FUTURE OF COACHING

THE VOICES AT THE TABLE:
PERSPECTIVES ON COACHING PRACTICES
AND THE PREPARATION OF PROFESSIONALS

A document prepared

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I. Introduction

There is ample evidence from recent studies to document the diversity of coaches practicing globally: their characteristics, qualifications, practices, and preferences. As the field of coaching matures, the characteristics of coaches and coaching contexts show a similar shift.

At the 2011 International Coach Federation (ICF) Annual International Conference, representatives from three coaching organizations – the ICF, the Association of Coach Training Organizations (ACTO) and the Graduate School Alliance of Executive Coaching Programs (GSAEC) – met jointly to discuss the emergence and evolution of the field. As a result of that conversation, representatives from these three groups agreed to organize and implement a Global Summit during 2012 concerning two specific dimensions of the evolving field: coaching practices and coach preparation.

A Summit planning committee was formed with two representatives each from ICF, ACTO and GSAEC. Additional representatives from The European Mentoring and Coaching Association (EMCC), and the coaching interest groups based within both the British Psychological Society (BPS) and the Australian Psychological Society (APS) were also invited to serve on the planning committee. In addition to the groups that comprise the planning committee, the Summit participants will include individuals from several other organizations around the world which represent coaches or related stakeholder groups.

Members of the Summit planning committee recognize that any dialogue about the future must first recognize and draw upon learning from experiences of the past. The intention of the Future of Coaching Summit is to build upon and extend the work of internal and cross-organizational discussions which have already taken place in recent years. As is noted in the Dublin Declaration on Coaching (2008) "…we recognize the challenges facing our emerging profession, the conflicting approaches that might diffuse its energy, as well as the moves to control it from within and without…" (p.4) In the spirit of the Declaration, this Background Document is hereby offered as a catalyst for engaging different professional bodies and stakeholders in a collaborative dialogue on the future of coaching, coaching practices and the preparation of coaches.

To help lay this groundwork for the upcoming Summit dialogue, this paper summarizes documents representing the positions of significant coaching membership organizations on the issues of coaching practice and preparation. Further, this Document will be provided to Summit participants prior to the meeting and be made available following the session.

We gathered the position statements of the participating organizations and solicited additional recommendations from members of the Summit planning group. In addition, we searched the websites of member-based coaching organizations which provide some form of coach certification or program accreditation for position statements or codes for coaching practice standards and coach preparation. Proprietary coach training organizations were not included.

Throughout February and March of 2012, documents for this paper were retrieved from organizational websites and also via personal communication with various coaching organizations: The Association for Coaching (AC), ACTO, BPS - Special Group in Coaching Psychology (SGCP), EMCC, GSAEC, International Association of Coaching (IAC), ICF, and Standards Australia.

Immediately following this **Introduction** section, will be a **Background** section that offers current data on the field of coaching and coach practitioners. The third section provides an overview of **Essential Coaching Competencies** as outlined in documents prepared by the respective professional coach organizations. A fourth section includes a summary of the key recommendations presented by these organizations; both in terms of coach preparation and in **Coach Development**. The fifth section of this paper shares key recommendations for **Practice Standards** within professional coaching. The sixth and final section of this document lists some **Final Observations** and identifies some questions for further consideration.

Two separate **Appendices** are also included in this document following the main sections of this document and provide an additional level of detail. A list of recommended Fields and Disciplines which underpin coaching and may be included in coach preparation can be found in Appendix A. Finally, a Glossary of Terms distinguishing forms of education and credentialing is highlighted in Appendix B.

II. Background

In the years that followed since the ICF commissioned its first global industry study (*ICF Global Coaching Study, 2007*), the global economy experienced dramatic changes and the world appeared to be a very different place in 2011. Regardless of how the global economic downturn might have affected coaching practices during the last five years, it appears that there has been a heightened level of awareness of the benefits offered from coaching (*ICF Global Consumer Awareness Study, 2010*). Therefore, it is possible that today's profession could include a new and potentially different cadre of coaches who have chosen to enter the marketplace; leading to significantly different trends, opportunities, and challenges for coaching.

These factors were the primary drivers which prompted the ICF to complete another global study on the profession during 2011. More than 12,000 coaches from 117 nations participated in the latest industry research. This study updated the global demographic profile of coaches (e.g. age, education, training, experience, etc…), identified common elements within client interactions, and provided key insights from coaches on the obstacles and opportunities that they faced in the future (see Table 1).

