

Christopher Puszczynski-Phelps

A bit of a left-field nomination this time as Christopher Puszczynski-Phelps is a data and IT type of guy. He loves to promote fitness and healthy lifestyles, but he's basically - no other way to say this - a nerd. And I mean that with the utmost affection. He's been with Serco Leisure for over 12 years in various roles, but he's currently our Management Information Manager.

However, the work he's done to develop our More Fitness app, promote usage and increase engagement mean he's definitely someone who has got more people, more active, more often - and he's got the stats to prove it. If the future of fitness is helping people get the most from their tech devices (and there's a good argument that's the case) so they're more motivated and likely to stay on track with their goals, it's people like Chris who are going to be a key.

More Fitness has very much been his 'baby'. From the start, he didn't see it as a fancy, new techy toy, something he could muck about with from the back-end - he knew it was a tool that if we pitched and promoted it right would get more people, more active, more often - and that's been proven to be true. Across the business, people with the app come to their centres 2-3 times a month more often than those who have yet to download it.

Chris was an evangelist for the app, and was key in helping us get the investment we needed from the wider Serco group to progress with this project. Chris stressed the social value potential of More Fitness, rather than just the simple improved membership and attendance numbers we might expect to see if we introduced an app. More engaged people, more active, more often, means happier, healthier individuals in society.

Chris has spoken to staff throughout the country, getting them enthused about More Fitness. He's talked to customers, helping them download and get the most from the app. He's convinced even the most technophobic to download and try More Fitness. On site, he's - in the nicest possible way - taken customers' phones and downloaded it for them, then spent time with them, so they're comfortable using the tool.

That stat, Chris' enthusiasm for getting people active, plus the fact that he may be the only 'nerd' nominated in this category mean I am comfortable selecting him as a Physical Activity Champion of the Year. His work on the app has encouraged 40,000 people to be more active, more often - try hitting those numbers on the gym floor.