

ICF Coach Educator Competency Model



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ICF Coach Educator Competencies: Advancing the Quality of Coaching Education

Summary

The overarching goal for developing a coach educator competency model was to use rigorous, evidence-based methods to determine what Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other characteristics (KSAOs), or competencies coach educators use in addition to the individual coaching competencies. In other words, we sought to determine what additional competencies were required by coach educators.

The 10-month ICF coach educator job analysis took a qualitative analysis approach. Phases included a literature review, multiple sets of structured interviews, development of tasks and knowledge domains, and workshops for Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to review the data and recommend coach educator competencies, and also to review draft competencies.

Seven new competencies were proposed as part of this analysis. These seven competencies are unique, distinct competencies for coach educators that represent the full scope of responsibility of the coach educator role. We did not separate individual coach educator roles in this iteration of the competency framework. Competencies were designed to be applicable to all coach educators, regardless of their role within an organization.

ICF Coach Educator Competency Framework

Overview

Coaching education programs have been central in the effort to professionalize and grow the coaching profession. Because ICF does not offer coaching education, these programs provide a critical and lasting foundation for aspiring coaches to initiate journeys of learning, growth, and professional identity.

At its heart, coaching education remains something of a paradox: while accreditation process ensures that program curricula reflect the definition of coaching, professional standards, and competencies, each program often has a distinct coaching philosophy and associated models, frameworks, tools, and techniques.

This model was designed to offer enough structure to promote effective coaching education while also providing enough flexibility for the coach educator to explore their own approach to coaching education practice. We recommend that coach educators utilize this framework in combination with adult learning theories, facilitation methodologies, and leading practices in education to develop effective education programs that are in alignment with the needs of learners.

ICF Definition of Coaching Education

Coaching education: A process involving the sharing of content rooted in relevant theories and current practices, and their comprehensive application. It embraces a partnership between coach educators and learners to impart knowledge, foster the integration of coaching skills, and facilitate the development of learners' identity as a coach.

During the coaching education process, coach educators function as coaches, instructors, and facilitators. They provide not only guidance and instruction but also play a pivotal role in facilitating the development of coaching skills. Moreover, they serve as role models by embodying a coaching attitude, creating a learning environment that balances challenge and support, fostering a non-judgmental learning environment, and offering constructive feedback to nurture learners' growth and proficiency in coaching.

ICF Coach Educator Competency Framework

1. Demonstrates Ethical Practice

Definition: Models coaching ethical and professional standards and encourages learners to do the same.

1. Abides by the ICF Code of Ethics, the ICF Code of Conduct, the ICF Core Values, and relevant legal codes and standards.
2. Demonstrates personal integrity and honesty in interactions with learners, prospective students and other coaching educators.
3. Uses language that is respectful to learners, prospective students and other coaching educators.
4. Ensures that coaching education programs comply with the regulations, accreditation criteria and standards imposed by all relevant systems (e.g., laws, professional bodies, etc.).
5. Delivers an experience that is congruent with communicated program content and outcomes.
6. Emphasizes the importance of coaching ethics, and ensures learners understand and commit to upholding ethical standards in their coaching practices.
7. Recommends additional resources when the learners' needs seem to be beyond the scope of the coaching education program.

2. Engages in Continuous Learning and Development

Definition: Engages in ongoing learning and development as a coaching educator.

1. Seeks continuous learning opportunities to engage in ongoing development as a coach educator.
2. Remains current with relevant theory, research, and developments in the field to inform coaching education practices.
3. Remains current with the broader coaching education industry, including the impact of cultural and global changes on coaching practices.
4. Seeks mentorship or supervision to facilitate one's personal and professional growth.
5. Manages the influence of personal beliefs, perspectives, values, and interpersonal patterns on the coaching education process to mitigate adverse impact on learners.

3. Develops Curricula and Programs

Definition: Designs and implements effective coaching education content and programs aligned with educational goals, relevant standards, and leading practices.

