

Coaching Supervision Guide

The AC is committed to sustaining and advancing good coaching practice. Our aim as a professional body is to encourage all coaches to undertake supervision as a continuous process once they have trained as a coach. Supervision is essential for all applicants seeking to achieve and maintain AC Coach Accreditation.

What is Coaching Supervision?

Coaching supervision is a formal and protected time for facilitating a coach's in-depth reflection on their practice with a Coaching Supervisor. Supervision offers a confidential framework within a collaborative working relationship in which the practice, tasks, process and challenges of the coaching work can be explored. The primary aim of supervision is to enable the coach to gain in ethical competency, confidence and creativity so as to ensure best possible service to the coaching client, both coachees and coaching sponsors. Supervision is not a 'policing' role, but rather a trusting and collegial professional relationship.

Why Coaching Supervision is Essential for the Practising Coach

'Having supervision is a fundamental aspect of continuing personal development for coaches, mentors, organisational consultants and supervisors, providing a protected and disciplined space in which we can reflect on particular client situations and relationships, the reactivity and patterns they evoke in us and by transforming these live, in supervision, profoundly benefit our clients,'

Hawkins & Smith (2006), *Coaching, Mentoring and Organizational Consultancy, Supervision and Development*.

Regular reflection on and reviewing of one's work is essential to maintain and sustain good practice. Supervision recognises the 'human element' and subsequent demands of the coaching work on the coach. It ensures that relationships with clients are non-exploitative, a coach's limitations are understood and worked within, and further development needs can be surfaced. It provides a space to expand emotional intelligence, gain support, relate practice to theory, develop new learning, and

evolve coaching practice. Overall, coaching supervision is essential both to develop the coach's professional skills and to maintain excellent standards of coaching.

The Benefits of Coaching Supervision

The primary purpose of coaching supervision is to ensure that the coach is effectively addressing the needs of the client. At the same time, the supervision dialogue enables the coach to continuously improve their practice. Supervision encourages the exploration of the relationship between the coach and client and ensures that ethical standards are adhered to throughout the coaching process. Hawkins and Smith (2006) identify three primary reasons for engaging with Coaching Supervision:

Qualitative (i.e. Accountability and Protection)

- Ensures the best interests of the client are being upheld – for the coachee and any organisation buying in services;
- Supports the coach to work to best practice and to the **AC Global Code of Ethics for Coaches, Mentors & Supervisors**.

Development

- Provides an opportunity to monitor client work and develop skills in a supportive environment;
- Utilises feedback to help to advance practice;
- Identifies areas for further development for the coach.

Resourcing

- Responds to the effect of the client work on the coach, including the emotional impact;
- Offers a confidential environment, enabling the coach to manage any personal issues which may impede their ability to be fully present for their client.

Forms of Coaching Supervision

There are a number of forms of supervision:

- One-to-one Coaching Supervisor to Coach
- One-to-one peer coaching supervision
- Group coaching supervision
- Peer group coaching supervision

All of the above may take place either face-to-face, via telephone or video conference, such as Skype.



Choosing and Finding a Supervisor

Coaches should identify a Coaching Supervisor who meets AC requirements by checking the current **Applicant Guide** which will state the relevant criteria. Ensure your Coaching Supervisor also agrees to complete a **Coaching Supervision Report** for your AC Coach Accreditation, works within the **AC Coaching Competency Framework**, and subscribes to the **AC Global Code of Ethics for Coaches, Mentors & Supervisors**.

Not all supervisors have a coaching background, although it is important they have undergone some coach training. You may wish to find a supervisor whose particular skills and experience will enhance the knowledge and skills you seek. You may also choose to work with more than one supervisor so that the full range of your work can be explored and developed.

Coaching Supervisors can be found via the AC Directory, where you will find AC members who undertake coaching supervision. Those members who have successfully been accredited to date through our Coaching Supervisor Accreditation Scheme are indicated.

Agreeing How to Work Together

Just as coaching works to an agreed contract between the coach and the client, the same applies to good supervision, so that the expectations of all parties are made explicit. These will include agreeing frequency, duration and location of meetings, ethical frameworks, confidentiality, how notes or electronic data are stored, charges and billing arrangements and cancellations or postponement.

Should you be seeking AC Coach Accreditation, ensure your Coaching Supervisor meets the AC's Accreditation requirements, agrees to complete that report for your AC Coach Accreditation, works with the AC Coaching Competency Framework and subscribes to the AC Global Code of Ethics for Coaches, Mentors & Supervisors.

Please refer to the AC Accredited Coach and Executive Coach Accreditation Applicant Guide available on the website.

