

ICF Code of Ethics, Part 4: Standards 20-24

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SUMMARY

The video discusses sections 20 to 24 of the International Coaching Federation's Code of Ethics, focusing on the responsibility of coaches to maintain professionalism. Key points include the importance of accurately representing qualifications, understanding the distinctions between coaching and other professions, and being aware of cultural differences in coaching relationships.

- *Coaches must accurately present their qualifications and certifications to build trust with clients.*
- *It's essential for coaches to clearly communicate their role and the nature of their services, differentiating coaching from consulting or therapy.*
- *Coaches should inform clients about the existence of the ICF ethical code and provide access to it, ensuring transparency.*
- *Understanding cultural differences is crucial for effective coaching, especially in a global context.*
- *Coaches must maintain professional boundaries and avoid conflicts of interest, particularly regarding personal feelings towards clients.*
- *Continuous education on ethical standards is vital for coaches to uphold professionalism in their practice.*

- Welcome back to the video series on the International Coaching Federation's Code of Ethics. We are heading into section

three in this video, Responsibility to Professionalism, and we're gonna be covering

numbers 20 through 24, the standards 20 through 24. So with me for this section of the code, I have Harriet Kretschmar from

Bavaria, and welcome Harriet. Thank you for being here. - Yeah, I'm happy to be here and talk about the ethical standards.

We put a lot of work

into reformulating them as the ICF does every

three years, and yeah, so let's jump into it, the section three, Responsibility to Professionalism. - Thank you to you and

the entire committee. I know a lot of work

went into this update, and it looks great, and of course, thank you to the viewer for watching this 'cause this is important work, but let's jump right into number 20 which has to do with

responsibilities around labels and accurately presenting yourself, so what do coaches need to be looking for here?

- Yeah, I think it's very important for the coaching profession

that the coachees can trust that the coach identifies accurately and truthfully the earned certificates and higher education and everything. I think this is very important for the relationship between the coachee and the coach, so and it's also important that these are verifiable, that another body can look into it and see that's okay, what's for example written on the back side of the coach.

- Yes, and I like that the ICF has gone just beyond saying ethically, you don't just have to say ACC, MCC, or PCC, but anything else, any other certifications or degrees that you have, this is across the board. You must be honest 'cause a lot of coaches also have other certifications, and being able to verify those is important, too. - Yeah, I think it's very important, but this is a kind of a basic standard because clients, that's my impression, they really don't look at your actual degrees, but if there is a relationship, if you look like a trustful person and things like that, but at the base, this must be truthful.

- Great, so let's move directly into number 21 which is about continuing along the theme of accuracy, being accurate in the statements that you make about what you offer, so what should coaches be looking for here? - I think it's very important for a coach to know what other professions do, that what is psychotherapy, what is consulting, what is conflict resolution, and things like that and that they can explain to the client that they, what's the difference between and what they are really doing, what their role as a coach is, that they do not consult, that they help the client to reach the goals the client has pronounced.

So the coach does not have an own agenda with this. - Yes, thank you. So number two is talking about making your clients or sponsors aware of the fact that there is an ethical code. So what do coaches need to be doing here? - Yeah, I think at first, you really have to know the code by heart, the standards, that for example in third-party contracts, you can say to the sponsor that you are really a part of this ICF, that you adhere to this ethical standards, and that's special and that you can explain what is in it.

It's about confidentiality,
it's about professionalism, it's about boundaries. It really helps too that
the client can feel safe in this coaching relationship. - Yes, and I think coaches
can go to the ICF website. The ethics is available
in downloadable PDF format in I think five or six
different languages, so you can just hand that over, and also in the member toolkit, the coaching agreement
should mention the fact that the ethics exists
and your client has access to those in the whole process
if they should need it.

- Yes, and what's very important
is that you can also say that there is a complaint
process so that they can feel sure if there is something which they feel is not really right,
they can go to the ICF and can go to this complaint process so that there is security
and that they feel held by this standards in a safe space. - Yes, and I think that
creates a lot of confidence in coaching to have this
code and for people to know that there is an entire
process around being ethical, but let's jump into number 23 next, and this has to do with
cultural differences.

What should coaches be watching for here? - I think it's very important for coaches, and I think all the
professionals know that you have to be present in the moment and have also a feeling what
is appropriate and what not, and if you don't know it,
you have to inform yourself before you, for example, I have to admit, I have no experience in coaching people
from Asia for example, but
I think I really have to dive down deep into this culture
to coach people from there, so you really have to be
responsible what you are doing and if you are really able to do this.

- Yeah, and I think
that's great as coaches more and more are doing things online, we have the ability to coach worldwide, but there
are cultural differences that we're gonna bump up against, and having it be the
responsibility of the coach to learn those ahead of starting a coaching relationship, very important. - That's true,
yeah. Once I heard from an
English-speaking client, oh this was very German,
you are so direct, but it's okay because I
know you're from Germany, and yeah, let's go ahead. (laughs) - So as an American, we like to have everything
written down, so this is number 24
is definitely something that seems to be, should be obvious, but good to have it written down, and that's about
relationships with the client going beyond the coaching relationship.

So what do coaches need to know here? - The thing is that you always have to look is there any conflict of interest or erotical detention of something which hinders the coaching work, that you cannot longer because, as a coach, you have to be kind of neutral and don't have an own agenda or something, and when you have, when you feel drawn to a client, then you have an agenda.

Then you really have to do or supervision or to talk about this or to stop the coaching relationship because you can no longer be helpful to the client. - Yes, coaching is, can be such an intimate relationship, and really people feeling safe and revealing details, that it might be easy for the coach or the coachee to feel some romantic involvement because maybe this is the first time someone really listened to them as deep as a coach listens to them, and that can be really attractive.

- Finally, somebody understands me, (laughs) yeah. I think this standard 24 very much relates to experiences from the psychotherapist field, more established, longer practices to have very clear boundaries, and as German-speaking people, we all know our Freud from Vienna who talked about transference and counter-transference, and I think all coaches with a psychotherapy background, they know about this, but all the other coaches really have to learn what this is about.

- Great, well it definitely shows the need for coaches, coach training, to continue continuously, and I wanna recognize the coaches who are watching this 'cause this is continuing education, learning more about ethics. Definitely an important part of coach education, and Harriet, I wanna thank you for providing the information on this section and for being part of the team that delivered these ethical standards to the coaching profession, and thank you to the viewers who are watching.

If you are just starting on this series with this one, if you just kind of stumbled across it, you can watch the entire series from down here, or if you're ready to move on to the next part, section four, Responsibility to Society, you can click up here to watch the next video in the series. We'll see you in the next video.