

REFERRAL PROGRAM LAUNCH KIT

Everything you need to decide before your referral program goes live: what a referral is worth, who gets rewarded, the rules that stop gaming, and the one-breath explanation your staff will give.

1 SET YOUR REWARD CEILING

Two numbers get you to the right reward. Any reward under the second one is cheaper than what you already pay for a member.

Member lifetime value: average monthly dues \$ _____ × average months a member stays _____ = \$ _____

What an ad-sourced member costs you: last quarter's ad spend \$ _____ ÷ members those ads brought in _____ = \$ _____

Your reward: \$ _____ (between "cheap enough to be an insult" and "more than an ad costs you")

Need your lifetime value? The Gymdesk retention calculator works it out from your dues and how long people stay: gymdesk.com/tools/gym-member-retention-calculator

2 PICK THE REWARD AND THE MODEL

Reward type: ☐ Account credit ☐ Free month ☐ Cash ☐ Gear ☐ Experience (private lesson, seminar seat)

Who gets it: ☐ Single-sided (the member who referred) ☐ Double-sided (both) ☐ Recipient-only (the friend)

Member's reward: _____ **Friend's reward:** _____

Why this model: _____

Single-sided when members already refer and you're formalizing it. **Double-sided** when the friend is nervous about the first visit. **Recipient-only** on a tight budget: in one working paper, rewarding only the friend performed like a double-sided reward that cost twice as much.

3 WRITE THE RULES DOWN BEFORE YOU LAUNCH

Every one of these is easier to enforce on day one than in an argument on day ninety. Tick each rule you're adopting.

WAY IT GETS GAMED	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	THE RULE THAT STOPS IT	ADOPTED
Self-referral	A member "refers" their own second account	No self-referrals	☐
Fake signup	A friend joins, never pays, and disappears	Reward only after the first payment and _____ days active	☐
Cancel-and-return	A member quits and rejoins under a friend's name	Former members don't count as new	☐
Household stacking	A family splits one signup into several referrals	One household counts once	☐
Double claim	Two members both say they brought the same friend	The name given at first contact wins	☐
Retroactive claim	A member asks for credit months after their friend joined	The referrer has to be named at signup	☐

The one rule: don't pay the reward until you've earned the revenue.

4 THE PROGRAM IN ONE BREATH

Your staff should be able to say this without looking at anything. Fill it in, then read it out loud.

"Bring a friend. When they join and _____, you get _____ and they get _____. Just make sure they tell us your name when they sign up."

5 SEED IT WITH YOUR CORE TEN

Launch to your most loyal members first. Watch where they get confused and what their friends ask, then fix it before everyone hears about it.

1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10

7 MATERIALS BEFORE GO-LIVE

- ☐ A one-page rules sheet (page one of this kit)
- ☐ A simple explanation members can understand
- ☐ Front-desk prompts your team can use
- ☐ A digital place to capture referrals
- ☐ A clear reward timeline

10 REFERRAL LOG

If you're tracking on paper or a spreadsheet, these are the five fields. Someone has to keep it current.

NEW MEMBER	REFERRED BY	FIRST CONTACT DATE	QUALIFYING DATE	REWARD ISSUED

11 THE FOUR NUMBERS TO CHECK EACH QUARTER

METRIC	WHAT IT TELLS YOU	STARTING TARGET	YOURS
Referral rate	Share of new members who came from a referral	About 20%, working toward 20–40%	
Participation rate	Share of members who've referred at least one person	80%+ in a tight-knit academy (most businesses see far less)	
Referred retention	Whether referred members stay longer than everyone else	Beat your organic retention	
Payback period	How fast a member's dues cover the reward	About 1–2 months	

6 FRONT-DESK PROMPTS

Put both questions on every entry point: lead form, inquiry workflow, waiver, front desk.

At first contact: "How did you hear about us?"

If it's a referral: "Who can we thank?"

- ☐ On the lead form
- ☐ In the inquiry workflow
- ☐ On the waiver
- ☐ In the front-desk script

8 WHEN A REFERRED MEMBER JOINS

- ☐ Same class as the friend who referred them for the first few weeks
- ☐ The coach knows who brought them
- ☐ Clear up the expectations the friend set before they walked in

9 REMIND EVERY MONTH

- ☐ Monthly email
- ☐ Announcement at the start or end of class
- ☐ Member milestone message