



Coaching Overview

Overview

Through this lesson you will learn what coaching is and what coaching is not, answer all the common coaching questions a new coach may have and become familiar with the ICF Core Competencies and the ICF Code of Ethics.

Coaching Defined

Coaching is a professional relationship that enables a client to move forward in their life or work with greater focus, momentum and success by enabling them to find and create their own answers. All the answers are inside the client and as a coach you will help them tap into these answers.

Only a client knows what is best for him or herself! Coaches do not “tell” a client what to do. Through the process the coach brings to the table the client experiences: 1) clarity and motivation that enables them to reach their goals and 2) shifts in awareness or perception.

This is achieved through questioning, listening and other coaching skills. This often means helping them figure out what they would like their life to be like – also called the “vision”. And how to get there which is called “goal setting”.

The coach is a very important part of the client’s support network for goal attainment. You will learn how to apply this process from your lessons as well as from client contact. Coaches may also supply clients with coaching tools which you will also learn about during the lessons.

Coaching vs. Therapy vs. Consulting

Coaching focuses on the present and the future of the client’s life. A coach is NOT a therapist, a psychologist, a counselor or someone who specializes in mental illness. A coach focuses on the Who of a person versus bringing a body of knowledge or expertise about “What” that person needs at that moment.

COACH	THERAPIST	CONSULTANT
Who	Who	What
Present/Future	Past	Present/Future

It is important to note that a coach is not a therapist unless the laws in one’s state or province deem otherwise. Therefore, a coach is not qualified to take on clients who possess issues that one has not been trained to handle. If a client is mentally ill but is stable and working with other professionals then coaching may be beneficial to this person. This will ultimately be your decision. Always let your clients know your qualifications.

Definitions in Coaching

Coaching client: An individual who is mentally stable and who seeks out your assistance to achieve their goals.

Welcome packet: A collection of forms given to all new clients. In this packet are a basic questionnaire, your policies and procedures, and your client agreement.

Client agreement: A form which all clients should sign prior to beginning the coaching relationship. This form will help protect you legally. This form is generally contained within the Welcome Pak.

Elevator speech: One to two sentences that describes what you specifically do as coach. An elevator speech can be a very important networking tool. Often times this speech follows the question "What do you do?" A very powerful way to respond is "Well, have you ever wanted to attain something but not been able to? That is where I come in."

Niche: A specialized area of coaching. For example, Wellness coaching.

International Coaching Federation (also known as the ICF): One of a few organizations that are attempting to regulate the coaching industry - Although they are the most recognized, it is important to note that you do not have to be certified or accredited through them to begin coaching.

Pro bono: Services delivered at no cost. Often coaches offer pro bono sessions to accumulate hours of practice when just getting started.

ICF Core Competencies: 11 coaching skills which the ICF deems necessary for one to be competent in if they intend to be contracted as a professional coach.

ICF Code of Ethics: Guidelines by which you as an ICF Member Coach or ICF Accredited Coach are bound to follow.

Coaching Niche

A coaching niche is an area a coach specializes within the personal or business coaching umbrella categories.

An example of a business coaching niche would be small business coaching. One would become a Certified Business Coach (CBC) to practice in this niche.

An example of a personal coaching niche is wellness coaching. One would become a Certified Wellness Coach (CWC) to practice in this niche.

A coaching niche is a coach's "lead" area of expertise and reflects:

- Your unique story or experience – "Pull Your File" on your life
- Your passion
- Your network
- Your life and/or work experience
- This is how you attract your clients

But you will ultimately coach the whole person no matter what reason they hire you for in the first place.

Experience (Life or Professional) + Passion = Your Niche

Explore

What areas are you considering for your niche?

