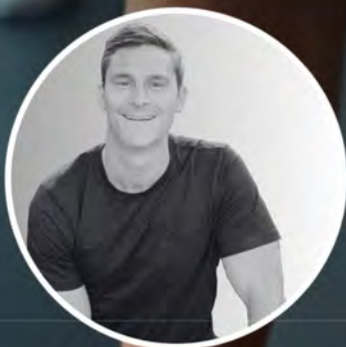


GYMHUB

**THE**  
**WINTER**  
**RETENTION**  
**PLAYBOOK**

**FOR GYM OWNERS**



How to Keep Members  
Showing Up Through the  
2026 Fuel Crisis

BY STEVE GRANT

# WELCOME TO YOUR Q3 WINTER GAMEPLAN



This winter presents a different challenge for gym owners.

Rising fuel prices, increased cost of living, and an uncertain economic outlook are already changing member behaviour. Attendance becomes less consistent, discretionary spending is questioned, and even loyal members begin to reassess their commitments.

For many gyms, this creates risk. For proactive gym owners, it creates opportunity.

The gyms that succeed through this period won't be the ones chasing more sign-ups.

They'll be the ones who **protect retention, stabilize cashflow, and build stronger member relationships when it matters most.**

Because in a tougher economy, retention isn't just important. It's the difference between surviving and growing.

The first 90 days still determine everything.

But now, the goal isn't just engagement. **It's long-term stability and future-proof growth.**

**This playbook is designed for operators who want to:**

- Bulletproof their revenue through uncertain conditions
- Reduce seasonal drop-off during winter
- Build a more resilient, predictable membership base



# **PLAY #1: WIN THE FIRST 14 DAYS**

***CREATE MOMENTUM WHEN MOTIVATION IS LOW***

Winter members don't arrive with the same urgency as January joiners.

They are often:

- Hesitant
- Low energy
- Unsure how to start

The first two weeks are about building momentum early.

## Winter members don't arrive with the same urgency as January joiners.

They are often:

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- 

The first two weeks are about building momentum early.

### Goal of this play:

Remove friction and make showing up feel easy and rewarding.

### Run this play by:

- Over-communicating how to get started
- Simplifying class booking and gym navigation
- Personally guiding first sessions
- Encouraging short, achievable routines (not intensity)

### KEY SHIFT:

- In Q1 you manage overwhelm.
- In Q3 you overcome inertia.





**This is where winter works against you:**

- Cold mornings reduce attendance
- Energy dips
- Schedule consistency drops

## **PLAY #2: BUILD THE ROUTINE BEFORE WINTER DISRUPTS IT**

***SUPPORT CONSISTENCY IN WEEKS 3-6***



Without intervention, members quietly disengage.

**Goal of this play:**

Anchor gym visits into their weekly routine before winter habits take over.

## Run this play by:

- Tracking attendance early and often
- Reaching out after 2–3 missed sessions
- Reinforcing “just show up” over performance
- Offering flexible options (short sessions, quieter times)

Consistency isn't created through motivation.

It's built through visibility and support.

### **KEY SHIFT:**

Routine is not competing with busyness, it's competing with comfort and weather.



# PLAY #3: PROTECT THE FIRST BILLING EXPERIENCE

*WHERE TRUST IS BUILT OR BROKEN*



In winter, members are more likely to question value early:

- “Am I using this enough?”
- “Should I cancel until summer?”

**Goal of this play:**

Make billing feel fair, predictable, and aligned with value.

**Run this play by:**

- Setting clear expectations upfront
- Reinforcing value during the first billing cycle
- Proactively addressing failed payments
- Making support fast and easy

## **KEY SHIFT:**

Billing isn't just about trust, it's about justifying commitment during a low-motivation season.





## **PLAY #4: TURN WINTER MEMBERS INTO HABIT-BASED MEMBERS**

***CREATE MOMENTUM WHEN MOTIVATION IS LOW***

**At this stage, members are deciding:**

- Is this part of my weekly routine?
- Does this help me through winter?
- Do I feel supported here?

