz.

The lesson plans- the session models would be placed here

Appendix

Reading Skills

One way to identify skills needed to be a successful tennis player is to categorize them as sending skills and receiving skills.

Sending skills are all of the elements that go into sending the ball back to your opponent. Examples are footwork, grips, and stroke work.

Receiving skills are all the input that can be discerned when the ball is traveling in either direction and at the contact point of both players. They can be explained by:

- The ball in flight
 - ✓ Ball traveling away from you and all that can be observed during that time.
 - ✓ Ball traveling toward you and all that can be observed during that time.
- Contact Point
 - ✓ Opponent's contact point and all that can be observed at that moment.
 - ✓ Your own contact point and all that can be observed at that moment.
 - ✓ How the ball felt and sounded leaving your racquet.
 - ✓ The sound of the ball at the opponent's contact point.
- The body position and balance of the opponent
- The court position of the opponent

Only the flight of the ball will be discussed here.

Tennis is a game of reception then projection. Most technical problems are a result of perception / tracking issues. Mike Barrell

If our ability to read, gather information, and observe all the ingredients is nonexistent or poor, then we do not possess the ability to make the best or clear decisions about our shot selection. Also, our reactions will be much slower than they need to be and consequently our court coverage ability will be less.

This module will identify and explain receiving skills as well as give drills to use with your players.

The flight of the ball

Interchangeable terms, or synonyms, are receiving and reading skills. How do we determine how well a player can “read” the variables of the flight of the ball? Reading skills are measured by speed and comprehension. In other words, how fast and accurately can someone “read” or understand what they are undertaking. When reading the written word, we say someone can read 600 words a minute at 80% comprehension. In tennis, we can measure if someone can get to a ball with a speed of 40 miles per hour and lands 15 feet away.

Fortunately, it is possible to develop a language which can be read because the ball is controlled by two laws:

- The ball will travel in a logical and consistent fashion because it is bound by the laws of physics.
- The ball can travel with only three variables.
 - ✓ Spin
 - ✓ Speed
 - ✓ Trajectory

A player does not have to memorize every playing situation in tennis, but instead learn to distinguish the variables in spin, speed, and trajectory and how they flow together to create the flight of the ball. How quickly a player can decipher the parts of the flight of the ball and react to cover the court will determine to a great degree their tennis skill.

A person must decipher 26 letters in the alphabet to read the written word. Just as C-A-T always spells CAT, the flight of the ball will always be consistent. Luckily, in tennis there are only the above stated three variables. At a beginning level of play, speed or speed are not a factor. The biggest variable for beginning players to read is trajectory of the ball.

Let us restate the key principles

- All reading skills are measured by speed and comprehension.
- The faster a player can comprehend where the ball is going, the better their court coverage skills

will be.

Therefore, it is critical that a player can recognize the trajectory of the ball, decipher where it is going to land and efficiently move to the optimal contact point with a minimal amount of lag time.

Drills

Purpose: Recognize ball trajectory accurately and sooner. This will allow for the ideal contact point more often.

1. Have a player hold a ball; drop it. Say bounce & catch; then bounce & waist (understanding waist high is the ideal contact height); then bounce & peak (they need to understand if they are hitting the ball at the peak of the bounce or their relationship to the peak).
2. Toss a ball to them repeating number 1. In a group setting, have them toss underhanded to each other, repeating the above as the ball comes to them. Have them say, bounce and their name as they catch the ball to assist you to remember their names.
3. Toss. Have them step and catch. Toss as they move a few steps- always watching for correct footwork. Make sure they catch the ball at their waist for a groundstroke and around shoulder level with fingers pointing up for mimicking a volley. Progress to have them catch the ball off to the side where a contact point would be.
4. Have them toss a ball above their head and make sure they let it come down to their waist to catch it. The tendency is to catch it at the highest point they can reach.
5. Feed a ball where they have to back up; let the ball come down to their waist when they catch it. Toss balls low and several feet in front of them where they have to move forward and catch before it gets too low to the court.
6. Toss balls with the variety of different heights, further in front; higher to make them back up; directly to them; off to the side. The goal is to read the differences but always catch the ball at the ideal contact point.
7. Repeat #6 by feeding balls while standing on the players side of the net.

Let's progress to rallying.

A player should visually divide the height above the net into three levels- low, middle and high. As a generalization, balls that travel low (0-2 feet) over the net will always land inside the service line (remember we are analyzing beginning level players). Balls that travel a middle height (2-6 or 8 feet) over the net will land in the middle of the backcourt and peak nicely at the baseline. Balls that travel very high over the net will carry deeper and bounce higher.

