

7 Easy Steps to Create Your Own Yoga Workshop or Event by Ken Immer

<http://www.yogatrail.com/blog/7-easy-steps-to-create-your-own-yoga-workshop-or-event/>

So, you've been [teaching yoga](#) for a while now. You've attended lots of workshop and [trainings](#). It's time to host your own yoga workshop or event! But how do you do it? Who is going to come? How to get the word out? What should you charge? These are all important questions, and there are many more. Organizing a workshop or event isn't just like teaching an extra-long class. It is an opportunity to really share some valuable information, and make a more lasting impact. It can also help to increase your class base and draw more people to the mat. There are a number of different ways to do it, from using yoga studio space, or a community center, all the way up to renting a special venue! The sky is the limit, but it's probably best to start small.

I've been hosting and planning events for years. With a restaurant and hospitality background, it's been easy for me to put together events, but for the uninitiated, it can seem a daunting prospect. With the following tips and tricks, you too can have a successful event that is valuable and interesting for your attendees and students.

Step 1: Getting clear and specific with your topic

This might seem pretty elementary, but remember: while you know the subject matter of your event like the back of your hand, it might be completely new for your attendees. It's important to be specific about what you'll be offering. Speak directly to your audience, not to "all people". You'll get more sign-ups when your offering is clear to its intended participants. Take complex topics and split them into multiple workshops. (This also already creates future opportunities.)

Step 2: Size, duration & location

These three things all influence each other. What is the maximum number of students you would be comfortable leading, and how long will the workshop last? The answers will help you decide on a location. The opposite is true too: if you already have a location in mind, it will likely influence the duration and size of your event. If you're planning to use a space in a yoga studio, they will guide you about that. However, if the available studio space is too small, or your target demographic doesn't go to yoga studios, you might want to look into using a

community space like a gymnasium or community center. You will also have more say about things in these spaces.

Step 3: Decide on a fee structure.

How much money do you expect, or want to make from your event? Don't sell yourself short! Your expertise is worth something. Your workshop can cost as little as \$15 per student, to well over \$100... If you're just beginning, \$15 – \$30 is the starting point. Yoga studios will often have a policy such as splitting the gross revenue 80% to the teacher and 20% to the studio, or even 60/40. Each studio is different, and sometimes this fee can be negotiable, so be sure to ask. If you decide on a community space or a special venue, the price will be driven by the cost of the venue, plus any additional insurance or licenses that your local government might require. In either case, it's time to go back to step 2: multiply the number of students by the event price, minus the costs, and arrive at your potential earnings. Decide on a range that you're comfortable with based on minimum and maximum attendance.

Step 4: Payments, Cancellations & Refund Policies

Now that you know how much to charge, how will you take payment? That's the million dollar question! Taking payment online so that people can easily book ahead is essential. If the studio you're using has this ability, chances are your attendance will be higher. For those not using a studio, you will need to accept your own payments, and PayPal has been my method of choice. It's easy to create a business PayPal account which then acts as your shopping cart. It costs money, but it will increase attendance, and so pay for itself. You'll also want to let people know that they can pay on the day of the event in cash or by check, but discourage this by creating a pricing structure where the price 'at the door' is higher (20-30% higher) than the 'pay ahead' price.

Once you have some people signed up, inevitably, someone will want to cancel, and worse yet, they may want to cancel at the last minute. That can become a problem, so let your attendees know how you will handle cancellations and refunds BEFORE they sign up. Studios have a policy in place, so you should too. It's unrealistic to say "No Cancellations, No Refunds", but you also need to help your attendees feel committed. A good policy: more than 2 weeks out: 100% refund, less than 2 weeks: 50%, and less than 1 week: 75%. People generally will only commit

to something as long as they know how they can get out of it! Let them know beforehand, and there won't be any awkward moments.

Step 5: Promotion

This step is the same whether your event is in a yoga studio or not, since it's all about filling it up. Do everything in your power to get people to come! These days, social media is #1 for promoting events. From feedback from a recent event ("How did you hear about the event?") I learned that [Facebook marketing](#) was by far my most effective strategy.