1. Communicates what learners can expect to experience, learn, and achieve through the coaching education program.
2. Reviews target content and planned activities to prepare for coaching education sessions.
3. Develops learning objectives and education plans that clarify how each session contributes to the overall program goals.
4. Designs coaching education programs aligned with the desired credential level and relevant ethical and competency frameworks.
5. Develops structured and consistent training experiences that align with the target coaching model, standards, and competencies.
6. Integrates optimal instructional design methods, adult learning methodologies, and coaching knowledge to effectively deliver learning content and skill development.
7. Creates clear, learner-oriented content to facilitate understanding of coaching concepts and the coach development process.

4. Creates an Inclusive and Effective Learning Environment

Definition: Creates a generative learning environment that promotes belonging through respect and inclusivity of each learners' identity, environment, experiences, values, and beliefs and learning needs.

1. Establishes and clarifies expectations of learners during the coaching education program.
2. Creates an engaging, dynamic, and supportive learning environment that manifests as mutual respect.
3. Adapts the learning environment to accommodate diverse learning preferences.
4. Continuously adapts learning material to ensure content, guidelines, reading material, and assignments are accessible to a diverse range of learning needs.
5. Demonstrates sensitivity and adaptability to the diverse resource needs of learners (e.g., time, technology, physical space, materials, prior knowledge).

6. Responds to each learner's needs and unique learning preferences to foster an environment of respect, belonging, and inclusivity.
7. Creates a learning environment that values diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.
8. Builds a community among learners that offers both challenge and support where learners are encouraged to contribute to the class discussions and share their reflections.
9. Approaches learning sessions with curiosity, flexibility and open-mindedness.

5. Delivers Educational Content

Definition: Conveys educational material in an engaging, participatory, and integrated manner to foster positive and impactful learning experiences.

1. Explains the educational journey and program design (e.g., overall structure, goals, program components, key milestones) to learners.
2. Presents topics in a clear, concise, and engaging manner.
3. Draws upon adult learning and facilitation methodologies to promote learner development and growth.
4. Models relevant coaching competencies during learner interactions.
5. Shares real-life coaching examples and lessons to facilitate learners' personal growth and skill development.
6. Highlights connections among content areas to facilitate learners' development.
7. Leads group debrief sessions in a way that promotes self-assessment and learning while minimizing peer comparisons.
8. Uses reflection and feedback loops to sustain learner engagement throughout the educational journey.
9. Encourages learners to engage in independent exploration to strengthen learner autonomy and develop their knowledge.
10. Leverages conflict as a source of learning.
11. Provides clear, actionable feedback about learners' coaching practice to support their growth.

6. Provides Guidance and Support

Definition: Provides guidance and support to learners to enhance their learning.

1. Responds to learners with empathy and respect.
2. Allows space and time for learners to assimilate knowledge and skills.
3. Stimulates and supports the emergence of the learner's identity as a coach.

4. Extracts insights from both successful and challenging learning and coaching moments.
5. Motivates learners to develop self-awareness and reflective practice to support their identity as a coach.
6. Encourages learners to reflect on potential biases and blind spots in their coaching practice.
7. Encourages learners to identify their learning needs and communicate when they need additional support.
8. Nurtures learners' confidence through the use of various feedback strategies.

7. Assesses Learning, Educational, and Program Success

Definition: Systematically evaluates and analyzes various aspects of teaching practices, learning, and overall program effectiveness to improve education quality, enhance learner outcomes, and ensure the success of the coaching education program.

1. Evaluates learner progress against relevant performance criteria to identify strengths and areas for improvement to support continued growth.
2. Evaluates learners' capacity to apply acquired skills, knowledge, and behaviors to determine the effectiveness of coaching education programs.
3. Engages in reflective practice to explore improvements to education and delivery methods.
4. Designs and implements assessments based on leading educational practices to measure program effectiveness and alignment to program goals.
5. Gathers and evaluates feedback from learners and peer educators to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and program recommendations, to enhance participant satisfaction and measure the overall effectiveness of learning sessions.
6. Solicits and evaluates feedback from program administrators and other relevant stakeholders to improve the overall quality of the coaching education program.
7. Ensures lesson plans, educational materials, and resources are up-to-date, specific, and reflect the relevant professional coaching association guidelines, research and other relevant industry expectations.
8. Determines clear and rigorous processes for reviewing, evaluating, and revising program content.

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COACHING.

