

Congratulations!

You are interested in becoming a professional coach, and realize the importance of being properly trained. You may have seen the large numbers of coach training organizations on the ICF website or other web locations, and are wondering how to choose from the list. This paper is designed to give you the information you need to make that decision.

You have two options:

1. Download this entire pdf and study it in depth
2. Peruse our web page and download the pdfs for the subject area(s) that intrigue you

If you choose option 1, please read on!

Choosing the Right Coach Training for You:

There are many considerations in choosing the right coach training for you, and you need to know the right questions to ask. Here are the most important ones:

1. Why do you want to coach?
2. What is a credentialing organization like ICF or EMCC?
3. What is Accreditation?
4. What's the difference between Credentialing and Certification?
5. What do I need to know about the structure of coach training?
6. What do I need to learn to be a good coach?
7. How well does the training fit my learning style?

This paper will answer all those questions. Once you are clear in what you're looking for, you can look on the [ACTO website](http://www.actoonline.org) for a list of quality Coach Training Organizations.

Let's get started!

Why do you want to coach?

Why become a coach? You are here because you are interested in training with the coaching training organization that resonates the most with you. Your reasons for coaching will have a bearing on what type of training you will select, so spend some time determining what is important to you.

Your Goals and Hopes:

What is it that brings you to coaching? What do you expect to get out of it? People have a variety of reasons, from a deep desire to help people to the idea that coaches make lots of money. Write down a list of reasons you want to become a coach. Include everything you can think of, such as:

- Good post-retirement career
- I want to make a difference in the world
- People always tell me their problems
- I want to be a better manager (or HR professional or OD professional, etc.)
- I want to work for myself
- I want to help organizations be more productive and motivating

Prioritize this list, as it will have a bearing on the training you select. Be very honest in making and prioritizing your list, as this decision has far-reaching consequences,

and you must be sure you are embarking on this journey for reasons that are powerful for you.

In looking at this list, think about what kind of coach you might want to be: Executive Coach, Leadership Coach, Team Coach, Life Coach, Wellness Coach, etc. Currently many businesses, governments and organizations understand about executive, leadership and team coaching. Building a business around life coaching, wellness coaching, and any coaching that works with individuals can be more challenging. Coaching is not as well-known as other professions like therapy, general medicine, or law. You will need to spend time and energy marketing to fill your roster. Remember that coaching is a relatively new profession and so you will spend time educating potential clients. Note that ICF and other organizations are working hard to educate the public, and have support for their members to build their coaching business.

Relevance

What program is best suited to your needs? If you want to be a professional coach and dedicate yourself to your new profession, the most widely recognized training is a 125+ hour certification course with a program accredited by ICF(ACTP), EMCC, CCE or AC. Note that it is not required to have a certification in order to attain a credential.

If you want to learn coaching tools because you use coaching in your role as a manager, consultant or therapist, and don't plan to dedicate a major portion of your energy to coaching, a good approach might be a program that will give you enough training hours to attain a credential. Be sure the program is accredited by a regulatory organization such as ICF, EMCC, AC or CCE before signing up!

Your budget is also a factor. You can expect to pay \$10,000 - \$15,000 USD for a full certification ACTP program in North America. If certification is not necessary for you, the ACSTH program will be less outlay upfront. A consideration with that approach is that it can be as expensive or more so in time and maybe even money to attain a credential, as the coach will need to be mentored (about \$1,000 USD in the U.S.) over a period of 3 months, and will need to send in recordings to be assessed by ICF, which currently is taking up to 12 weeks.

Most training organizations have payment plans to help with tuition, and ACTO offers a scholarship program for qualified individuals.

Plan:

If you've done your homework, you should have the information about length of each program you're considering. Be thinking about how that timeframe fits into your current workload, your long-term goal, and your expectations. You will need to plan how you will support yourself during training. Most people take training while they are still working, and gradually phase out of their current job to their coaching work once they build their business to the point that can support their lifestyle. Be realistic when planning your coach training, and ensure you have enough time and money to continue through to graduation.

What is a credentialing organization like ICF or EMCC?