## Goal of this play:

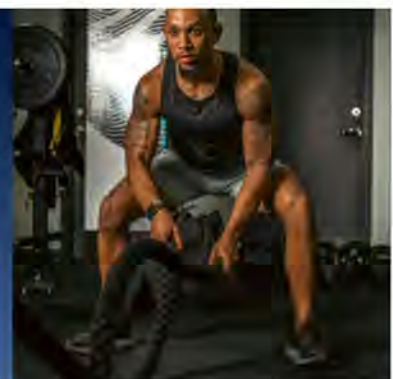
Shift from “trying something new” to “this is what I do each week”.

## Run this play by:

- Celebrating consistency (not just results)
- Creating community touchpoints
- Making staff support visible
- Reinforcing identity: “this is your gym”

## KEY SHIFT:

- In Q1 you convert motivation into habit.
- In Q3 you convert effort into identity.





# **PLAY #5: CREATE A MID-WINTER SOCIAL ANCHOR**

## ***JUNE MEMBER SOCIAL NIGHT***

Winter isn't just a physical drop-off. It's a social one.

### **Members are:**

- Less likely to leave the house
- Less connected to others
- More likely to disengage quietly

A well-timed social event creates a reset point in the middle of winter.

## Goal of this play:

Strengthen emotional connection to your gym and community.

## Run this play by:

- Hosting a June member social night (low pressure, high attendance)
- Keeping it simple: drinks, casual setting, no workout required
- Encouraging staff to actively connect with members
- Personally inviting newer members to accelerate integration

## KEY SHIFT:

- In Q1 you convert motivation into habit.
- In Q3 you convert effort into identity.





By mid-winter, even consistent members can plateau.

## PLAY #6: REIGNITE ENGAGEMENT THROUGH SOCIAL REFERRAL ENERGY

***JULY FRIENDS & FAMILY TRAIN FREE INITIATIVE***



Energy drops.  
Attendance becomes routine or inconsistent.

This is where you inject fresh energy into your gym.

## Goal of this play:

Re-engage current members while driving warm, low-friction referrals.

## Run this play by:

- Running a “Friends & Family Train Free” initiative in July
- Encouraging members to bring someone they already know
- Positioning it as fun and social, not sales-driven
- Following up with guests quickly while momentum is high

## Why this works:

- Members show up more when they bring someone
- The gym environment feels more energetic
- New members come through trusted relationships

## **KEY SHIFT:**

Instead of chasing cold leads, you leverage your existing member base to create momentum.



# PLAY #7: RUN THE Q3 RETENTION CHECK

## *YOUR WINTER ENGAGEMENT AUDIT*

Retention still comes from systems, not luck.

### Weekly Team Check

- Are winter members attending consistently?
- Has anyone stopped showing up due to weather or routine?
- Are we reaching out quickly enough?

### Monthly Owner Review

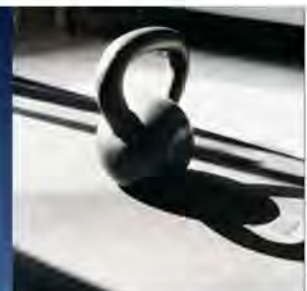
- Are cancellations increasing mid-winter?
- Are members engaging with communication?
- Are systems helping or slowing staff down?

### Winter-Specific Red Flags

- Attendance drops during colder weeks
- “I’ll come back when it’s warmer” language
- Increased payment pauses or cancellations
- Reduced class bookings despite active memberships

### **KEY SHIFT:**

Billing isn't just about trust, it's about justifying commitment during a low-motivation season.



# THE BIGGER PICTURE: TURNING WINTER INTO A COMPETTIVE ADVANTAGE

Winter exposes weak gyms.

But it rewards strong operators.

**While other gyms experience:**

- Attendance drops
- Revenue instability
- Increased cancellations

**Proactive gyms use this period to:**

- Strengthen habits
- Deepen relationships
- Stabilize cashflow

When you retain members through winter, you don't just survive the season. You position your gym for stronger growth heading into spring.

