



The Nature and Scope of Coaching

Part I: With Respect to Coaching

What Is Coaching?

Coaching is an interactive process that helps individuals and organizations to develop more rapidly and produce more satisfying results. Coaches work with clients in all areas including business, career, finances, health and relationships. As a result of coaching, clients set better goals, take more action, make better decisions, and more fully use their natural strengths.

Professional coaches are trained to listen and observe, to customize their approach to the individual client's needs, and to elicit solutions and strategies from the client. They believe that the client is naturally creative and resourceful and that the coach's job is to provide support to enhance the skills, resources, and creativity that the client already has. While the coach provides feedback and an objective perspective, the client is responsible for taking the steps to produce the results he or she desires. Coaching does not focus directly on relieving psychological pain or treating cognitive or emotional disorders. Note: to further understand the coaching professions, you can visit the ICF website at www.coachfederation.org, click on Find a Coach and find the following link in this same paragraph online, the "Nature and Scope of Coaching."

Part II: With Respect to Psychotherapy

Who the Client Is

The individual coaching client is someone who wants to reach one or more of the following: a higher level of performance, learning, or satisfaction. The client is not seeking emotional healing or relief from psychological pain.

The coaching client can take action to move towards a goal with the support of the coach. The successful client is not excessively limited in the ability to take action or overly hesitant to make this kind of progress.

How Service is Delivered

Coaches and clients arrange the schedule and means of contact (e.g., in person, by phone, or via e-mail) that serve them both. They are not constrained to follow a standardized schedule or means of contact.

The Relationship in Coaching

A coach relates to the client as a partner. A coach does not relate to the client from a position of an expert, authority, or healer.

Coach and client together choose the focus, format, and desired outcomes for their work. The client does not relinquish the responsibility for creating and maintaining these nor does the coach take full responsibility for them.

Results

Coaching is designed to help clients improve their learning and performance, and enhance their quality of life. Coaching does not focus directly on relieving psychological pain or treating cognitive or emotional disorders.

Time Frames

Coaching concentrates primarily on the present and future. Coaching does not focus on the past or on the past's impact on the present.

Coaching uses information from the client's past to clarify where the client is today. It does not depend on resolution of the past to move the client forward.

Emotions

Coaching assumes the presence of emotional reactions to life events and that clients are capable of expressing and handling their emotions. Coaching is not psychotherapy and emotional healing is not the focus of coaching.

Relationship to Psychotherapy

Coaching can be used concurrently with psychotherapeutic work. It is not used as a substitute for psychotherapeutic work.

Advice

Advice, opinions, or suggestions are occasionally offered in coaching. Both parties understand that the client is free to accept or decline what is offered and takes the ultimate responsibility for action. The coach is not discouraged from offering advice, opinions or suggestions on occasion.

Requesting

A coach makes a request of the client to promote action toward the client's desired outcome. A coach does not make such requests in order to fix the client's problem or understand the client's past.

Part III: With Respect to Consulting

Definition: In all of the following statements, the word 'client' is used to denote the person who is being coached, regardless of who is paying for the service.

Expertise

Coaches are experts in the coaching process and may not have specific knowledge of a given subject area or industry. Where coaches have expertise in other areas, they may use it to facilitate the coaching process. Coaches do not use this particular expertise to diagnose, direct, or design solutions for the client.

Relationship

Relationship is the foundation of coaching. The coach and client intentionally develop a relationship which is characterized by a growing and mutual appreciation and respect for each other as individuals. This relationship is not an adjunct to or byproduct of the coaching. Nor is it based on the client's position or performance.

Use of Information

In coaching, information drawn from the client is used by the coach to promote the client's awareness and choice of action. This information is not used to evaluate performance or produce reports for anyone but the person being coached.

Scope

Coaching has the freedom and flexibility to address a wide variety of personal and professional topics. In any given coaching relationship, coach and client alone determine the scope of their work. Coaching is not necessarily restricted to a narrowly defined issue nor is its scope determined in any other way.

Contribution to Results

In coaching, any contribution the coach makes to producing the client's desired outcome is through on-going interaction with the client. The coach's role does not include producing a contracted product or result outside of the coaching sessions.

Ongoing Impact

Coaching is designed to provide clients with a greater capacity to produce results and a greater confidence in their ability to do so. It is intended that clients do not leave coaching with a perception that they need to rely on a coach in order to produce similar results in the future.

How to Find A Coach

For Clients, the ICF and PCAM both host a searchable directory of its coach members. The directory makes available the information to match the appropriate coach with the client, depending on the client's needs. Since coaches often specialize in various areas, it's a good idea for the prospective client to shop around for the coach with the most experience and combination of qualities they seek.

The ICF and PCAM recommend following these Coach Selection Recommendations, as well:

1. Educate yourself about coaching. Hundreds of articles have been written about it in the last 3-5 years.
2. Know your objectives for working with a coach.
3. Interview three coaches before you decide on one. Ask them about their experience, qualifications, skills, and ask for at least two references.
4. Remember, coaching is an important relationship. There should be a connection between you and the coach that "feels" right to you.

The following are coaching specialties to review before selecting a coach:

Executive-Corporate-Corporate Coaching:

- Human Resources Departments interested in hiring external coaches.
- CEO's, executives, managers and other professionals who would like a coach.
- Companies looking to launch a coaching initiative.
- Companies intending to train their managers to be coaches.
- Initiative to prevent and/or cure burnout.
- Companies interested in coaching workshops.
- Companies wanting the support of a coach in any of the following: Strategic planning, process re-engineering; creating a compelling vision; launching and developing teams; or 360-degree reviews.

Small Business Coaching:

- Entrepreneurs.
- Owners or Managers of small companies.
- Start-up companies (actual or planned)
- Professionals in private practice
- People who run a business from their home.
- Executives thinking of leaving companies and launching a business.

Personal/Life Coaching:

- Life planning
- Life vision & enhancement
- Extreme self care
- Spirituality
- Relationships (Singles, couples, families, etc.)
- Health & Fitness
- Creativity
- Financial Freedom
- Organization
- Children/Teens/College Students
- Attention Deficit Disorder

Career/Transition Coaching:

- People in career transition
- People with a big career decision to make.
- People in a corporate job or considering one.
- People struggling with the decision of whether to stay in a corporate job.
- People who would like to work with a coach familiar with the following: The changing expectations of employees and employers; trends in the workplace; values and issues of loyalty and security; specific evaluation criteria for one's company, future or career satisfaction; determining ones readiness to strike out on their own or look for another career.

**PCAM Sponsors a FREE Online “Find A Coach Referral Service.”
Go to <http://www.michigancoaches.org> and click on Find A Coach.**

**ICF Sponsors a FREE Online Coach Referral Service (CRS).
Go to <http://www.coachfederation.org> and click on To Find A Coach.**

Note: The PCAM and ICF coach referral lists are offered to assist individuals in identifying and selecting coaches best suited for their particular situation. The qualifications of coaches listed, and the information provided is not verified by PCAM or the ICF in any way. Individuals utilizing this database are urged to take reasonable steps to verify the qualifications of any potential coach. By your utilizing the PCAM or the ICF coach referral database, you agree to hold PCAM and the ICF harmless from any and all claims which may arise as a result of your using the information provided.