Coaching is a self-regulated profession. There are several global coach regulatory organizations that offer credentials to ensure the consumer that he/she is hiring a coach who is both trained and experienced. These organizations regulate and define what is quality coaching, and have strict requirements that must be met to achieve a credential, certificate or accreditation. The most influential regulatory organizations are:

- ICF: International Coach Federation
- EMCC: European Mentoring and Coaching Council
- IAC: International Association of Coaching
- CCE: Center for Credentialing and Education
- AC: Association of Coaching

Each of these organizations is dedicated to excellence in coaching, and has developed a series of credentials, accreditations and certifications to support their mission. This has resulted in much confusion over what is a credential, certification or accreditation. As a potential student, you will need to understand the regulatory organization that serves you best, and also learn the differences between those terms, so that you can choose the training program that best suits both your goals and financial needs.

ICF

International Coach Federation

The International Coach Federation (ICF) is the leading global organization dedicated to advancing the coaching profession by setting high standards, providing independent certification and building a worldwide network of trained coaching professionals. ICF developed the coaching Core Competencies as the gold standard of coaching, plus a strong Code of Ethics that protects both coaches and clients. It offers the most globally recognized, independent credentialing program for coach practitioners. ICF also accredits training programs that deliver coach-specific training. ICF-accredited training programs must complete a rigorous review process and demonstrate that their curriculum aligns with the ICF Core Competencies, Code of Ethics, and definition of coaching. ICF tracks learning using CCE's: Continuing Coach Education units. Each CCE equals one hour of approved coach-specific training.

ICF offers 3 coaching Credentials:

| Levels of Coach Credential | ACC - Associate Certified Coach | PCC- Professional Certified Coach | MCC - Master Certified Coach |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Minimum Requirements: | | | |
| Training Hours | 60 | 125 | 200 |
| Coaching Practice Hours | 100 | 500 | 2500 |
| | Hours must have followed the start of coach-specific training. At least 75 hours must be paid coaching, and 25 of these hours must occur within the 18 months prior to submitting the application for the credential. | Hours must have followed the start of coach-specific training. At least 450 hours must be paid coaching and 50 of these hours must occur within the 18 months prior to submitting the application for the credential. | Hours must have followed the start of coach-specific training. At least 2,250 hours must be paid coaching experience. |

| Levels of Coach Credential | ACC - Associate Certified Coach | PCC- Professional Certified Coach | MCC - Master Certified Coach |
|--|--|---|---|
| Number of Clients | 8 | 25 | 35 |
| Previous Credential | None Required | None Required | PCC |
| Additional Requirements for Certified Coaches | | | |
| CKA (Coach Knowledge Assessment) Exam | Must pass CKA | Must pass CKA, unless previously passed | Must pass CKA, unless previously passed |
| Requirements for ACSTH/Portfolio Coaches | | | |
| CKA (Coach Knowledge Assessment) Exam | Must pass CKA | Must pass CKA, unless previously passed for ACC | Must pass CKA, unless previously passed |
| Mentoring | 10 hours over at least 3 months by an ACC Mentor with at least one renewal, or a PCC or MCC Mentor | 10 hours over at least 3 months by a PCC or MCC Mentor | 10 hours over at least 3 months by an MCC Mentor |
| Performance Evaluation Recordings & Transcripts | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Requirements for Renewal | | | |
| Mentoring | 10 hours over at least 3 months by an ACC Mentor with at least one renewal, or a PCC or MCC Mentor | No mentor coaching required for PCC renewal, however up to 10 hours of mentor coaching (received or delivered) AND up to 10 hours of coaching supervision (received or delivered) may be submitted for Core Competency CCEs | No mentor coaching required for MCC renewal, however up to 10 hours of mentor coaching (received or delivered) AND up to 10 hours of coaching supervision (received or delivered) may be submitted for Core Competency CCEs |
| Training CCEs since previous renewal | 40 CCE credits At least 24 CCEs in Core Competencies, with at least 3 hours in coaching ethics | 40 CCE credits At least 24 CCEs in Core Competencies, with at least 3 hours in coaching ethics | 40 CCE credits At least 24 CCEs in Core Competencies, with at least 3 hours in coaching ethics |

