

# ICF Mentor Coaching Competency Model

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## ICF Mentor Coaching Competencies: Advancing the Quality of Coaching and Mentor Coaching

### Summary

The overarching goal for developing an ICF Mentor Coaching Competency model was to use rigorous, evidence-based methods to determine what Knowledge, Abilities, and Other characteristics (KAOs), or competencies mentor coaches use in addition to the individual coaching competencies. In other words, we sought to determine what additional competencies were required by mentor coaches beyond the ICF Core Competencies.

The 12-month ICF mentor coaching job analysis took a robust mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative analysis) approach, following best practices in competency development and informed by experience mentor coach practitioners at every stage. Phases included a literature review, development of tasks and knowledge domains, a global survey of mentor coaching practitioners, and workshops for Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to review the data and draft competencies.

Six new competencies for mentor coaching practice were identified as a result of this research. These six competencies are unique, distinct competencies for mentor coaches that represent the full scope of responsibilities of the mentor coach role. Competencies were designed to be applicable to all mentor coaches, regardless of whether or not they mentor coach within a coaching education program.

## ICF Mentor Coaching Competency Framework

### Overview

Mentor coaching serves several important functions for ICF coaches. Mentor coaching is a requirement for the achievement of ICF credentials and is an important element of a coach's education. It functions to help develop the coach's skills to meet the professional standards required across levels of coaching practice. However, mentor coaching is also an important part of a coach's ongoing professional development. Not only does mentor coaching help develop the coach's competence and capabilities, but it also serves to develop a coach's unique coaching style and approach. This competency model was created to support mentor coaches in their work and to help mentor coaching clients understand the mentor coaching process.

It is also important to highlight the symbiotic relationship between coaching supervision and mentor coaching. Coaching supervision primarily focuses on the "self" of the coach, the quality and impact of their work, and how they relate to broader contexts and systems. Mentor coaching focuses more on the skill development of the coach. However, the skills of the coach and how they are used cannot be separated from the self of the coach and their way of being in their work and in the world.

### ICF Definition of Mentor Coaching

Mentor coaching is a collaborative learning process through which coaches receive feedback based on observed or recorded sessions to support them in further developing their unique coaching style and coaching skills in alignment with the ICF Core Competencies.

#### A. Foundation

##### 1. Models and Promotes Ethical Practice

**Definition:** Models ethical standards and encourages the mentor coaching client to do the same.

1. Abides by current ICF Code of Ethics, ICF Core Competencies and ICF performance standards.
2. Is sensitive to the mentor coaching client's identity, experiences, context, culture, values and beliefs.

3. Upholds and clarifies the distinctions and similarities of coaching, mentor coaching, coaching supervision, coaching performance assessment, therapy and other roles.
4. Refers the mentor coaching client to other support professionals, as needed, including support to resolve ethical issues that are observed in the mentor coaching client's coaching.
5. Encourages the mentor coaching client to understand and uphold the legal and professional requirements for their practice.
6. Ensures mentor coaching recordings and sensitive coaching client data are securely stored in compliance with the ICF Code of Ethics and local data protection regulations.
7. Engages in ongoing learning and development, including maintaining an ongoing reflective practice to enhance one's coaching and mentor coaching.
8. Seeks guidance, support and development from other sources when necessary to support the mentor coaching client.

## 2. Establishes and Maintains Mentor Coaching Agreements

**Definition:** Partners with the mentor coaching client to create clear agreements about the mentor coaching relationship, process, plans and goals. Establishes agreements for the overall mentor coaching engagement as well as those for each mentor coaching session.

1. Reaches agreement on the guidelines and specific parameters of the mentor coaching relationship such as logistics, fees, scheduling, duration, termination and confidentiality.
2. Clarifies expectations regarding achievement of a particular credential level, the mentor coaching relationship, including what is and is not appropriate, and the responsibilities of both parties.
3. Partners with the mentor coaching client to develop an overall plan for the mentor coaching engagement that explores developmental needs, goals, and measures of success for coaching skill development, including how to meet the desired ICF credentialing standards.
4. Partners with the mentor coaching client to identify the goals and focus of the mentor coaching session.

## B. Process Management

### 3. Manages the Mentor Coaching Process

**Definition:** Co-creates the learning environment, process and development plans to facilitate the mentor coaching process.

1. Partners with the mentor coaching client to create a respectful, supportive and inclusive learning environment.
2. Allows space for the mentor coaching client to reflect.
3. Co-creates a development plan tailored to the mentor coaching client's needs, learning style and aspirations.
4. Checks in periodically to reconfirm the mentor coaching process is meeting the client's needs.
5. Partners with the mentor coaching client to ensure they have enough time for practice and skill integration between mentor coaching sessions.

## C. Client Development

### 4. Conducts Formative Appraisals

**Definition:** Evaluates the degree to which the mentor coaching client's coaching aligns with ICF Core Competencies or the skill level required for a specific credential level.

1. Clarifies the specific skill level required for each credential level using relevant ICF resources.
2. Employs critical listening skills to identify coaching skill demonstration in live or recorded coaching sessions.
3. Identifies where specific competencies are reflected in the mentor coaching client's recorded or live sessions.
4. Partners with the mentor coaching client to reflect on their strengths and identify growth opportunities in the coaching session being evaluated.
5. Identifies trends in the mentor coaching client's behaviors and competence across sessions to determine skill development.

### 5. Facilitates Client's Skill Development

**Definition:** Supports the mentor coaching client's development of coaching skills and unique coaching style.

1. Partners to uncover the mentor coaching client's values and preferred styles of coaching.
2. Models ICF Core Competencies to help the mentor coaching client better understand the required skill level for a specific credential level.
3. Offers feedback and observations to help the mentor coaching client identify coaching strengths and areas for development.
4. Acknowledges the mentor coaching client's strengths, insights and work in the mentor coaching process to foster confidence and growth.
5. Shares observations with the mentor coaching client in a non-judgmental style to foster learning and growth.
6. Offers guidance on how the mentor coaching client can improve on their demonstrated coaching skills.
7. Supports the mentor coaching client to integrate new learning with their unique coaching style.
8. Partners with the mentor coaching client to explore resources, opportunities and peer networks that may enhance the mentor coaching client's coaching skills.

## D. Group Mentor Coaching

### 6. Manages Group Mentor Coaching

**Definition:** Effectively manages the group mentor coaching process. Note: Relevant for mentor coaches who offer group mentor coaching services.

1. Creates a respectful, collaborative and inclusive group learning experience.
2. Facilitates live group sessions where mentor coaching clients can practice and demonstrate their skills.
3. Manages group dynamics that are impacting the effectiveness of the mentor coaching process.
4. Encourages all group members to participate in the mentor coaching process.



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