But it's a bad idea to put all your eggs in just one basket. Don't just burn out your family, friends, and existing clients — try to reach people outside of your circles! Ultimately, the more ways people get referred to your event, the better. For my most recent event I partnered with YogaTrail by creating an event listing on the site. They offer an easy way to advertise your services and events, and create a place where yogis can connect with you (especially if you don't have a personal website). YogaTrail got my event some extra buzz and exposure by promoting it on the site, adding it to their newsletters, and sharing it in their social media channels. Hosting your event at a studio gets you some audience automatically. Since the studio has a vested interest in the event doing well, they will help to promote it using their own newsletters and media channels (sometimes this can be part of the fee negotiations). The downside is that they only market to their own clients. However, everybody wins if you bring in newbies, so creating event listings on Facebook and YogaTrail, making flyers, these are all ways to promote both yourself and the studio.

Your [marketing](#) can even go beyond just getting the word out, by 'sweetening the pot' for your attendees. Think about sponsorship! Many online retailers and manufacturers are eager to help you with some free merchandise. It won't cost you anything, and all you have to do is ask. You could easily put together a cool package to give away to a "lucky attendee"!

Promotion for your event really is key, especially if your workshop or event is not in a yoga studio or fitness gym. It's a lot of hard work, but it'll pay off when you get a room full of 'hungry' students.

Step 6: Be prepared

It's the day of your big event, and everything has fallen into place... are you really prepared?

- Be ready for extra people to show up.
- Have extra mats for those who are new, or may have forgotten theirs, and a few props available for newbies.
- Really help those who are new to feel welcome and comfortable, as they will likely come back for more.
- Having a handout of the information you are providing is an added value. This doesn't need to be a textbook: highlights, important points, and extra resources (such as books, DVDs and websites) are a good place to start.

Lastly: don't forget to promote yourself, too! People have come to see you. They have given up their free time to spend it with you, and have paid good money.

Don't be too [modest](#)! This is your chance to connect. If you offer other kinds of services (massage, reiki, nutritional counseling), go ahead and talk about these. It doesn't have to be a sales pitch at the end, but be sure to add this information to the handout, for example. And remember to have a sign in sheet asking your attendees to 'opt in' to your email list.

Step 7: Follow up

After the event, be sure to follow up with your attendees. It's a great opportunity to get feedback. I like to use SurveyMonkey to send email surveys (it's easy and free). Be sure to include digital copies of any information you gave out. This way, when you have your next event, you will already have built an audience.

Promotion then becomes easier because you have a list of people to reach out to! This will also help to increase your class base in your weekly classes if you got some new people. Don't be afraid to stay in touch with them, and send updates about your schedule changes, and any new certifications and/or services that you might offer in the future.

I hope that you will think about hosting your own yoga event sometime soon! It's an enriching experience for both the attendees and for you: everyone learns a lot. Plus it's just a fun way to do more yoga and spread the word. Good luck!

Nine Tips for Successful Workshops

December 4, 2015

https://www.yogaalliance.org/Learn/Article_Archive/Nine_Tips_for_Successful_Workshops

Eureka! Your genius just struck and you have an awesome idea for a workshop. But how do you share that special wisdom effectively with others? We've outlined our nine favorite tips for creating successful workshops below.

Before the Workshop

#1: Create a Simple Outline

Planning is key for any effective presentation; however, it's important to find the balance between "going with the flow" and micromanaging every minute of your time. Creating a thirteen page plan that breaks down every minute of your workshop will only make you anxious and overwhelm your workshop participants. Instead, devise a simple outline that touches on the important points you want to deliver. Try to limit yourself to five topics. The less time you have, the fewer topics you should focus on.

#2: Add Visuals

People learn in many different ways. While some may absorb information from a simple lecture or discussion, not everyone will benefit from this sort of presentation. Incorporate visuals like PowerPoint slides, props, models, videos, etc. to ensure all workshop participants can learn in their unique way.

#3: Plan an Activity or Hands-On Experience

In addition to adding visuals to your workshop, consider creating a short activity to facilitate experiential learning. For example, if you're doing a workshop on communication, you may want to try a 30 second public speaking exercise or five minute writing prompt.