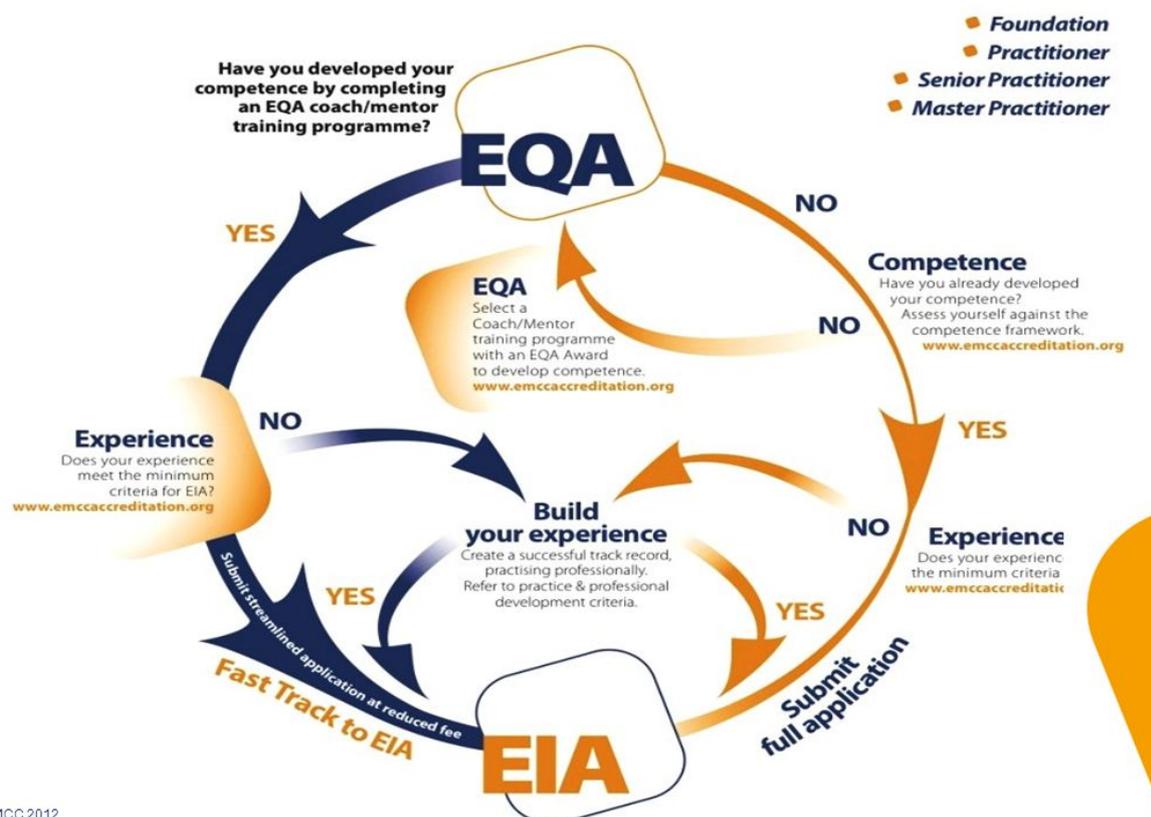
EMCC

European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC)

The EMCC exists to promote good practice and the expectation of good practice in mentoring, coaching, and supervision globally for the benefit of society. We are a Europe-wide council that consists of representatives from national EMCCs plus direct members in countries where a local EMCC does not yet exist. The EMCC membership is a rich mixture of individual mentors, coaches, mentoring/coaching organizations, training and education providers, buyers of mentoring/coaching and mentor/coach associations, large organizations/corporate members – all of whom share EMCC’s vision to promote good practice in mentoring/coaching.

European Individual Accreditation (EIA): The EIA is an internationally recognized award that demonstrates that an individual practicing as a professional mentor/coach has the appropriate level of knowledge and the ability to apply it effectively in his/her practice.

