

DEMYSTIFYING COACH CERTIFICATION

For MentorCoach Students Only

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The Certification Ladder

Certification is the most official, visible recognition of your professional training and development. It connotes professionalism and opens additional business opportunities. It may become a requirement in the future. Here are the basics—and check each organization for additional, qualifying details.



In coaching, the premier organization for certification is the International Coach Federation, www.coachfederation.com. They certify coaches at three levels:

ACC: Associate Certified Coach, “for the practiced coach,” requires 60 hours of coach training and 100 hours of coaching clients, 5 client recommendation letters, 10 hours of being coached by a coach certified at one of the next two levels, two recommendation letters from coaches at the PCC or MCC level, and an oral exam. Seen as a provisional, preliminary certification is renewable.

PCC: Professional Certified Coach, “for the proven coach,” requires 125 hours of training, 750 hours of coaching at least 25 clients, 10 hours of coaching by a PCC or MCC, among other requirements.

MCC: Master Certified Coach, “for the expert coach,” 2500 hours of coaching clients at least 35 clients, among other requirements.

Mentor Coach also offers its own certification, the CMC or Certified Mentor Coach, which falls between the ICF’s first two levels. See www.mentorcoach.com/certification. While ALL MC graduates can proudly say they completed an ICF-approved program, many opt for official status as certified coaches.

CMC: 125 hours of coach training, 100 hours of coaching clients, 10 hours of coaching, 5 client recommendation letters, 10 hours of being coached by a coach certified as CMC, PCC, or MCC, two recommendation letters from coaches the CMC/PCC/MCC level, completion of the Interim Exam, and a written and oral exam

Bonus A: When you receive CMC status, when you can ask the ICF to grant you ACC status if you submit your CMC documentation (and the coaches who recommend must be at the PCC or MCC level, not just CMC).

Bonus B: After receiving the CMC and have accumulated 750 hours of coaching 25 clients, you may ask the ICF to grant you PCC status.

How Can I Map the Smoothest Route to the CMC Credential?

Print out the requirements from the MC website and read them over. Make up a check list and get going. As you consider the basic steps, keep in mind that the exams are given only in the spring and fall, and that availability of classes can vary.



Qualify to take the exam. The fast track begins by taking Foundations, Ethics and Risk Management, and Individual Skills as quickly as possible, even overlapping the classes as fits you. This will prepare you for the MC Interim Exam that tests your knowledge of the fundamentals in those three classes. Keep your Certificates of Completion for each class carefully filed.

Get as much practice coaching clients as you can along the way, keeping careful track of both paid and pro bono hours. Seek feedback from homework partners and clients. Get written permission from all clients to include their name, contact information, and the dates of coaching sessions.

Take the interim exam. Apply to take the exam, which is a moderately long, open-book, objective test administered over the internet. You will be able to choose your own 48-hour window for completing the exam from the four-day long testing period.

Get coached. At some point, hire your own coach at the CMC, PCC, or MCC level for at least ten hours of coaching over a minimum three-month period; these are to be hours dedicated to the ICF coaching competencies, not marketing strategies. Your coach will serve as a great role model and one of the two eventual references that you will need from coaches at this level. [Please note the slight difference here with the ICF's ACC requirements below.] Leverage your coaching sessions to create the business platform for your successful practice as a credentialed coach.

Rack up 125 course hours. Meanwhile, continue taking MC classes that are marked as counting towards certification from the wide array available to accumulate the 125 required course hours, keeping good notes along the way for the CMC Final Exam. Be sure to keep those Certificates of Completion carefully filed. You must take the Supervision class, which will include six individual sessions with the supervising coach who will listen to your coaching sessions and provide feedback that will hone your skills and prepare you for the oral exam. Select classes to give you a broad base for exploring and then defining your niche.

Hit 100 client hours. Continue coaching to accumulate at least 100 hours of coaching clients (at least 75 of which are paid hours). Ask for feedback and testimonials along the way. As you approach the date to

file to take the exam, ask five of your most satisfied clients to write letters of recommendation for you. Also get those two certified coaches to send you their recommendations as well.

Apply to take the final exam. Now you are qualified to take the exam, which consists of an on-line multiple-choice and essay exam plus an oral exam with a supervisory coach and a designated client. If you have followed the above steps of studying, reviewing, observing role model coaches, and getting feedback, you will be able to celebrate your new status as a CMC!



Maximizing your credential. File the International Coach Federation's on-line application for the ACC via the ATP option, and with the documentation for your CMC **plus recommendation letters from two PCC or MCC coaches**, and you will receive the ACC designation. (This is the ICF, and they want to see ICF credentials; the CMC designation does not matter to them, and the ICF considers the ACC a provisional level and not acceptable as a reference for certification.) When you have reached 750 client coaching hours, file the ICF application for the PCC. Fees are involved, but the procedure is simple.

Celebrate and publicize! And remember to feature the CMC, ACC, PCC, etc., designations after your name. Mention your credentials on your website with links to MentorCoach and the ICF. Send notices to relevant news sources, including the Mentor Coach community listserve and Resource Groups (we want to hear!), and contacts about your professional achievement.

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It is the obligation of the coach to see if there have been changes at MentorCoach or ICF in the process or requirements for certification.

For more information~

⇒For further details on MentorCoach credentialing, see the website and/or write certification@mentorcoach.com.

⇒for further details on ICF credentialing go to <http://www.coachfederation.org/research-education/icf-credentials/become-credentialed/>. Watch for possible changes or "enhancements" in 2010 – 2011.

⇒For individual or group coaching for this or other goals, contact me at gayle@essencecoaching.com