Table 1: Key Issues Facing Coaching (next 12 months)

Obstacles	Resp. (%)
Untrained individuals who call themselves coaches	43
Marketplace confusion about the benefits of coaching	30
Coaching market saturation	9
Coaches under-pricing their services	5
Over regulation of coaching	3
Increased demand for services that compete with coaching	3
Other	7
Base: 11,280	

Opportunities	Resp. (%)
Increased awareness of the benefits of coaching	36
Credible data on the ROI/ROE from coaching	28
Improved general perception of coaching	14
Increased demand for coaching	11
Positive portrayal of coaching in the media	8
Other	2
Base: 11,300	

**Source*: 2012 ICF Global Coaching Study*

According to the most recent ICF study findings, the contexts in which coaches work vary widely. In fact, it appears that these coaching contexts can vary significantly depending upon multiple factors; including the geography of the coach, their preferred method of delivering coaching sessions, the theoretical models they draw upon, or even the position held by their coaching clients.

When asked to state the position held by the majority of their coaching clients, nearly one third (29%) said they mainly deal with managers. One in four respondents replied that most of their clients held executive positions. A little over one in five coaches (21%) rely on personal clients. The remaining coaches mainly serve business owners/entrepreneurs (15%), team leaders (6%) and staff members (4%).

In very broad terms, the foregoing client profile was replicated across the major world regions, albeit with some variations in the pattern of demand. For example, in North America, the prevalence of personal clients (25%) was slightly above the global average (21%) while business owners/entrepreneurs (19%) were slightly over-represented compared to the average across all regions (15%). By contrast, in Western Europe, over one in three coaches (35%) said their clients were in a managerial position. Overall, comparatively fewer coaches identified personal clients as their main source of business; 16% compared to the global average of 21%.

Almost two in three respondents said they mainly deal with their clients on a face-to-face basis. However, the proportion interacting on a face-to-face basis varies sharply by region. In North America, a minority of coaches (43%) deal with their clients face-to-face. There, the telephone is the preferred method of contact (50%). Apart from Asia (63%), in all other regions face-to-face is mainly used by over 80% of coaches.

When asked to indicate which theoretical models they draw from when coaching, almost six in 10 respondents (58%) highlighted Leadership. More than one in three respondents specified Organizational Development (35%), followed closely by Organizational Psychology (28%). Only 13% said they drew upon no theoretical model.

The more important sources of variation in theoretical models related to the main areas of coaching and the client's position. Almost three in four coaches with a business-focused specialty (73%) indicated Leadership as a theoretical model compared with 37% of other coaches. A similar disparity could be seen with the use of Organizational Psychology.

Similarly, the Leadership model was most often cited by those dealing with executives (77%) and much less frequently (30%) by respondents mainly dealing with personal clients (*ICF Global Coaching Study, 2012*).

One of the main conclusions of this most recent study is that coaching is growing globally and there are specific trends observed in geographic expansion of coaching. These estimates were generated using reported coaching activities and other key indicators; including the number of active coaches located in seven global regions.

It was also interesting to note that a growing number of coaches are concerned that the marketplace for those who purchase coaching services may have become confused by those untrained individuals who use term 'coach' to describe their services and qualifications.

When compared to the 2006 coaching demographic data, the latest study results seemed to indicate a growing level of maturity and credibility among coaching professionals. Essentially, there is evidence that coaches today are more seasoned, report even higher levels of formal education, and have completed more training through accredited/approved coach-specific training programs.

In addition to the latest ICF global industry research, other recent studies show that coaches' prior professional training and field of practice (e.g. Grant and Zackon, 2004; Liljenstrand and Nebecker 2008; Bono et al. 2009), as well as their personal life experiences (Campone and Awal, 2012) have a distinct impact on how they coach.

As coaching emerges as a complex and multi-dimensional field of practice, this paper is presented as a starting point for dialogue among participants in the Future of Coaching Summit and others in the coaching field. They, and others, are invited to consider some of the diverse perspectives on the field, with a spotlight on what coaches need to be able to do and how they can best be prepared for the type of coaching practices in which they engage. Several aspects of the evolution of coaching as field can be investigated from this perspective: knowledge and competencies, education and training, credentials and accreditation processes, and the role of professional organizations.

III. Overview of Essential Coaching Competencies

While the competencies and standards established by the ICF are often considered to be the "gold standard" for a broad range of coaches; professional organizations with particular coaching orientations have also drawn upon experience, research and practice to identify a range of competencies appropriate for that field of practice. The pages which follow provide an outline of the key positions of those professional organizations. ACTO participated in the development of and is fully aligned with the core competencies identified by ICF; thus Table 2 represents the position for both organizations.

It should be noted that across all international coaching organizations, there is agreement on two key points, that coaches:

1. **Adhere** to the ethical standards of practice identified by their respective professional organizations. These ethical standards address, in particular, maintaining appropriate boundaries, confidentiality, management of stakeholder relationships, alignment of the coach's skills and knowledge with the requirements of the coaching engagement, and maintaining a professional presentation of self and the field of coaching; and

2. **Engage** in on-going personal and professional development. This includes maintaining currency in knowledge of the field, development of new skills, activities designed to improve current practice, and continued development of self-awareness and self-management.