The EIA process is provided below:



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European Quality Award (EQA): This is an independent quality award awarded to providers of mentoring/coaching training to make their qualifications/training widely and immediately recognizable. This is through linking them to recognized professional standards. It is an integral and essential step on the path to establishing the professional credibility and status of mentoring/coaching.

Four levels of Mentor/Coach accreditation:

- 1) **Foundation:** This program level is aimed at those:
 - a. Who wish to gain an understanding of mentoring/coaching practice and to have the core skills
 - b. Likely to be working with others using mentoring/coaching conversations to support and encourage development of skills/performance
 - c. Who wish to use a mentoring/coaching approach within their own field/role and clearly understand how their mentor/coach role integrates with their vocational roles.
- 2) **Practitioner:** This program level is aimed at those:
 - a. Who will either be working as an internal mentor/coach, use mentoring/coaching as part of their main job or starting up as an external mentor/coach
 - b. Who are likely to be working with a small range of clients/contexts and within own area of experience to improve performance, build confidence and stretch capability
 - c. Who will typically be able to apply a limited range of models, tools and processes.
- 3) **Senior Practitioner:** This program level is aimed at those:
 - a. Who will practice as professional mentors/coaches and can draw on a range of models and frameworks
 - b. Who are or wish to work with a range of clients, contexts and organizations
 - c. Whose focus of work will be building capacity for progression, managing complex and challenging relationships, working with ambiguity and change.
- 4) **Master Practitioner:** This program level is aimed at those:
 - a. Who will practice as professional mentors/coaches and will create their own coherent approach drawing on a wide range of models and frameworks
 - b. Who are or wish to work with a range of clients, contexts and organizations

Requirements for Credentials:

| Levels of Coach Accreditation | Foundation | Practitioner | Senior Practitioner | Master Practitioner |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| During EQA Training: | | | | |
| Study hours | Min. 20 | Min. 150 | Min. 500 | Min. 1800 |
| Skill Practice hours | 10 hrs | 60 hrs | 150 hrs | 540 hrs |
| Coaching practice hours | 6 hrs | 36 hrs | 90 hrs | 250 hrs |
| Practice - Experience | | | | |
| Length of Experience | Min. 1 year | Min. 3 years | Min. 5 years | Min. 7 years |
| Number of client contact hours | 50 hrs | 100 hrs | 250 hrs | 500 hrs |
| Number of Clients | 5 | 10 | 20 | 40 |
| Client feedback | 5 within last 12 months |

| Levels of Coach Accreditation | Foundation | Practitioner | Senior Practitioner | Master Practitioner |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Professional Development | | | | |
| Continuous Professional Development | 16 hrs per year | 16 hrs per year | 32 hrs per year | 48 hrs per year |
| Mentor/Coach Supervision | 1 hr / Quarter | 1 hr / Quarter | 1 hr / 35 hrs practice (min. Quarterly) | 1 hr / 35 hrs practice (min. Quarterly) |
| Reflection on practice | 5 items within last 12 months | 5 items within last 12 months | 5 items within last 12 months | 5 items within last 12 months |
| Contribution to the profession | Membership of a professional body | Membership of a professional body | Membership of a professional body | Membership of a professional body and contributes to development of mentor/coaching field |

CCE

Center for Credentialing & Education

The BCC (Board Certified Coach) verification system was designed by the Center for Credentialing & Education (**CCE**) to establish standards for competency and experience within the coaching profession. The CCE started as an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), and credentials nearly 25,000 practitioners globally in a variety of fields. Whereas the CCE offers credentials for a variety of positions in the Counseling field, the only one that applies to coaching is the **BCC**.