1. Instructor feeds balls at the three different heights over the net. Players, standing on the service lines and progressing to the baseline, learn to recognize the different heights and move accordingly. Instructor can say what height is coming. Progress to feed a mixture of balls.
2. Have the players rally from the service lines and progressing to the baseline. Have players say "low, middle, or high" out loud so you know they are focusing and can distinguish the height as soon as they can comprehend the trajectory of the ball.
3. The same can be done with players at the net. Feed balls low- a player should understand there is not time to move in and they should stay and handle the ball at their feet. Feed a high, soft floater. The

player should move in and take the ball at the peak or highest comfortable contact point.

4. Add "angle" feeding. Stand on a singles sideline. Feed a sharp crosscourt ball. Get players to recognize the ball will not come back to the baseline and they must move forward at an angle to receive the ball.
5. It isn't so one dimensional just to read the height of the ball over the net because the ball will come with different trajectories. For example, a lob can travel 20 feet over the net and travel at a soft angle and land near the baseline. Another lob could rise at a sharper angle; be the same height; but land much shorter. Feed lobs with different trajectories and have the player begin to understand sooner how to move for each type of lob to get the optimal contact point.
6. Have players rally. Have them increase their awareness of their contact point. Have them say what their contact point is. "Waist; shoulder; knee." Of course, they are striving for a waist high contact point. Have them increase their body awareness. Have them say, "stable; moving, falling backwards." Of course, they are striving for good stability on each shot.
7. Have players rally. Circle among the players, asking questions about their reading success. For example, "What height was your contact point? What height did the ball come over the net?" Applaud their good reading judgments.
If you have a court where you can tie a rope across the net- tie a rope two to three feet over the net; then change the heights if possible. Have them say "above or below" as the ball passes over the net. Have them understand the correlation between the height over the net and where (the depth/ distance from the net) the ball lands on the court.

The player's enjoyment and progression will be greatly increased if they can conquer the most difficult part of the game for a beginner- improving their receiving skills. "Creativity," creating a different contact point on every shot will lead to frustration. "Boring is beautiful" should be the rallying cry to teach better ball judgement skills.

Administrative Off Court Duties

Objectives:

1. To successfully integrate non playing tennis customers into tennis programs, activities and events.
2. To ensure continued development of basic skills to progress each player to the low intermediate or intermediate level.
3. To establish in each new player a strong affiliation and affinity with the game of tennis so that a minimum of 50% continue as active players.

Responsibilities:

1. Develop a personalized program for each player to ensure their needs are met.
2. Establish program for instructors or desk team members to periodically communicate with students who joined classes to inform students of special programs, events and special opportunities.

3. To make sure every player is informed of pathways that meet their needs. Arrange games, join in play days or cardio tennis, or get into a league to assure play and interaction.

Consider:

1. It has been shown that a program that meets two times per week for 3 weeks has the best retention. There is concrete evidence that a lesson twice a week and also offers a free or reduced play day time is much better for adherence.
2. Offering 6 or 8 students in a class at a cheaper price to attract wary prospective students works well.
3. Offering free or reduced court time- “practice time” at non-prime time – open court times- as an incentive to play helps the feeling of a value and the enjoyment. Let them bring a friend or family member not in the class as well.
4. Offering a bonus or commission system for desk team members who sign people up. Also offer an incentive for instructors for each person that signs up for the next session or they get into a league.
5. Offering a special racquet purchase & price at conclusion of class.

Marketing:

1. Post flyers in club.
2. Email blast to various groups.
3. Tell non tennis staff- engage them to sell.
4. Work with other departments- get them to mention and announce the tennis program.
5. Offer a onetime free or discounted class to all other staff to get them familiar with tennis- they can be your biggest advocates.
6. Have a booth at front area of the facility to advertise the program. Have staff there during prime times.
7. Place staff in T shirts advertising the classes.
8. Make sure tennis desk is well informed to sell the lessons. Make sure check in for 1st lesson assures a warm welcome and good communication. Inform desk how to handle latecomers after first 10 minutes.

Operations

1. Assign a teacher who is passionate about teaching beginners.
2. Give lesson plans to teacher.
3. Assemble teaching aids.
4. Assign courts.
5. Send correspondence including welcome letter.
6. Process registration forms. Collect all fees.
7. Enter participant data in computer.