It should also be noted that the ICF core practice competencies are reflected, albeit with minor variations, in all other organizations' positions. Competencies beyond those articulated by ICF are noted in the tables, reflecting the individual organization's perspective.

Ultimately, the practice of effective coaching is a combination of art and science, the coach's traits and knowledge applied in the service of meeting the client's needs and goals. The development of coaching maturity is an on-going pursuit which involves continuous learning from a variety of sources including *self-awareness*, *intentional experimentation* and *reflective practice*.

A cross-organizational comparison of competencies presented a challenge insofar as the term "competency" collectively appears to encompass what coaches need to know, what they need to be able to do, and personal qualities. In the collective sense of "competencies" the knowledge dimension includes theoretical and technical knowledge of coaching principles and practices as well as knowledge of the field and of coaching contexts. The behavioral dimension of competencies includes but is not limited to behaviors which foster and sustain individual and multi-party relationships; use of coaching strategies to facilitate client development; and appropriate protocols for decision making in practice. The personal dimension of coach qualities includes professional attitudes, personal traits and characteristics and less easily defined aspects such as "presence". In some of the source documents, these different dimensions of competencies are clearly distinguished; others present an integrated list.

To facilitate the usefulness of this document as a background and catalyst to dialogue, we created a set of tables which places each organization's statements on coaching competencies into four dimensions:

Knowledge—what the coach knows about the coaching field (e.g. definitions and boundaries, ethical standards, a broad theoretical knowledge base, understanding of change processes and principles and similar technical knowledge)

Understanding—what the coach understands about the coach-client relationship and other interpersonal and intrapersonal dimensions; the process of facilitating understanding, awareness and change; the ability to translate knowledge into action in practice

Behaviors—these refer to the coaching specific skills and strategies the coach is able to employ effectively with clients and in their professional practice management.

Coach Qualities—addresses the coach's inner state of being and how that manifests in interaction with clients and as a practitioner in the field. Coach qualities encompass the coach's values, perspectives, professional presence and self-knowledge, as well relational characteristics such as empathy and emotional intelligence.

In many instances, the four dimensions of coach competencies are interdependent. For example, establishing an effective coaching relationship implicitly requires *knowledge* of relationship dynamics, ethical standards and the principles of building trust. The ability to *understand* that knowledge will allow coaches to form a process for building and sustaining an effective partnership with their clients and also to enact *behaviors* that are consistent with that process. Both *understanding* and *coach qualities* will allow a coach to remain responsive to feedback and to calibrate of their behaviors.

Readers are invited to keep in mind that the following tables summarize what is presented explicitly in source documents. For example, while certain areas of knowledge may be implied in the understanding or behaviors promoted by the organization cited, knowledge may not be represented in the table as it was not expressly presented in the source document. Some documents, such as the GSAEC Standards for Graduate Coach Education and Standards Australia - Guidelines for Coaching in Organizations, are quite extensive, detailed and specialized. Summarizing the information in a one-page table required significant condensing of key concepts. The original sources offer context and language to allow a more nuanced understanding.

Table 2: International Coach Federation and Association of Coach Training Organizations

Source and Type of Coaching	ICF and ACTO All types
Knowledge	Ethical standards
Understanding	-Ethical standards -Appropriate coach/client fit
Behaviors	- Communicate distinctions - Appropriate referrals - Co-create agreement -Asks client permissions -Access intuition -Able to shift perspectives -Manage emotions -Active listening -Asks powerful questions -Direct communication -Evocative language -Spotlights keys -Facilitates focus - Instigates action -Develop & maintain plans
Coach Qualities	-Trust & intimacy -Genuine caring -Integrity -Honesty -Support for risk-taking -Integrity -Respect -Open/Flexible -Curious -Insightful -Advocacy without attachment

Table 3: Association for Coaching

Source and Type of Coaching	AC All types (additional executive coaching competencies in italics)
Knowledge	- AC's professional standards and codes of conduct - Prevailing laws governing or constraining the practice of coaching - *organizational contexts* - *Challenges of organizational leaders and attributes of successful leaders*
Understanding	- *Aligns coaching goals with organizational goals and objectives* - *Understands relationship between coach, client and organizational sponsor* - *Takes systemic approach in coaching with client* - *Understand and address sponsor wants and needs* - *Appropriate and open communication with client and stakeholders* - *Identifies ways of adding value to the client and individual, team and organizational levels*
Behaviors	- Explains the coaching process, models, techniques and approaches - Helps client establish coaching goals and outcomes - Contracts with all stakeholders, clarifying roles, expectations and boundaries - Formal coaching agreements - Establishes trust-based relationship with client - Effective in listening and expressive communications - Raises client awareness and insight - Supports client to design strategies and actions - Supports client to maintain forward momentum - Periodically measures progress, achievements and outcomes - *Language appropriate to the organizational context* - *Promotes self-learning and accountability with client* - *Develops relevant networks & strategic partnerships in organization* - *Effective commercial agreement and contract with multiple working alliances* - *Involves key stakeholders at various stages of process*
Coach Qualities	- Acts ethically and with highest integrity - Presence and self-management - Continuous self-development - Models positive, constructive behaviors