#4: Practice

Prior to the live workshop, make sure to practice a few times to not only get comfortable with the material but to go through how you present it. Instead of

trying to memorize a script, practice each piece of the workshop separately—the introduction, the main points and the conclusion. After you feel comfortable with each piece, practice how you’ll transition between them.

During the Workshop

#5: Set Expectations

At the beginning of your workshop, share your outline with your participants—in written form or verbally. Walk them through what you’ll cover and what they can expect to know by the end of your time together. By setting their expectations, you’ll better prepare your participants so they aren’t surprised or disappointed by the workshop.

#6: Ask for Feedback

At some point during the workshop, ask for feedback—especially if the workshop is more than an hour long. A perfect time to do so is before or after a break.

Soliciting feedback allows you to gauge the room: are your participants understanding the information? Is there something you need to spend more time on? Do they have any questions?

Asking for feedback can be a bit difficult to do if you’re teaching a workshop online. Since online training is usually much shorter, create a mini-break halfway through and ask your participants to virtually submit questions. Some platforms even allow for your participants to “raise their hands” or send in feedback through a quick poll.

#7: Keep an Eye on the Time

Time management is crucial to successful workshops. Periodically check the time to ensure you’re getting through all of the content you’ve planned. For example, if your workshop covers three main points or topics, you’ll want to spend one third of your time on each topic to cover them equally. Practicing your workshop in advance can also help so you anticipate how much time you’ll need on each topic or activity.

After the Workshop

#8: Ask for Feedback (Again!)

Yes, you read correctly—ask for feedback *again* after the workshop is over. Send out a short survey to participants with simple questions about what they learned, if

they would recommend it to a friend and if they have any suggestions for future workshops. Their feedback can help you continually tweak and adjust your course to make it more enjoyable and effective.

#9: Reconnect with Your Participants

Keep in touch with the participants of your workshops and get to know them better by connecting with them on social media or via email. By establishing personal, authentic relationships, you can slowly build a following of people who are interested in what you have to offer because they're interested in *you*. And, more importantly, you can create long-lasting friendships and a stronger yoga community.

WORKSHOPS: TAKING YOUR TEACHING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

(from Jennilee's *Teach the Perfect Chaturanga Workshop Manual*)

Now that you have been teaching for a while **it is time** to take your teaching to the next level with thematic workshops intelligently designed to serve your students needs and desires.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF:

What am I passionate about?

What am I seeing in the yoga community that is needed and necessary for the well-being of my students physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual health?

What does my yoga community need/want to take their practices to the next level?

What are the current trends and debates in the yoga-world-at-large?

What are you currently learning/witnessing online, at festivals and conferences and in your continuing education/trainings?

What specific population are you drawn to serving?

Jennilee's Favorite Structure For a Yoga Workshop

1. Welcome/Introduction
 - Name of Workshop
 - Duration of Workshop
 - Brief Introduction of Yourself
 - Why You are Passionate About This Subject Matter/
Why Is This Workshop Needed/Relevant/Important?
2. Brief Overview of Workshop
 - Beginning, Middle and End
3. Present Material - Lecture/Handouts/PowerPoint/Whiteboard
 - Visual and Audio Learners
4. Move the Material - Postures, Flow, Hands-On, Partner Work
 - Kinesthetic Learners
5. Cool-Down: RECAP
 - Summary, Field Questions
 - Offer counterposes if the practice encouraged a certain shape
6. Centering to Close
 - Savasana or Seated Hands to Heart Yoga Closing

Perfect Chaturanga Workshop Outline

1. Introduction of Self

*cheerful/excited, brief and relevant, mention relationship to Jennilee if applicable.

2. Introduction of Jennilee, Suzanne and The Perfect Chaturanga Book

*2010 - first PC workshops created and taught in Saratoga Springs, NY by Jennilee

*2010-2013 Jennilee working on book (procrastination at its finest)

*2013 - Jennilee's vision of Suzanne in a meditation (perfect partner!)