CCE offers the BCC Credential for Coaching:

| Levels of Coach Credential | BCC - Board Certified Coach |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Minimum Requirements: | |
| Training Hours | At least 30 |
| Coaching Practice Hours | At least 30 |
| Education | Master's degree or higher in Counseling |
| Previous Credential | Current and active National Certified Counselor credential or full professional counselor license |
| BCC Exam | Passed |
| Other | Must have one professional endorsement |
| Recertification | 70 hours of continuing education over 5 years to recertify |

IAC

International Association of Coaching (IAC)

The IAC is a global professional organization that feels that attaining coach mastery is a transformative process, and takes life experience, training and education into account when measuring skill levels. IAC defines 9 *Coaching Masteries* that when demonstrated at the appropriate level indicate the coach is high-caliber.

IAC uses Certifications to indicate the skill level of the coach. Applicants start with a Masteries Professional Development Plan, where they identify 2-4 learning objectives and activities that will enhance their coaching skills. Once they have completed the plan, they take an online test based on the 9 IAC Coaching Masteries to measure their understanding of coaching mastery. Once they pass the online test, they are awarded the “Masteries Practitioner” certification. To attain the CMC or MMC, the applicant must pass 2 assessments of recordings of their coaching. The assessment will determine which level the coach applicant has attained.

IAC Certification Requirements

| Levels of Certification | Masteries Practitioner | Certified Masteries Coach (CMC) | Master Masteries Coach (MMC) |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Minimum Requirements: | | | |
| Training Hours | Complete Masteries Professional Development Plan | | |
| Exam | Pass Online Test | | |
| Recordings Assessment | | 2 Recordings, 30-45 mins, with 2 different clients, plus transcripts | 2 Recordings, 30-45 mins, with 2 different clients, plus transcripts |
| IAC Membership | Required | Required | Required |
| Previous Certification | | Masteries Practitioner | Masteries Practitioner |

AC

The Association for Coaching (AC) was established in 2002 and is a leading independent and not-for-profit professional body dedicated to promoting best practice and raising awareness and standards of coaching worldwide. With members in over 70 countries, it is made up of professional coaches, academic institutions, trainers and providers of coaching, as well as sponsors of coaching from the third sector through to large corporates, building coaching cultures. The AC has a code of Competencies as well as a Code of Ethics to uphold the profession of coaching.

Four levels of Mentor/Coach accreditation:

- 5) **Foundation Coach** has:
 - a. A core level of knowledge and understanding of coaching practice
 - b. Some coaching tools and techniques
 - c. Use of coaching tools in a functional way
 - d. A commitment to further growth and development
 - e. Knowledge and understanding of working with organizations and leaders (Executive applications)
- 6) **Coach** has:
 - a. Good knowledge of coaching practice
 - b. A broader range of tools and techniques
 - c. A cohesive coaching model
 - d. Some evidence of application of coaching approach through case study and coach recording
 - e. Evidence of coach development over time
 - f. Knowledge and understanding of working with organizations and leaders (Executive applications)
- 7) **Professional Coach** has:
 - a. A depth of understanding of coaching practice, with a strong theoretical and practical framework
 - b. Flexible use of a range of techniques and approaches in response to client/situation
 - c. A coaching approach with breadth and depth that is well-articulated, and demonstrated in action in the application
 - d. Ability to work on more complex, demanding and ambiguous issues with clients
 - e. Evidence of coach development over time
 - f. Systemic work with organizations and leaders (Executive applications).
- 8) **Master Coach** has:
 - a. An expert knowledge and deep understanding of coaching practice, a strong theoretical and practical underpinning and an awareness of coaching related disciplines (e.g. psychological models, coaching supervision, mindfulness etc.)
 - b. A coaching approach that draws on a broad range of models, tools and techniques, tailored to individual requirements and demonstrated in action
 - c. Targeted coaching interventions used with great refinement • Knowledgeable and confident yet working from the mind-set of knowing little
 - d. Effective working on complex, demanding and ambiguous issues
 - e. Evidence of coach development over time
 - f. Systemic work with organizations and leaders (Executive applications)