Table 4: The British Psychological Society - Special Group in Coaching Psychology

Source and Type of Coaching	*BPS - SGCP* *All types- coaching psychology*
Knowledge	- Diverse philosophical bases underpinning psychological theories - Theories of human cognitive, emotional, behavioral, social and psychological functioning; theories of behavior and personality; lifespan development - Research evidence on process and outcomes - Qualitative and quantitative approaches to research; research methods and ethics - Business and management development theory and practice
Understanding	- Deep understanding of theory, philosophy and practice of at least one specific model of psychological coaching; understanding of second and alternative models - Able to apply theoretical understanding as framework for understanding client concerns, coaching alliance; critical evaluation of frameworks for appropriate application - Understand organizational, social and cultural contexts - Able to apply understanding of psychopathology to evaluate and refer as appropriate - Explicit and implicit communications in coaching relationship
Behaviors	- Initiate, develop , maintain and end a purposeful coaching alliance - Able to conduct psychological assessments and interpret, integrate and apply results - Able to work in a range of modalities, contexts and timeframes - Reflect critically on practice and identify alternatives - Respond appropriately to complex demands of client - Professional practice skills - Communication skills - Belief in potential of others - Focus on positive outcomes - Critical thinking, creative and artistic skills
Coach Qualities	- Evaluate own practices in light of ethical principles - Commitment to best practices in the interests of clients - Set and observe high standards of professional conduct - Provide services appropriate to the level and breadth of the coach's experience and knowledge - Self-awareness, confidence, personal presence - Domain specific experience

Table 5: European Mentoring and Coaching Council

Source and Type of Coaching	*EMCC* *All types*
Knowledge	- Ensure level of experience and knowledge is sufficient to meet needs of client
Understanding	- Ensure the relationship reflects context of coaching/mentoring
Behaviors	- Clarify expectations and methods of meeting expectations - Create environment conducive to focus and learning - Clarify confidentiality agreements - Disclose only if there is convincing evidence of potential danger - Respond to client's learning and development needs
Coach Qualities	- Enhance competence through relevant training and professional development - Maintain relationship with supervisor - Operate within limits of own competence and refer as appropriate - Aware of potential conflicts of interest

Table 6: Graduate School Alliance of Executive Coaching

Source Type of Coaching	*GSAEC* *Executive Coaching*
Knowledge	- Theories drawn from philosophy, theories of individual differences and development; motivation, emotion and behavior; thinking, learning and insight; health and wellness; interpersonal dynamics and communication; individual change management; group and inter-group dynamics; social systems and dynamics; organizational systems and dynamics; coaching theory and principles; organizational change - Knowledge of business: finance, global context, human resources, marketing, operations, organizational culture, sales, specific industry imperatives, strategy
Understanding	- Principles of social and emotional intelligence - Collaborative meaning making - Facilitate change and development - Appropriate use of tools
Actions/Tools	- Co-create relationship - Communication skills - Supporting success through framing, reframing, contributing - Entry and contracting - Assessment and feedback - Goal setting and planning - Outcome evaluation - Long term planning - Appropriate termination
Coach Qualities	- Professional practice management - Ethical behaviors and standards of practice - Reflective learning - On-going professional development - Contribution to field and profession

Table 7: International Association of Coaching

(Note: The documents used for Table 7 focus primarily on the coach's qualities and specific coaching behaviors and actions. Knowledge and understanding are implicit but not specified.)

Source and Type of Coaching	*IAC* *All types*
Knowledge	See above-referenced note
Understanding	See above-referenced note
Behaviors	- Engenders mutual respect, acceptance, confidence and reassurance - Recognizes and helps client recognize strengths and potentials - Empathy - Attentive to explicit and implicit communication - Expand client awareness of how to experience thoughts and issues at various levels (mind, body, heart/spirit) - Direct attention to positive outcomes - Increase client understanding and confidence - Help client maintain focus on goal - Create environment that allows ideas, options and opportunities to emerge - Helps clients build and maintain structures to support goal attainment - Document work and appropriately and ethically maintain records - Clear explanation of fees and structures up front - Refer to other professionals as appropriate (including mental health assessments) - Notify authorities re: client disclosure of harming or potential harm to self or others
Coach Qualities	- Act with integrity toward clients, peers and selves - Aware of own belief and value systems and impact on their work - Accurately represents own competence and works within boundaries of competence based on education, training or appropriate professional experience - Maintain currency in business practices and professional information in fields of activity - Ensure that assessments are used correctly and appropriately