# FINAL THOUGHT

Winter members don't need more motivation.

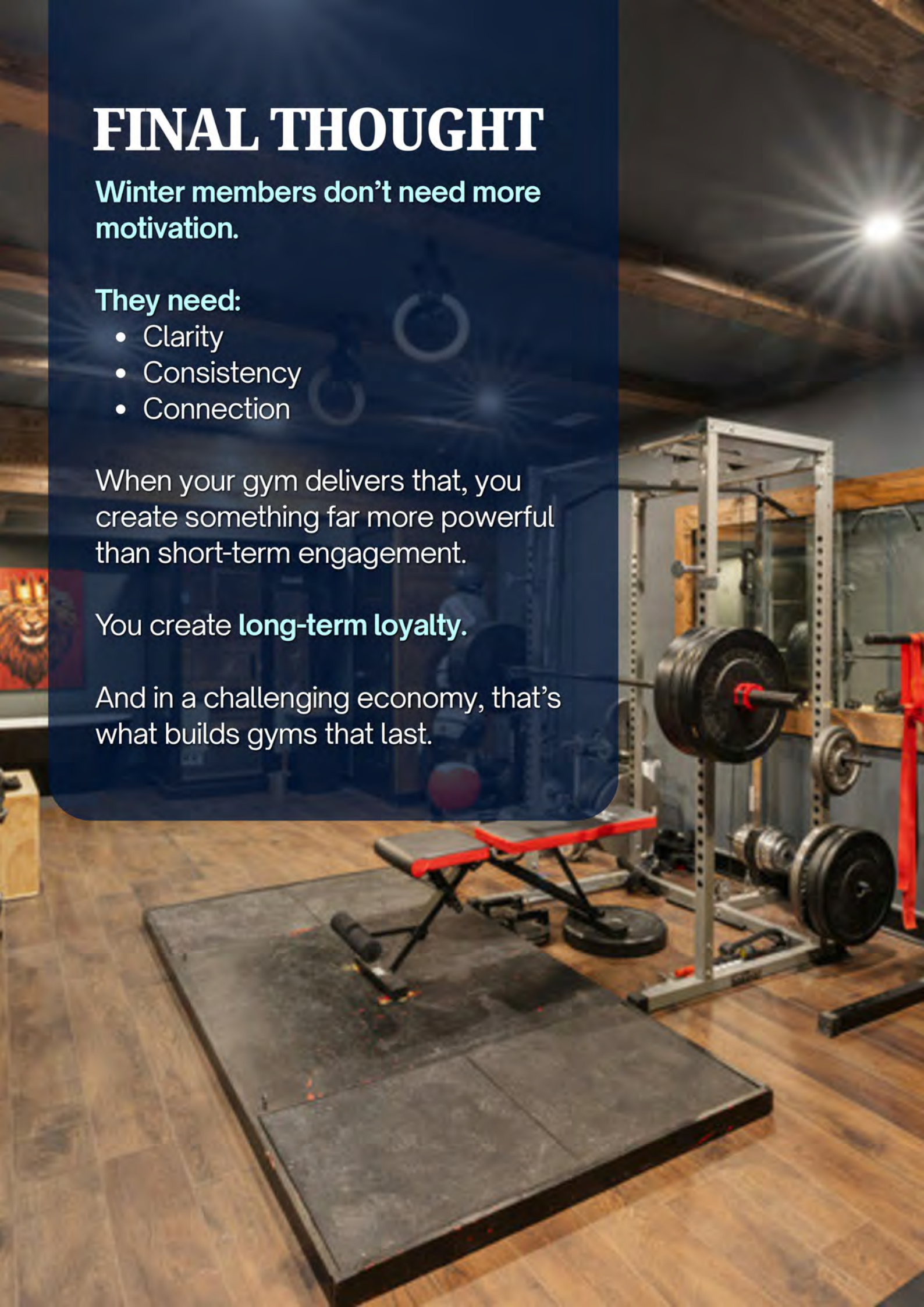
They need:

- Clarity
- Consistency
- Connection

When your gym delivers that, you create something far more powerful than short-term engagement.