AC Credential Minimum Requirements:

| Levels of Coach Accreditation | Foundation Coach | Coach | Professional Coach | Master Coach |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Minimum Experience: | | | | |
| Coach Training | 35+ hours | 40+ hours | 60+ hours | 80+ hours |
| Coach Experience | 75+ hours | 250+ hours | 750+ hours | 1500+ hrs |
| Number of Clients | 5 | 10 | 20 | 40 |
| Client feedback | 5 within last 12 months | 5 within last 12 months | 5 within last 12 months | 5 within last 12 months |
| Ethics | Compliance + Professional Indemnity Insurance | Compliance + Q&A+ Professional Indemnity Insurance | Compliance + Q&A+ Professional Indemnity Insurance | Compliance + Q&A+ Professional Indemnity Insurance |
| Professional Development | | | | |
| Continuous Professional Development | CPD Log Required | 30+ hours for 3 years | 36+ hours for 3 years | 42+ hours for 3 years |
| Mentor/Coach Supervision | 3 months | 6 months | 9 months | 12 months |

What is Accreditation?

Accreditation in Coaching

Accreditation means different things for different coach regulatory organizations. For EMCC and AC, it means awarding a credential to a coach. For ICF it means approving coach training programs to offer different levels of training. Please see “Credentialing” for the EMCC and AC credentialing descriptions, and read on for the ICF Accreditation description.

ICF Accreditation:

To indicate the extent of the coach training program, ICF offers three different levels of ICF accreditation: ACTP, ACSTH and CCE:

ACTP (Accredited Coach Training Programs) are ‘all inclusive’ programs that offer full coach training at the PCC level. Students who complete all the certification requirements of an ACTP program receive a certificate that is accepted by ICF as proof that training requirements are met at the PCC Level. This certificate, along with validation of required experience hours, number of clients, and passing the Coach Knowledge Assessment exam is all that is required to apply for the PCC.

Requirements to be accredited by ICF as an ACTP are:

- Minimum 125 hours coach-specific training
- At least 80 percent of all training delivered in synchronous learning activities
- At least 80 of all training hours are focused on the ICF Core Competencies & ICF Code of Ethics
- Minimum of 6 observed-coaching sessions with an experienced coach
- Comprehensive final exam that evaluates a student’s coaching competency at the PCC level
- Director of Training is an MCC or PCC

ACSTH (Approved Coach Specific Training Hours) approved courses are ‘a la carte’ training programs which may not provide the full start-to-finish coach training program. Graduates using ACSTH training for credentialing must use the ACSTH Application which includes assessment of 1 or 2 recordings, 10 hours of mentor coaching, and passing the Coach Knowledge Assessment exam to qualify for a credential. Requirements to be accredited by ICF as an ACTP include:

- Minimum of 30 hours of coach specific training
- At least 80 percent of all training delivered in synchronous activities, and
- At least 80 percent of all training delivered on the ICF Core Competencies & ICF Code of Ethics

CCE (Continuing Coach Education) are separate training modules for supplemental or advanced training. Providers may provide a certificate, but it can only be used to prove hours of training. Graduates using CCE training for initial credentialing must use the Portfolio Application path which includes assessment of 1 or 2 recordings, 10 hours of mentor coaching, and passing the Coach Knowledge Assessment exam to qualify for a credential. CCE providers must have their classes approved by ICF in order to display the ICF CCE logo.

What's the difference between Credentialing and Certification?

Distinctions Between Professional Credentialing and Assessment-Based Certificates:

Earning a professional credential is a voluntary process through which an individual is evaluated against predetermined standards for knowledge, skills or competencies for a particular job or profession. A credential may include other eligibility criteria such as training and experience. Private credentialing, sometimes referred to as certification, is offered by an independent, nongovernmental body, such as a professional association or organization, and not by the provider of education or training. Credentials are what prospective clients look at to validate your coaching level.

By contrast an assessment-based certificate program offers an individual a certificate after successfully completing a training program and passing the training assessment provided by the training provider. This assessment evaluates an individual on the knowledge gained through that particular course.

The ICF awards its credentials to professional coach candidates based on their meeting the eligibility requirements, including required training and experience, as well as demonstrating the required knowledge and skill in coaching as determined by the credentialing assessments.

Certificates are awarded by coach training programs to graduates to demonstrate or verify successful completion of the training program. Professional coaches who apply for an ICF credential may use a certificate provided by a coach training program to verify they have completed the required coach-specific training hours for the credential.