Table 8: Standards Australia

(Note: In addition to core competencies, the Standards Australia document differentiates skills, performance, developmental and remedial coaching and specifies additional competencies within each of these. These areas have been italicized in Table 8)

Source and Type of Coaching	*Standards Australia – Guidelines for Coaching in Organizations* *Organizational coaching*
Knowledge	-micro-skills of assisting people to make change - evidence-based theories and models -uses and limitations of psychometric tools -at least one model of adult learning - at least one model of change
Understanding	-efficacy of coaching knowledge is contextual - the process of learning and systemic context - relationship between beliefs, feelings, environment and behavior and impact on goal attainment - coaches business and organizational context - role of transference and countertransference - difference between evidence-based and belief-based practice -*conceptual and practical understanding of the skill for which coaching is sought (skills)* -*understands complex network of causal factors (remedial)* -*features and dynamics of major personality disorders (remedial and performance)* - *shared stakeholder dynamics (performance)*
Skills/Actions	- Basic communication and helping skills - Taking a meta-perspective on oneself - Recognize and refer outside one's scope of competency - Offer relevant ideas and advice when appropriate - Able to articulate theoretical frameworks - *Identify performance and pathways to goal attainment(performance)* - *Develop incremental and monitored plan for goal attainment (performance)* - *Identify hidden assumptions and beliefs and impact(developmental)*
Coach Qualities	- Self management - Maintaining professional boundaries and practices - Receives and accepts feedback appropriately - Uses a range of feedback processes - *Work with challenging personalities (remedial)*

IV. Key Recommendations on Coach Development

While some organizations have implicit recommendations for coach preparation and development, two organizations (GSAEC and Standards Australia) offer very specific recommendations or detailed guidelines. In addition, three other organizations (ACTO, AC, and ICF) provided specific recommendations for coach mentoring, coach supervision and the required competencies for coach assessment. Each of these is summarized in Section IV.

Both the GSAEC and Standards Australia recommendations draw on extensive research. The brief summaries below offer only representative recommendations and key areas for consideration. The areas of theory and knowledge recommended in the GSAEC standards appear in greater detail within Appendix A. These areas find parallels in the recommendations from both BPS (Special Group in Coaching Psychology) and from Standards Australia (Guidelines for Coaching in Organizations).

Coach Development Programs

GSAEC programs address four dimensions of *graduate education* in executive and organizational coaching: institutional alignment; program review; engagement and growth; and quality and sustainability.

- Institutional alignment includes standards for program mission and objectives; program context; requirements for admission; program administration and resources; and relationship with accrediting bodies. Key recommendations:
  - Clearly articulated mission and academic goals
  - Housed within and administered by accredited institution
  - Explicit and equitable processes for admissions, including assessment of candidate readiness
  - Has structure and resources to carry out the program

- Program review addresses curriculum and program plan; theory and knowledge; core coaching competencies; coaching process; business acumen. Key recommendations:
  - Design and instructional methods consistent with adult learning
  - Multi-disciplinary theoretical content and development of coaching specific meta-skills[1]
  - Core coaching competencies aligned with content address interpersonal, structural, intrapersonal and facilitative processes

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[1] A listing of recommended disciplines and theory sources is provided in Appendix A. The GSAEC recommendations encompass areas and disciplines which were also addressed in documents of the BPS and the Standards Australia document, so these are not addressed separately.

- Engagement and growth addresses professional practice and development; requirements for coach supervision; requirements for assessing progress; cultural diversity and individual differences; contribution to body of knowledge and field. Key recommendations:
  - professional standards of ethics, practice management, use of tools (such as assessments)
  - articulated standards and processes for coach supervision
  - states and measures learning outcomes
  - encompasses diverse, multicultural perspectives
  - supports contribution of new knowledge to the field of coaching

- Quality and sustainability addresses program values and ethical standards; faculty qualifications and supervision; stakeholder relationships; program assessment/quality enhancement; and policies regarding advertising and claims Key recommendations:
  - Program and host institution align with standards of ethical practice and professional conduct
  - Faculty qualifications consistent with university standards
  - Methods and measures for quality assurance in place
  - Accurate representation of program, consistent with academic values

The Standards Australia - Guidelines for Coaching in Organizations recommends multiple pathways for coach development, consistent with the observation that coaching is not a single uniform activity. In addition, diverse experiences (formal, informal and personal) shape each practitioner and practice. This document identifies four pathways for coach development: practice and self-education; transfer of relevant learning in allied fields (e.g. psychotherapy, human resources); short coaching specific training courses; and formal education preparatory to standardized qualification or certification. The *Standards* document recommends that both short term training and formal education should utilize best evidence and practice; use research in training; and address assessment and evaluation.