Coaching Niche Examined

There are two umbrella categories of coaching: personal coaching and business (or executive) coaching. Under these two areas fall most niches. For example, life coaching falls under the personal coaching category. And small business coaching falls under the business coaching category. Below are just a few of the niches that are available:

Personal Coaching Niches

- Life Coaching – Included in WCI CLC Program
- Wellness Coaching – Included in WCI CWC Program
- Relationship Coaching – Included in WCI CRC Program
- Bereavement Coaching – Included in WCI CRC Program
- Youth Coaching – Included in WCI YPF Program
- Parenting Coaching – Included in WCI YPF Program
- Family Coaching – Included in WCI YPF Program
- Christian Coaching – Included in WCI CCRC Program
- Spiritual Coaching – Included in WCI CSC Program
- Addiction Coaching – Included in WCI CAC Program

Business Coaching Niches

- Career Coaching – Included in WCI CCC Program
- Executive Coaching – Included in WCI CEC Program
- Business Coaching – Included in WCI CBC Program
- Marketing Coaching – Included in WCI CMC Program

Explore

What are the most in demand coaching niches?

Personal Coaching vs. Business coaching

Business coaches and personal coaches are available for whatever area in your life you feel you need to work on. It is important to note that even if a client is having problems with their business life, there is almost always something that is going on inside them personally that must be addressed.

Surface Level Coaching vs. Transformational Coaching

Surface Level - Coaching someone on techniques and strategies, marketing, time management, goal setting, brainstorming, communication in relationships. Surface level coaching doesn't change the "being" of the client but it can be very effective.

Transformational - Shifting client's self-image and beliefs. Transformation coaching changes the client's "being" that enables them to let go of things like anxiety, and self-doubt, and creates a system for spiritual development.

Micro Niche Considerations

You can absolutely have more than one niche! You can also have an over-arching niche and provide content related to other niches underneath that umbrella if that works better for you. For example, you might call yourself an Addiction Coaching Specialist with a focus in Relationship, Life and Spiritual coaching.

The easier it is for someone to "get" what you do so what you call yourself or how you brand yourself is important.

And the more micro-niche you go the more easily you can brand yourself as an "expert". For example, Alcohol Addiction Coach for Women. It's easier to become an expert when the focus is narrow.

Best advice: follow your heart and do what feels right for you.

Are You Still Deciding on a Niche?

Sometimes choosing a niche comes very easily to coaches. They may have an area they already are passionate about and that they cannot wait to add coaching too.

For others, answering these questions is another good way to find your niche:

- What coaches would you like to model?
 - What are their characteristics
 - Usually the person you model or admire embodies the characteristics you already possess
- What are you good at? Really good at?
- What are you (outside of coaching) really passionate about? Sports, women's rights, health and wellness, marriage, adolescents, etc.?
- What is your favorite non-fiction topic to read about?
- What were your interests as a child?

You need only put yourself out there and you will attract the right clients for you. If you're undecided about a few niches then put them all out there and see what happens. Just remember to be authentic and don't be afraid to put your story out there.

It is important to note that the better your-self worth is the easier it is to find your niche. How so? High/good/accurate self worth makes you less susceptible to doubts about where you excel.

What Services do Coaches Usually Offer?

In the beginning they offer one-on-one coaching services. Eventually they may expand into other streams of incomes such as seminars, radio shows and so on.

How are Coaching Sessions Conducted?

Coaching is conducted over the phone, in-person or over the internet, often with clients from anywhere in the world. Until ten years ago over 95 percent of coaching sessions were held by phone. Now about 70 percent are conducted over the phone with the remainder being conducted in person.

How Often are Coaching Sessions Held?

On average sessions are held two to three times per month for 30 – 60 minutes per session. Many coaches take one week per month off as do their clients as a result. You may structure your agreement with your client however you wish.

Why are Coaching Sessions not Commonly Held in Person?

Holding sessions by phone is more convenient for professional and busy clients. The pool of potential clients increases exponentially when sessions are conducted by phone. Potential clients can come from all over your state or province or from another country.

In addition, a coach can usually go deeper quickly with a client over the phone as there are not pre-conceived ideas of that person that normally come from face-to-face interactions. And there is a wall of anonymity for the client which makes them feel safe.

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