Certifications

1. General:

- a) ICF- Accredited Coach Training Program certificates: Earning a certificate by passing all the training requirements for an ICF Accredited Coach Training Program (ACTP) streamlines the ICF credential application process, since the coach training organization incorporates a number of the requirements--including performance evaluations, training in Ethics, and mentor coaching--within the training program. When a student who has been certified by an ICF ACTP applies for an ACC or PCC credential, the candidate need only send a copy of the certificate, attest to the number of coaching hours and clients, and earn a passing score on the Coach Knowledge Assessment.
 - Note: A Certification is NOT required to attain a credential. It simply makes the credential application process much easier.
- b) Other certificates: Some coach training organizations offer "Coach Certification", but are not accredited through the ICF as an Accredited Coach Training Program, or ACTP, or as an Approved Coach Specific Training Hours provider, or ACSTH. Certificates earned through a non-ICF accredited training provider, along with additional requirement curriculum documentation, will be considered, however approval of such training hours is contingent on the training's alignment with the ICF definition of coaching, ICF Core Competencies and definition of coaching. Credential applicants who attain a certificate that is NOT an ACTP or ACSTH certificate will need to use the Portfolio path to apply for a credential, which includes completion of required client coaching experience hours, submission of recorded coaching sessions to be assessed, having 10 hours of mentor coaching and completion of the Coach Knowledge Assessment.

2. Specializations

- a) Many coach training organizations offer certificate programs in specialized areas, such as ADHD coaching, Divorce Coaching, etc. These certificates validate that the student has satisfied all the requirements for that training organization to graduate. However, these specialized certificates will not be recognized by ICF to ease credentialing requirements. Credential applicants who attain a certificate that is NOT an ACTP or ACSTH approved training certificate will need to use the Portfolio path to apply for a credential, which includes completion of required client coaching experience hours, submission of recorded coaching sessions to be assessed, having 10 hours of mentor coaching and completion of the Coach Knowledge Assessment.

What do I need to know about the structure of coach training?

Structure of Training Programs

All training programs are different. Consider the differences even within ACTPs (full Certification Training): length of the program, teaching mode, configuration of the classes, can all be different based upon the program's design. Be aware of what is important to you in your training, and prioritize those factors to help you decide which program might best fit into your schedule and learning mode.

- **Class Configuration:** Consider how the classes will be held. Find out:
 - Number of students in each class, and trainer to student-ratio
 - How the class is presented: Mostly lecture, very experiential or a combination?
 - Location of face-to-face classes (see *Training Mode* below)
 - What technology you will need to access classes and recordings
 - What books are needed
 - What other expenses such as books, transcription fees, etc.
- **Timing and Length:** Look into timing factors to see how it fits in your schedule:
 - How are the classes given: several full days in a row, once a month, once a week, whenever the student wants, etc.?
 - How long is each class: a full day, 1 hour, etc.?
 - How long does it take to graduate? Some ACTPs might take 6 months, others a full 3 years.
 - When is the next available class going to be held?
- **Faculty:** Research the program's faculty to gauge the level of professionalism:
 - The program should have at least one MCC on faculty. Trainers should hold a credential, preferably PCC or MCC, as you want them to be experienced coaches. You should interview one or all of the faculty you'll be working with to ensure you like their style.
- **Training Mode:** There are three types of training modes:
 - **Virtual:** Online training via web meetings. Of these, there are two types:
 - *Synchronous:* The trainer and student are both present during the training, with frequent give and take.
 - *Asynchronous:* training has been recorded. The student takes the training on his/her own, then must debrief with a trainer to receive credit.
 - **In Person:** classes are real-time, face to face.
 - **Hybrid:** a blend of virtual and in-person training. This could entail some number of in-person classes supplemented by virtual training.
- **Exposure/Diversity:** Find out how the program addresses diversity, culture, power, etc:
 - Does the training program address diversity and culture? How?

