

So you're thinking about becoming a coach...

People often realise the value of coaching once they have been coached, or worked in an environment where there is a coaching mentality. There are also people who become interested in coaching because they think "there must be another way to do things!". However finding out how to go about becoming a coach is a bit of a minefield!

This guide is drawn up as an impartial pamphlet to help you understand how to get where you want to be – because coaching is all about meeting your goals!

The first thing to understand is that the coaching profession is not regulated in the way that counselling or psychotherapy is. This means that there is no one governing body which approves coaches or coach training. Responsible coaches all over the world are trying to address this by getting together to create a level of standard to which we should operate. The main bodies set up to do this are:

- The International Coach Federation (ICF)
- The Association for Coaching (AoC)
- The European Council for Coaching and Mentoring (EMCC).



These organizations are run by practicing coaches who carry out research into the value of coaching. The purpose of these bodies is to protect anyone receiving coaching and anyone who chooses to train as a coach. The committees for each of these bodies meet regularly to discuss standards and appropriate conduct for coaches.

When looking for a training course, check that the company you are interested in carries at least one of these logos. You can check if their courses are accredited by visiting the sites directly:

- ICF: <http://www.coachfederation.org/icfcredentials/program-search/>
- AoC : http://www.associationforcoaching.com/dir/org.htm#1_3
- EMCC : <http://emccaccreditation.org/eqa-home/eqa-providers/>

The most rigorous course accreditation process is carried out by the ICF and the highest level of training that is currently approved by the ICF is the Accredited Coach Training Programme (ACTP).

What does ACTP mean?

If a company is offering an Accredited Coach Training Programme (ACTP), this means that all their training materials, methods, and modes of assessment have been checked and verified by external reviewers for the ICF. Any students attending such a programme should receive a certificate on successful completion of the course with this logo on it:



The certificate should also say how many hours of coach specific training you have attended as this will need to be presented to the ICF if you choose to apply for professional credentialing through them.

Why do an ACTP?

The ACTP is a mark of a high level of training. It is especially important if you want to practice as a coach to align yourself with one of the coaching bodies. If you want to become credentialed by the ICF, the process is easier (and cheaper!) if you have already completed an ACTP. This is because the ICF already knows the standard of training that you have done and will accept your certificate as evidence that you have a high level of coaching ability rather than you needing to demonstrate it with a live coaching session and other assessments. For full details of the credentialing process see here:

<http://www.coachfederation.org/getcredentialed/>

The course I'm interested in is called 'ACSTH', is this the same thing?

ACSTH stands for Approved Coach Specific Training Hours. This is also an ICF accreditation and also undergoes a rigorous approval process by the ICF. ACTPs are made up of ACSTH. This means that the ACTP is broken down into smaller sections that are individually accredited by the ICF. If you have completed one of these programmes it is a good mark that you have received adequate training however you would still have to go through the full credentialing process which can be avoided if you complete an ACTP. If you have attended ACSTH you should have received a certificate with this logo and the amount of hours that you have achieved:



I don't want to set up as a coach, I just want to use coaching skills as a manager, what should I do?

If you are only planning on doing 1 to 1 coaching as part of a managerial role, a good ACSTH course should be sufficient. Make sure that the course you are attending includes

training on contracting and safe practice as well as various coaching techniques. You may find once you have attended an ACSTH course that you want to learn more and you can always take further modules at a later date.

The company I did my ACSTH with doesn't do a full ACTP, what should I do?

Some companies don't offer a full ACTP because they are missing elements from their training that would take them up to the full accreditation. If you have completed ACSTH and want to top-up your learning, you can contact many companies who offer ACTPs and ask about the possibility of studying particular modules to get you to the right level. This means you don't need to start from the beginning again.

I've been practicing as a coach for years, why should I get training now?

Coaching is an evolving profession and has become much more popular in the last 20 years. Many people practice as coaches without having received formal qualifications. Given the importance of safe practice and the rise in legalities around the coaching profession, it is important to protect yourself by learning the appropriate skills. Many people who believe they have been coaching for years attend a coaching course and realise that they have actually been mentoring, or counselling. It is important to make the distinction so that each coach knows their boundaries.

Unfortunately many people who practice without adequate training are unaware of the potential damage they could cause to clients. If you have been coaching without having attended a recognised coaching course, ask yourself how you know what you are doing is correct.

Is there anywhere I can talk to people who have already attended training?

There are thousands of coaches out there who are happy to share their experiences of coach training. Search for coaching groups on LinkedIn or Facebook and ask members what they would advise.

I've got more questions, can you help?

If your question is about one of the specific professional bodies we suggest you go directly to them as they are the experts. However if you want some advice about coach training please feel free to get in touch with us at:

E-mail: enquiries@theperformancesolution.com

Tel: +44 (0)1225 867285

www.theperformancesolution.com



This pamphlet was prepared by The Performance Solution to help you make the best decision for you.