

I can't follow you and that is a problem.

Just a quick post this morning.

My schedule has been really tight lately and it's been hard to find time to go to the gym. So I decided to buy an exercise video to get a quick workout at home. This morning I popped what purported to be a dance plus cardio "complete" workout in 30 minutes. OK. The presenter, a "celebrity trainer," says she can't teach us non-dancers to dance in a video, but that we should at least be burning calories. Fine. After her two minute" intro," she gets right into it. No explanation, no instruction, nothing. After a few minutes of trying to follow what she is doing—again, with no cues—I gave up. So much for my idea of working out at home.

What's the communication lesson to learn from this exercise video #fail? Well there's two:

1. Don't assume that people understand you (especially if you are basing it on your presumed celebrity). Provide instructions.
2. Don't fly in the face of convention, especially if it is really not necessary. Conventions are there for a reason. People expect certain things, and during exercise instruction, I expect...instruction. Just like in every exercise video and show I have ever watched, and certainly every exercise class I have taken, the instructor GIVES INSTRUCTIONS. The instructor cues the next move. The instructor counts the reps.

The bottom line is that when we are trying to teach anybody or present new information, we have to work at explaining it so people will get it. We can't assume people will just get it. We can't assume people will just follow.

Now, the question is, can I get my money back?