- Foundational training content
  - Foundational micro-skills including communication and helping skills such as rapport building, listening, eliciting and sharing information, goal-setting and giving feedback
  - Conceptual skills-e.g. conceptualizing a coaching case, planning intervention, change management
  - Self management and self development skills
  - Boundary management skills

- On-going professional development
  - Regular, structured reflective practice
  - Supervision
  - Contribution to the body of coaching knowledge
  - Reading and networking

Coach Mentoring, Supervision and Assessment

ACTO and ICF offer a definition of mentoring and standards for the qualifications and competencies of mentor coaches. Mentor Coaching provides "Professional assistance in achieving and demonstrating levels of coaching competency demanded by the desired credential level sought by a coach applicant." (ACTO document)

Requirements for serving as a mentor coach include:
- Graduation from a coach-specific learning program with demonstrated coaching competence and practice standards (indicated by holding ICF or equivalent credential)
- Training in the assessment of coaching competencies and skills
- Demonstrated professional competency in coaching skills development
- Demonstrated professional competency in the delivery of coaching services
- Additional traits are specific including trustworthiness; ability to partner, encourage, support; authenticity; self-confident; encourages development of mentee's own style; accountability
- Specific skills: able to discern mentee skill application in relation to core competencies and differing levels (ACC/PCC/MCC); discern and articulate areas for growth, competency use and skills using competency based language and examples from coaching; offer effective feedback that references examples and details; able to self-manage

Duties include:
- Modeling initiation and contracting in client relationship
- Supporting mentee self-confidence
- Focus on core competency development
- Providing verbal and/or written feedback
- Demonstrating understanding of the mentee

An *AC* survey on mentoring and supervision identifies the benefits as: providing a basis for learning and development a place to discuss ethical issues; a trusting relationship; maintenance and sustainability of practice; opportunities to increase creativity. The survey results identified the top mentor/supervisor competencies as:
- Able to support and challenge
- Uphold ethical standards
- Promote development of use of self as a resource
- Offer new models/ideas consistent with development needs
- A practicing coach
- Takes a holistic approach (work and personal)
- Knowledge of a range of coaching models
- Member of professional coaching body
- Flexible in methods and platforms for support (e.g. phone, individual, face to face)
- Understand systems and people in organizational contexts

Desired personal qualities in supervisors include: professionalism and personal maturity; encourages exploration of new ideas and methods; consistent and appropriate boundaries; accepts and celebrates differences and clarifies styles and expectations of supervision. (McDougall, n.d.)

The *Standards Australia - Guidelines for Coaching in Organizations* defines the benefits of coach supervision as reflective practice to help the coach develop insight into beneficial and problematic patterns in their coaching; understand difficult issues in coaching; formulate effective responses to challenges; assist in developing and maintaining professional practice. The *Standards* differentiates the advantages and limitations of three different forms of supervision. Individual coaching may help the coach gain personal insight but is limited by the range of perspectives of the coach and supervisor. Peer supervision is most appropriate for experienced coaches and brings a broader range of perspectives; however, it may be limited by reticence among peers and other external factors. Group supervision offers a variety of perspectives and a structure facilitated by an experienced supervisor. A drawback to the group process is limited time for individual concerns and a reticence to discuss challenges with one's peers. Both the *Standards Australia* document and the *GSAEC Standards* documents specify that supervising coaches should be appropriately qualified for supervision/mentoring tasks.

The *GSAEC* Standards document identifies supervision as a "structured learning engagement in which participants reflect on real world experiences to deepen and extend cognitive, emotional and practice skills." (p.25).   GSAEC distinguishes supervision and mentoring in purposes, processes and relationship dynamics. The functions of supervision include the development of coaching practice skills, learning meta-skills, the cultivation of professional identity and establishment of practices that foster life-long professional development.

Standards for Assessors

ACTO has also identified requirements for Assessors. Assessors must adhere to the ethics and standards of coaching as well as the Assessor Code of Conduct. Required credentials include graduation from professional coach-specific training program; relevant and up to date coaching credential; training as an assessor. In addition, assessors are expected to engage in regular training and assessment of their own coaching and demonstrate leadership within the profession. Core competencies for assessors include:
- Knowing and adhering to the ICF code of ethics and assessor code of conduct
- Understanding and adhering to the exam process and standards of assessment; timely completion of administrative tasks and addressing technical questions as appropriate
- Providing clear leadership and appropriate presence in the exam process
- Discerning levels of skill related to core competencies, identifying omissions and ethical issues
- Providing written and verbal feedback that is specific, relevant and developmental
- Self-manage with regard to coaching model preferences and maintain focus on core competencies

V. Key Recommendations on Practice Standards

<u>Standards of Professional Practice</u>

As coaching organizations look to contribute to the evolution of coaching as a professional practice, it is useful to consider some of the perspectives on the elements of professional practice. Several parallel criteria are offered by Bennett (2006) and Standards Australia, as noted in Table 9. A synthesis of results from a DACUM process conducted by ICF, using contributions from a diverse set of subject matter experts, offers a complementary listing of professional practitioner characteristics.

