

BEST PRACTICES FOR MENTOR COACHING

Mentor Coaching is a specific kind of coaching, designed to help you orient on the Core Coaching Competencies, as defined by the International Coaching Federation. The purpose is to grow your awareness of the competencies themselves, expand your knowingness of how to demonstrate the competencies in a session, and how the competencies can empower you forward to becoming a stronger coach.

What follows is a basic break-down of the best practices to ensure you get the most out of your mentoring experience. You will want to give yourself the very best situation possible to demonstrate your coaching. You'll want to give yourself space and circumstances that really allow for your skills to be seen. To achieve this, please apply the following as you prepare for recording and conducting your coaching sessions.

1

Don't use a good friend or family member as your client. These folks may love you, they may want to help you out, but they make terrible clients. Typically, the whole coaching relationship is a bit inauthentic due to your background relationship that, in most cases, would be considered a conflict of interest and/or power-balance issue...which would make coaching the person an ethical issue anyway. Just don't.

2

Make sure that you walk the person through a brief 'zero' session, or exploratory session, to be sure that they appear coachable, they have a coachable topic, you feel comfortable with their topic, and the two of you have enough 'click' to be partners for this process. This includes making sure they know what coaching is, and is not, and agree to partner with you in a coaching relationship, even if only for 1 session. Do not record the zero session for mentoring feedback. It's good to record them, but they won't show off your coaching skills as they are not actual coaching sessions.

3

Use stable recording processes and set-up a good coaching environment. This is no different than you would do with a regular client, under any circumstance.

- a. Test your audio
- b. Clear out as many distractions as possible
- c. Please know, unless you have a nack for it, or the equipment for it, recording a live face-to-face session usually isn't great. Regardless of how you usually coach, try using Zoom, (or the like), for your mentoring session recording.

Coaching Evolved

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Remember, you're striving for a 30-minute coaching session. This may be way shorter than you are used to, but it makes the group's "listening work" lighter, and it is more than enough for your instructor to get a feel for your coaching. If your session is 31, 34, or 39 minutes – don't panic. Even if it's 40 minutes, send it in. If it is over 45 minutes, consider recording another session for submission, or be clear that only part of the session will be reviewed due to time.

a. To prepare yourself for a 30-minute session, keep this in mind...you aren't supposed to produce some transformational miracle in 30-minutes. There is NO expectation to solve/resolve some deep issue in 30-minutes. Instead think of it like this: We are meeting for 30 minutes today, what should we work on for 30 minutes, and what do we hope to accomplish by working on it for these 30-minutes?

If you're building a house, you can't expect to build the bathroom in a day. You CAN come and work on the tile in the shower for 30-minutes, and feel you've made some progress. This is especially true if you see that action as part of a bigger 'house build.' So, see the session as a work-meeting to work on a piece of the 'human build' for 30-minutes. Focus in on the most important piece for the client, and just work on it.

5

No matter what happens, do NOT edit your audio in any way. Don't cut off the end, or the start, or edit out things the client didn't want shared, or that you didn't think was important. Either submit it all or use a different recording.

a. Your instructor needs to hear both the start and end of your session, they are so important to the session overall, so both must be present.

b. Editing dialogue breaks the authenticity of the coaching interaction, including removing things that either, or both, parties said/did in the session.

6

If you choose to use a method during the session, please realize that following a template doesn't show your skill at coaching, it shows your skill at following a template. All templates have their purpose, and their good attributes, but in this context, they can hurt your feedback. The lowest level of coaching competency, as defined by the ICF, is a coach who is not curious, not dancing in the moment with the client, but is working a scripted set of questions or holding a client to a specific process. Your choice to use a structured method will usually result in demonstrating a more limited version of your skills. Thus, less helpful feedback.

7

Please don't record your second submission until you've received feedback on your first one. Otherwise there is little to no way to see your growth and application of the feedback.