You create **long-term loyalty**.

And in a challenging economy, that's what builds gyms that last.



# GYM SUCCESS STORIES



**Mitch and Vicky**  
*Real Fitness Training*  
GREW THEIR PT  
BUSINESS BY 53% IN  
JUST 6 MONTHS



**Simon McDonald**  
*Vision PT Five Dock*  
INCREASED PROFIT BY  
70% IN 12 MONTHS



**Matt Mazzaferro**  
*Live Well Health & Fitness*  
HAD A 75% INCREASE IN PT  
& DOUBLED HIS REVENUE



**Dev and Jody Krishna**  
*Empower*  
INCREASED THEIR GYM  
REVENUE BY \$550K PER  
YEAR



**Michelle Manion**  
*FitMiss*  
ADDED 100HRS OF  
PERSONAL TRAINING  
REVENUE IN 4 MONTHS



**Matt Grant**  
*MG Fitness*  
TRIPLED HIS GROUP  
TRAINING BUSINESS &  
STARTED A PODCAST



**Kris Preston**  
*Functional Fitness Plus, Vic*  
MADE 10K IN SALES IN  
JUST 3 WEEKS



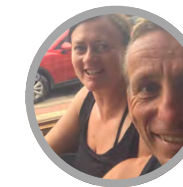
**Jonathan Quieros**  
*Duke's 24hr Gym Richmond*  
150% INCREASE IN SALES  
IN 1 MONTH



**James Tampion**  
*Vision PT Lanecove*  
ADDED \$3,000 TO HIS  
WEEKLY BILLING IN 1  
WEEK



**Jodi Winter**  
*Fitness Avenue Warriewood*  
INCREASED HER  
MONTHLY BILLING TO  
\$11,999 IN 8 WEEKS



**Brett and Michelle**  
*Totally Pumped Bairnsdale*  
GOT 20 GOOD LEADS  
FROM A GYM HUB  
REFERRAL CAMPAIGN



**Alec Drain**  
*Authentic Personal Training*  
DOUBLED HIS REVENUE  
& WON FITNESS BUSINESS  
OF THE YEAR



**Nick Kirk**  
*Team Elwood VIC*  
SIGNED UP 50 NEW PT  
CLIENTS IN 6 MONTHS



**Nicole and Laura**  
*24Fit Brisbane*  
HIT A MEMBERSHIP  
PERSONAL BEST



# ABOUT STEVE GRANT

Steve Grant studied a 4 year Bachelor of Education in Physical and Health Education and worked as a PE teacher for 4 years before getting promoted to a three-year lecturing role for the Teaching and Sports Business degrees at the Australia College of Physical Education ACPE, in Olympic Park.

He started his first gym in 2007 in the beach suburb of Mona Vale, NSW, with zero members and grew that to 10 staff and a million dollar annual turnover within 18 months.

In 2015, he sold the business for a strong profit and travelled the US and Canada for 3 months, taking a holiday with his wife and 2 kids. On the trip, he visited over 50 high profile gym models, studying their processes. On his return to Australia, he set up a business Mentoring Program for gym owners, named *Gym Hub*.

In fact, Steve has personally helped over 100 gyms create more profit and work less. Brands like Virgin Active, Plus Fitness, Snap Fitness, F45, 12Round, Vision Personal Training, and plenty of independent gyms, too! He has also presented at Filex and coached Australia's no. 1 ranked Anytime Fitness Gym.

In 2017, Steve started a new fitness brand in Sydney called Rushcutters Health, again hitting a 1million dollar run rate in under 18 months, a strong achievement considering he only works in the gym 1 day per week

**SCAN THIS CODE  
TO BOOK YOUR 90-DAY  
GROWTH PLAN SESSION  
WITH STEVE**