Table 9: Characteristics of a Profession

Bennett (2006)	Standards Australia
• Identifiable and distinct skills • Education and training required to acquire proficiency	• Significant barriers to entry including formal qualifications
• Recognition outside the community as a profession	
• Developed, monitored and enforced code of ethics by a governing body making the profession a self-disciplined group	• A strong ideological and ethical component including the establishment of enforceable standards of practice and codes of ethical conduct
• Public service that is motivated by altruistic service rather than financial gain	• A defined scope identifying purpose and goals that serve the public good
• Formalized organization • Evaluation of merit	• Regulatory bodies with power to admit, exclude, accredit, license and discipline members
• Established community of practitioners	• A sense of commitment and collegiality through education, membership of a professional association and sharing of skills and knowledge
• Status or state of recognition associated with membership in the profession • Public recognition from outside the practicing community that the profession is distinct and actually in existence	
• Practice founded in theoretical and factual research and knowledge	• A common body of empirically tested knowledge and processes for the development and testing of knowledge

DACUM Results

The word DACUM is an acronym that stands for 'developing a curriculum.' This process is an established method of analysis using a panel of subject matter experts to identify the duties, tasks, skills, and knowledge required to perform a job or occupation with a high level of competence. The results of a DACUM analysis are intended to inform the design of curriculum, training materials, assessment development, and organizational restructuring.

In 2011, the ICF formed two separate panels and utilized trained DACUM facilitators to complete a DACUM analysis of the job of "Professional Coach." The work of the two panels was synthesized into a single job profile and was presented to multiple audiences for further validation.

Participants who completed the process identified nine "duties" of professional coaches:

1. Continuous professional and personal development
2. Establish and sustain effective professional business practices
3. Get coach specific training and education
4. Establish and maintain beneficial, ethical and generative thinking partnerships
5. Represent and be an ambassador for the professional coaching industry
6. Elicit, analyze and integrate information relevant to the client's context
7. Demonstrate coaching competence and practice to standards
8. Elicit solution focused engagement goals and benchmark progress
9. Manage complex, multi-dimensional relationships in coaching engagements.

VI. Final Observations

This paper is intended as a base for discussion and dialogue at the 2012 Future of Coaching Summit and beyond. Additional studies, along with a growing body of studies by individuals and groups, can enrich these discussions going forward. Such discussions may take place in a variety of venues, including print, voice to voice and conference gatherings. For example, members of The BPS - Special Group in Coaching Psychology engaged in a written exchange of views (Grant, 2011, Cavanagh, Palmer et al. 2011) on a proposed agenda for teaching coaching psychology which addressed:

- The purpose of the teaching agenda
- Contextual issues in such education
- Curriculum content
- Teaching processes

Clearly, these are complex issues and complex questions and no single or easy solution is likely to emerge. Rather, global dialogue is essential for broadening and deepening a collective understanding of the issues, and for sharing information and perspectives which may support the emergence of a multi-faceted and multi-dimensional set of responses.

Within the framework of the Future of Coaching Summit, participants are invited to consider the following questions for future consideration and discussion:

1. **What conceptual frameworks for coaching competencies are possible, recognizing the diversity of the field, of practitioners and of stakeholder needs?**

2. **What frameworks for coach preparation would serve to address the diversity of competencies and program standards?**

3. **What frameworks for coach certification might offer consistency and credibility for the profession while acknowledging theoretical and philosophical differences?**

4. **What role can professional organizations play in supporting credibility and standards in the field?**

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VII.   Appendices

Appendix A: Fields and Disciplines Which Underpin Coaching

7.1.   **Ontology, epistemology, and phenomenology.** Theories drawn from philosophy, philosophy of science, cultural and physical anthropology, sociology of knowledge. What makes us human? To what extent are we genetically determined? How do we know what we know? What do we take as evidence? Is mere knowledge enough? What's important to us? Is there such a thing as free will?

7.2.   **Individual differences and development.** Theories drawn from developmental psychology, psychiatry, cognitive psychology, and neuroscience. Who am I? How did I get to be that way? Am I still changing? Does anyone else think like I do? Am I the only one? Am I normal?

7.3.   **Motivation, emotion, and behavior**. Theories drawn from affective psychology, physiology, psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, personality and social psychology. Why do I feel the way I do? Why do I do what I do? Where do feelings come from? How do I know if my feelings are true? How can I influence others?

