

Coaching Code of Ethics

The aim of this code of ethics is to define ethical rules governing professional coaching and is to be used during coaching session with clients which should define the boundaries and bring the maximum of benefits to both parts of coaching relationship.

Following terms have been used in this code of ethics with their meaning defined below:

- *Coaching* – activity (paid in some situations by the sponsor) which is performed by coach in order to develop and exploit the full capability of client so that he/she could deal with problems and challenges on his/her own
 - *Coach* – person performing the profession of which goal is to support the clients on their way to exploit the full potential in order to solve challenges, problem and attain the client goals by himself/herself
 - *Client* – person who is capable of solving the problems and challenges independently but also needs the coach's help in realizing that capability
 - *Sponsor* – person or organization which is paying for the coaching relationship between the coach and client
 - *Coaching relationship* – the relationship in which the coach and client are related to each other during coaching sessions
1. To support the client's understanding regarding information about education, experience and qualifications of the coach, it is expected that:
 - the coach provides correct and just information about his/her experience, certificates, qualifications and references
 - the coach is not overstating the numbers of coaching sessions delivered to a client
 - the coach is not misrepresenting names of clients that have been coached
 - the coach is not overstating unrealistic or unreal benefits the client will be able to achieve during the session
 2. Coaching as a relationship should support the client in solving the problems independently. Because of that:
 - the coach is not assessing or making judgements about the client as it is appreciated that other people can have different value and belief systems
 - the coach is assisting the client to find solutions but is not solving problems of clients because doing so limits the capability of the client to use hidden potential
 - it is the responsibility of the client to make intuitive decisions and choices, therefore the coach should not propose solutions because the coach is not responsible for the consequences
 3. The relationship between the coach and the client should be based on reciprocal trust so:
 - information shared by both sides is confidential in nature unless one of the sides expressly states information may be disclosed
 - the coach cannot use information from or about the client without clear verbal and/or written consent from the client
 4. It's the coach's responsibility for the client's data to not be compromised in any way and so the coach must:
 - keep client information in secure permanent storage either online and/or hard copy
 - keep the information away from the access of unauthorized individuals unless the access is needed by legal authorities according to the adequate legal regulations
 - store personal data of the client in such a way that records storage and labeling do not identify the client names to unauthorized personnel
 5. The Coach understands that everyone comes from a different background and therefore:
 - the coach always respects all clients even if they have very different values and beliefs
 - in cases where coach deems a conflict of interest with a client, he/she should terminate the coaching relationship and refer a more appropriate coach
 6. Coaching is different from psychotherapy, consulting and mentoring, therefore:
 - the coach recognizes that the client may need a different type of support and will direct client to other professionals when appropriate
 - coach will not try to provide other services than coaching itself within the coaching contract
 7. Coaching as service means the coach will be paid fees upfront and the following issues should be taken into consideration:
 - coach explains in unequivocal way financial terms before the coaching relationship will start in order to avoid misunderstandings and negative influences on the reciprocal relationship

- any potential referral fees to be received by the coach for sending the client to another professional should be known to the client before reference is given
8. In cases where services of the coach are paid by another person or organization (sponsor), the coach will take following aspects into consideration:
 - information exchanged between sponsor, client and coach should be defined before the start of coaching relationship
 - each transference of information about the client from coach to the sponsor should be first agreed with client before information will be transferred
 9. Coaching is a professional relationship and it should stay professional therefore:
 - in cases when coach notices that the expectations of the client are exceeding the professional relationship the coach should notify the client and stop the coaching relationship when necessary
 - when coach notices that his/her expectations of the client exceed the professional relationship coach should notify the client and stop the coaching relationship when necessary
 - termination of the coaching relationship should be preceded by the explanation of the reasons for stopping it
 10. Conflict of interest may happen in coaching relationship. If such a situation happens:
 - coach should discuss the conflict of interests with client and suggest termination of coaching relationship
 - in case where other relationships might positively or negatively influence coaching relationship, the coach should inform the client about it and jointly decide on the next steps
 11. Coach is responsible for his/her ability to provide coaching services which means:
 - coach is responsible for on-going development of skills and knowledge about coaching models and techniques
 - coach is responsible for his/her mental state and therefore coach should take care of physical and emotional condition as well as of mental attitude
 - if coach notices that his/her capability to provide coaching services has decreased (due to the illness, overstrain, personal relationships), the coach should stop providing the services and look for the help of an adequate professional
 12. Although coach is not judging and not advising the client, he/she can transfer knowledge and observations to other people through books, articles and publications. By doing so the coach takes the following aspects into consideration:
 - coach by using other materials which are not of his/her authorship always references the source respecting copyrights of content
 - coach preserves the objectivity while offering research to not distort the results
 13. Coach is a representative of the coaching profession which requires following considerations:
 - behavior of the coach is a representation of the whole profession therefore he/she should act accordingly while providing coaching services
 - coach should be a member of at least one coaching organization or governing body in order to exchange up-to-date information and maintain professional connections and networks
 - when a coach is aware of a fellow coach that does not embody the governing code of ethics, it should be reported to the appropriate organization
 14. Coaching relationship has a beginning and an end, therefore:
 - coach accepts the right of the client to end the coaching relationship if the clients wants it
 - coach has the right to stop the coaching relationship if the client is not doing any progress
 15. Coach must take into the consideration the well-being of the client will:
 - Be responsible for ending the coaching relationship in a case where the client is not progressing or gaining value ng as a result of coaching sessions
 - propose another coach who is appropriate to the client's needs if the client requires a different type of expertise and skills

References:

1. http://internationalinstituteofcoaching.org/standards_and_ethics.php
2. <http://www.coachfederation.org/about-icf/ethics-&-regulation/icf-code-of-ethics/>