8. Prepare name tags for lesson one.
9. Assemble temporary membership cards or facility access if appropriate.
10. Call after lesson one for feedback.
11. Call all no shows.
12. Make sure all handouts are ready and given out.
13. Give a group tour of facility after lesson including welcome packet for players new to the facility.
14. Conduct check on class attendance.
15. Update participation and retention statistics as needed.
16. Begin game arranging.
17. Speak with participant to help generate leads for other players.
18. Give discount for next class session by letter and/ or in person if appropriate.
19. Give thank you for continuing/joining/taking class in person and/ or in letter.
20. Confirm sign up for next session.
21. Discuss what pathways are available and what their interests are.

Teaching Aids

There are plenty of useful tools that stimulate learning; makes the program more fun for the student and teacher; makes your job much easier. There are aids to fit any budget and type of teaching need.

If there is no budget: Hang a towel over the net on place on the court for a target. You can even draw a bull's eye on it. Cut up a rope and place on court as an obstacle course or use as a line or corner target; place on court for class control; make into a circle. Cut the strings out of a racquet and loop a net through it so a player can catch the ball in the netting. Refill a plastic jug with water or sand for a target or use several for an obstacle course. The use of balloons is practical and fun.

Teach contact point: Eye Coach; Sport Swing stand; Volcano (a stream of air supports a foam ball)

Targeting: Circle; cones; Hulu hoops (either on the court or suspended next to the net); target trainers; lines & corners; blow up knockdown targets; use caution tape strung across 2 chairs or large cones. Lay painters tape on the court surface

Movement, Fun, & Fitness tools: Z-balls; cones; ladders; tennis ball with streamer; tennis football

Class control: Ropes; lines; kids feet markers

Cones: These are colorful plastic pylons used as obstacles or targets. Substitute with shoe boxes, tennis ball cans or pyramids created by tennis balls.

Koosh balls: A ball made up of colorful rubber strings bound together to form a ball, available at most toy stores. Substitute with beanbags or sock balls.

Playground balls: 10- to 12-inch textured inflated rubber balls. Substitute with beach balls, volleyballs, soccer balls or basketballs.

Poly spots and donuts: Colorful flat rubber, non-slip spots and circles for on court marking. Substitute with carpet squares or sidewalk chalk.

Portable nets: Several portable net systems are available and come either in individual pieces that need to be joined to construct a frame for a net, or with all pieces attached by an elastic cable so they easily fit together and pop up so the net can be attached to the frame. A simple substitute would be to use caution tape or surveyor tape tied to the net, fence or chair.

Throw-down lines: Flat non-slip rubber strips approximately 2 inches by 24 inches that can be used as temporary lines for courts. Substitute with sidewalk chalk, a chalk snap line, masking tape or painter's tape. (Use a tape that will not pull

Pathways

It is best if multiple options are available for the player. Players will be at different interest and comfort levels. To force someone into competition is just as damaging as not to offer any option. Possible options are:

- Stay in the class for a 2nd time
- Advance to an intermediate class
- Get involved in Cardio Tennis. Cardio Tennis is a high energy fitness activity that combines the best features of the sport of tennis with cardiovascular exercise, delivering the ultimate, full body, calorie burning aerobic and anaerobic workout.

The Cardio Tennis experience includes :

- Proper warm-up, cardio games and cool down
- The agility ladder
- Heart rate monitors
- Cardio Balls (red, orange and green)
- Cardio blasts

The purpose of Cardio Tennis is :

- To train in your heart rate zones
Players get into and stay in their heart rate zones with ease because of the fun factor
- To burn calories
- To train for TENNIS

It is a very safe and healthy workout for players of all ability and fitness levels and ages. It is a perfect environment for FAMILIES to recreate together.

- Flexible Team Competition
 - Concept: To allow for team competition in a situation where the student population changes from day to day.
 - How to: Divide students into teams and play a series of short scoring matches (e.g., 11-point games or 21-point games) or for a designated time (10-minute matches). Each team may have, for instance, four doubles squads. At the end of the period, points can be totaled to determine the day's winner.

- Round-Robin Tournaments
 - Concept: Provide students with equal opportunity for singles or doubles play in a non-elimination format.
 - How to: Players are divided into four to five small groups of four to five students. Students will play all other students within that group.

- Tennis Night Out. Offer family tennis activities on a Friday night or slower time on the weekend. Offer pizza or refreshments with the activities.
- JTT- Get the children involved in Junior Team Tennis
- Non-prime time activities. Offer mixers; leagues; socials; ball machine rentals in non-prime time for a discount.
- Play a compass draw tournament.
- Schedule a social mixer with players from another class or club.
- Get involved in a 2.5 USTA league team.