- Does the training program 'speak your language'?
- Do you feel respected and cared about by the training program representatives?
- **Cost:** You should choose the best program that fits into your budget:
 - What financing options are available?
 - Does the program offer tuition assistance, scholarships or budget plans?
 - How flexible is their payment plan?

What do I need to learn to be a good coach?

What to Learn? There are many coach training programs available, and each one has its own focus. As a consumer, you must do the research on these programs to ensure they are offering the best value and giving you the skills you need to succeed as a coach.

If you are brand new to coaching, you should choose a program that gives you a strong grounding in the fundamentals of coaching. Once you have been trained in the fundamentals, you can take more advanced training and even branch out into specialized areas. What does this all mean?

- **Fundamentals:** Coaching involves a different way of listening and interacting with others. The largest coach regulatory organizations (ICF, EMCC and AC) each have a set of coaching competencies that clearly define how to coach. They also have a Code of Ethics that members must sign to indicate understanding and acceptance. These are the most basic skills and knowledge that each coach should have. If you are new to coaching, choose a program that gives you both understanding and much practice in the competencies and ethics. Ensure you choose a program that is accredited by the coach regulatory organization of your choice, and ask them how much training you get in the competencies and ethics. You should get at least 35 hours for the program to be useful for your grasp of coaching.
- **Advanced:** The fundamentals give a foundation in coaching, and to really grasp coaching, the student should also learn more advanced practices. This usually involves a deeper dive into competencies and ethics, and can include practices that are unique to the particular coach training program you are researching. These courses will strengthen your understanding and practice of coaching, and will round out your skills.
- **Specialties:** Once you have a firm grasp on the competencies and ethics, you can branch out into specialties. These can include focus on such areas as ADD Coaching, Health and Wellness Coaching, Spiritual Coaching, Somatic Coaching, Marital/Divorce Coaching, and so on. If a particular program in a specific area interests you, ensure they also give a strong grounding in the competencies and ethics. If not, you will need to get the fundamentals from another program.

How well does the training fit my learning style?

Matching Your Style: There is more to learning than listening and reading! You want your journey to become a coach to be challenging, enriching, fulfilling and joyous. As you perform research on the coach training programs that most interest you, arrange time to speak to a faculty member. In this conversation, you can investigate what might make this program perfect for your learning. Pay attention to:

- **Values:** What do you value most in your life? What does the coach training program value? Are they a match? What is the mission of the program? Is it a mission that motivates you to sign up,

or is it one that doesn't interest you much? For example, if you value pragmatism and achievement, and plan to be an executive coach, you may not be interested in a program that values spirituality and altruism, with a focus on growing self-awareness and tapping into the energy of the universe. On the other hand, if you are focused on self-awareness, spirituality and to inherent goodness of mankind, and would like to be a spiritual coach, a program that is geared towards training internal executive coaches, with little to no business training may not be a good fit for you.

- **Learning Style/Preference:** How do you enjoy learning? Do you like many people in a class, or do you prefer small classes with more one-on-one attention? Do you want face-to-face training or is online webinar training better for you? Or a combination of the two? Do you learn well with lectures? How much interaction do you like? How much practice? Are you a visual learner, or an audio learner or a kinesthetic learner? How does the program present their learning? Be very clear on how you learn best, and consider the style of training offered by the programs that interest you.
- **Training Philosophy, Approach:** How does the program train? Do they offer training in a classroom with 30 other students, listening to lectures and reading lots of coaching books? Or do they offer small classes or even one-on-one training with a lot of interaction and practice? How interactive is the program? How often do they meet? How do they ensure putting into practice what is learned? If you plan to have your own coaching business, how strong is their business training?

Reference

Information about the various regulatory organizations were collected directly from the organizations, or from their websites. For more information see:

- ICF: International Coach Federation. <https://coachfederation.org>
- EMCC: European Mentoring and Coaching Council. <https://www.emccouncil.org>
- CCE: Center for Credentialing and Education. <https://www.cce-global.org/BCC>
- IAC: International Association of Coaching. <https://certifiedcoach.org>
- AC: Association for Coaching. <https://www.associationforcoaching.com>