*14 months to print

Suzanne grew and gave birth to the very cute Savannah

Successful \$24,000 KICKSTARTER campaign

November 7th 2014 Book Tour Kick-Off Weekend (print anniversary)

3. 3 Ways of Learning

*This workshop will include techniques for all styles of learners

*Anatomy lecture for Audio and Visual Learners

*Movement for the Kinesthetic Learners

4. Stimulate their Brains: Anatomy Lecture

*The Most Common Vinyasa Yoga Injuries

*Where, How they Occur and How to Prevent Them

Spine: Cervical and Lordotic Compression

2 curves mimic each other (if you dump in one, you dump in both)

Too Early Up Dog!

1-3 Cobras (or sphinx/locust combinations) needed

LENGTH THEN STRENGTH

Shoulder Girdle: Bursitis, Tendonitis, Ligament Damage

Show improper shoulder

Bursitis: Pressure on SubAcromium Bursa

Tendonitis: In Elbow Too

WORSE: Ligament damage

Ligaments are NOT elastic

Once Overstretched will NEVER go back to their original shape

Show ligaments at sternum, scapula and elbow

NO JUMPING BACK TO HIGH PLANK - show why

Hip Girdle: SI JOINT

The flip-flip of the feet versus the rolling over the toes issue

Creatures of Habit: Lift-Dump same hip overtime (wear and tear)

5. Get Them Moving: 5 Step Process for Longevity

1. Breath

Make a joke about all that anatomy info and then get them to settle into their bodies with their breath. Natural breath and then soft Ujjayi. Get them to feel the up, down, expansive, contractive and circulatory qualities of breath (vayus).

2. Bandhas

In the pause have them activate mule bandha...this will support them throughout the rest of the workshop, on theta in practices and off the mat in life.

Workshop Outline (cont.)

3. Bone Stacking (know alignment in postures)
(offering impeccable alignment cues in every pose you offer in the workshop)
4. Muscle Activation & 5. Joint Integration
 - Warm-Up Spine with Cat-Cow
 - Warm-Up Shoulder Girdle with the addition of arms
 - Warm-Up Shoulder Girdle with Strap Work
 - Wake Up Muscles with Block, L-Shape PNF and/or Amy's Shoulder Strengtheners
 - More Warm-up With Table Top work
 - Cat/Cow with variation, Thread The Needle, Turbo Cat, Wrist Stretches, Toe Stretches
 - Down Dog Warming Up
 - Rag Doll
 - Mountain
 - Chaturanga Set-Up from Mountain

6. Partner Work: 5 Step Homework Process

1. Knee Down Push-ups (2 versions)
2. Dolphin/Dolphin Push-Ups/Serratus Strengthening
3. Turbo Dog/Turbo Dog to Dolphin to Down Dog
4. Chaturanga with Blocks
5. Chaturanga with Strap

7. Perfect Cobra/Perfect Chaturanga

- Knees Down to Sphinx-Cobra
- Updog Discussion (Flip-Flip vs Toe Roll)
- Chaturanga To Updog

8. Advanced Chaturanga

- Roll-Out to Chaturanga
- If time - Half-Lift & Crow to Chaturanga
- At least mention as well koundiyasana, tripod headstand, dolphin to chaturanga

9. Cool-Down & Savasana

- Shoulder and Chest Stretches
 - Locust to Half Bow to Full Bow (Flip the Bow)
 - Lie on Belly with cactus arm stretch
 - Reclining Twist
- Savasana

3 WAYS OF LEARNING: **VISUAL, AUDITORY AND KINESTHETIC**

VISUAL

- An excellent organizer
- Instinctively follows directions
- Easily visualizes objects
- Great sense of alignment and balance

Learns well from:

- Overhead slides, whiteboards, & PowerPoint presentations
- Reading diagrams, handouts and textbooks
- Studying alone

AUDITORY

- Works well in groups
- Understands subtle tonal changes in people's voices
- Writes responses to lectures well
- Succeeds at oral exams
- Enjoys story-telling

Learns well from:

- Participating vocally in class
- Making audio recordings of classes and listening to them
- Reading assignments out loud, especially in a group

KINESTHETIC

- Good hand-eye coordination
- Great experimenters
- Good at sports, drama and art
- Higher levels of energy

Learns well from:

- Conducting experiments
- Acting out a play or singing the information
- Studying while standing, moving or doodling