7.4.   **Thinking, learning, and insight.** Theories drawn from cognitive psychology, cognitive science, adult learning studies, and social-cognitive-affective neuroscience. How do I find out what I need to know? What conditions help me learn it? How do I remember it? Why do I remember some things and not others? Why was it so much easier to learn when I was a child? If a memory is really vivid, is it true? How do I remember things in the future? How can I find things I know that I know but can't remember? How can I make an "aha" more likely?

7.5.   **Theories of health and wellness.** Theories drawn from research on expertise and mastery, creativity, physiology, medicine, mindfulness studies, and sport psychology. How can I get and stay healthy? What should everyone know about how our bodies work? What is health beyond absence of disease? How do I reach for and sustain optimum performance? How does stress affect my health? What does mindfulness have to do with being well? How do our physical brains and bodies, our thinking processes, and our social connections relate to being truly healthy?

7.6.   **Interpersonal dynamics and communication**. Theories drawn from attachment research, communications studies, neuropsychiatry, comparative neuroscience, family therapy, women's studies, and leadership studies. How can we get along? Why do relationships seem so important? What does it mean to really connect with someone else? How can we stop fighting so much? Is it more important to connect or to be right? What kind of relationship serves coaching best? What does it mean to have a collaborative, contingent conversation? What triggers threat reactions? What happens to my thinking ability when I am stressed? How can I calm feelings of threat?

Appendix A: (continued)

7.7.   **Individual change management**. Theories drawn from psychotherapy, positive psychology, narrative and metaphor studies, brain science. Why is change so hard? Why is it so easy to change in ways I don't want? What role does practice play in change? What role does attention play? What about imagination? What changes when I start doing something different? Can I just get rid of old habits? Can an old dog learn new tricks? How is coaching like self-directed neuroplasticity? What is better for getting myself to change—the carrot or the stick?

7.8.   **Group and inter-group dynamics.** Theories drawn from social psychology, sociology, anthropology, counseling, diversity studies, conflict and alternate dispute resolution, and economic and political theory. Who is "we" and who is "them" and what difference does that make? What's the effect of being in an out-group? What will make a group like or at least tolerate members of another group? How can we get rid of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination? How can we reduce conflict and encourage reconciliation and forgiveness? Is conflict between groups automatic and unchangeable? What are the advantages of diversity? How can we take advantage of the advantages?

7.9.   **Social systems and dynamics**. Theories drawn from general systems, family systems, social psychology, social networks, sociology, mathematics, biology, cosmology, climatology. What is a system? How does it change? How does a system achieve dynamic stability? What patterns emerge from chaos? What are the characteristics of complex systems? How do self-organizing

7.10.   **Organizational systems and dynamics**. Theories drawn from action research, leadership, appreciative and positive organizational scholarship, industrial/ organizational psychology, management science, human relations, human capital movement. How do we get organized? What is leadership? How do leaders lead? How do we get things done? How do we coordinate and collaborate? How can we get an organization to act in concert, toward a common goal? What are the characteristics of a healthy organization?

7.11.   **Coaching theory and principles**. Theories drawn from coaching, coaching research, human relations studies, management education, organizational development, project management, and other precursors to coaching. What are the theoretical foundations of individual and organizational coaching? What promotes cohesion and integration of the field? What are the personal skills, knowledge, and attitudes required of a coach in general and an executive/organizational coach in particular?

7.12.   **Organizational change**. Theories drawn from organizational development and design, management science, human resources theory, change management theory. How do organizations grow, develop, flourish, wane, and exit.

Source: *GSAEC Academic Standard #7: Theory and Knowledge*

Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

Accreditation
A process whereby a professional association or nongovernmental agency grants recognition to a school or health care institution for demonstrated ability to meet predetermined criteria for established standards; A formal recognition of a school or institution attesting to the required ability and performance in an area of education, training, or practice.

Academic Degree
A title (or position) conferred by institutions of higher education (i.e., college or university) awarded in recognition of the recipient having either satisfactorily completed a prescribed course of study or having conducted a scholarly endeavor deemed worthy of his or her admission to the degree.

Certificate Programs
Non-degree granting education or training consisting of: (1) a learning event or a series of events designed help individuals achieve specific learning outcomes within a defined scope & (2) a system designed to ensure individuals receive a certificate only after verification of successful completion of all program requisites including but not limited to an assessment of learner attainment of intended outcomes.

Certification
Certification of specialized skill-sets affirms a knowledge and experience base for practitioners in a particular field, their employers, and the public at large. Certification represents a declaration of a particular individual's professional competence; independent of Certificate Program Providers.

Licensure
Permission granted by an agency of government to an individual to engage in a given profession or occupation, once an applicant has met qualifications standards (in regulated professions)

Source*: http://www.knappinternational.com & The 2003 report, Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs, prepared by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/)*