



Guide To The ICF Coach Credentialing Process

How to get your ICF ACC or
PCC certified coach credential



With thanks to Dr. Dave DeVries, PCC who edited the first version.

Notice to Participant

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Introduction

The focus of this Guide is to help navigate through the International Coaching Federation (ICF) credentialing process. It's designed to help Creative Results Management participants to not only understand the ICF's requirements and next steps to attain their Associate Certified Coach (ACC) or Professional Certified Coach (PCC) credentials, but also to develop action steps to accelerate forward progress.

Receiving the ACC or PCC credential from the ICF is a significant recognition of your progress and achievement.

Intended Outcomes: Coaches will...

- Understand the requirements necessary to attain your ICF Credential.
- Identify practical steps to take to move closer to achieving your goal.
- Learn how to overcome the #1 obstacle to reaching your goal.
- Discover valuable measures you can put into action immediately.
- Explore ways to gain the support you need to succeed.

To achieve these outcomes, coaches will...

1. Consider what attaining their ICF credential will do for them.
2. Understand the eligibility requirements more fully.
3. Set a goal for when they hope to attain their ICF credential.
4. Start an ICF Folder to collect the documentation they need to apply online.
5. Seek practical support to achieve their goal.

The fastest, easiest, and cheapest way to get an ICF coach credential is with our [Level 1 \(for ACC\) or Level 2 \(for PCC\) Certificate programs](#).

Consider

What result do you need from this Guide?

Your Progress

One purpose of this Guide is to provide encouragement for participants as they make progress toward their credential. Identify your anticipated completion of the requirements.

Month:

Year:

Consider

How far are you in the credentialing process (hours, months)?

What step are you currently working to accomplish?

What would becoming credentialed do for you?

ICF Membership

Associations bind professions and professionals together.

The true professional is a member of his or her professional organization. By joining and maintaining membership in ICF, coaches inform others that they are part of an influential voice that is shaping the future of coaching around the globe. ICF membership opens up a world of opportunity for professional development, networking and leadership in your profession from the local to global level.

Your clients expect you to be credentialed

According to the *2006 ICF Global Coaching Study*, 52 percent of all coaching clients expect the coach they hire to be credentialed.

In addition to measuring and certifying the competency of individuals and inspiring pursuit of continuous development, the ICF Credentialing Program exists to protect and serve consumers of coaching services.

By holding an ICF Credential, your clients can rest assured knowing that: 1) you have received professional training from a program specifically designed to teach coaching skills in alignment with the ICF Core Competencies and Code of Ethics; 2) you have demonstrated a proficient understanding and use of the coaching competencies as outlined by the ICF; and 3) you are accountable to the ethics and standards set forth by the ICF.

“It’s important to hold an independent credential. Research demonstrates several benefits to holding one, including higher client satisfaction.”

- Janet Harvey, MCC, 2012 ICF President

Membership Eligibility Requirements

Individuals must have completed or be enrolled in 60 hours of coach-specific training* to be a member of the ICF, in addition to paying membership dues and agreeing to abide by the ICF Code of Ethics. See more [here](#).

*Coach-specific Training is defined as:

- Training from an ICF Accredited Coach Training (ACTP) or a program that has received the ICF Approved Coach Specific Training Hours (ASCTH) designation; **or**
- Training that is specifically marketed as teaching coaching skills and behaviors, teaches how to apply technical skills in a coach-like manner, and transfers those skills in accordance with the ICF Core Coaching Competencies.

Note: All of Creative Results Management's training is approved by the Level 2 ICF-Accredited Coaching Education. Our training meets the ICF's strict professional coach training standards.

Associate Certified Coach (ACC)

The first level of ICF credential is called "Associate Certified Coach" or ACC.

Our Level 1 Coaching Mastery Certificate Program will prepare you for a ACC.

After graduating from the Coaching Mastery Certificate Program, the Coaching Workshop Certificate Program plus Electives, or the Core Coaching Skills Certificate Program, you've overcome the biggest obstacle to attaining your ACC credential, which are the required training hours.

You can continue working on the rest of the requirements to apply online.

3 ACC Application Paths

1. ACC Level 1 / Level 2 / ACTP Path – if you have completed an entire Level 1 or Level 2 or ACTP program (not just part of it).
2. ACC ACSTH Path – if all of your training hours are from an ACSTH program. All of Creative Results Management's training hours are ACSTH since September 2011.
3. ACC Portfolio Path – if some or all of your training hours are not ICF approved. Use this path if you took Creative Results Management's coaching training prior to September 2011.

Each application path applies to some of our training participants. So, we'll show you all three paths' requirements.

ICF ACC Credential Requirements

More information follows this chart for each area. The ICF’s website defines everything.

	ACC Level 1 or 2 / ACTP Path	ACC ACSTH Path	ACC Portfolio Path
Coach Specific Training	Graduation from a complete Level 1, Level 2, or ACTP program.	60 hours Approved Coach Specific Training Hours (ACSTH).	60 documented hours. Including non-ICF approved training.
Work with a mentor-coach	This is part of your Level 1, Level 2, ACTP program.	10 hours with a qualified mentor coach. If you took Coaching Mastery, you also received these, otherwise click here for Coaching Excellence (Mentor-Coaching).	10 hours of Mentor Coaching to be documented on your online application. Click here for Coaching Excellence (Mentor-Coaching).
Coaching Experience	Client Coaching log demonstrating 100 hours (75 paid) of coaching experience with at least 8 clients following the start of their coach-specific training. At least 25 of these hours must occur within the 18 months prior to submitting the application for the credential. Sample Log & Instructions		
Performance Evaluation	This is part of your Level 1, Level 2, ACTP program.	Submit a recording and transcript of a live coaching session.	Submit a recording and transcript of a live coaching session.
Coach Knowledge Assessment	A multiple-choice, Web-based exam on the ICF Core Competencies and Ethics.		
ICF Fees	\$175 for ICF Members, \$325 for ICF non-members.	\$375 for ICF Members, \$525 for ICF non-members.	\$475 for ICF Members, \$625 for ICF non-members.

Professional Certified Coach (PCC)

The second level of ICF credential is called "Professional Certified Coach" or PCC.

Our Level 2 Professional Coach Certificate Program will prepare you for a PCC.

3 PCC Application Paths

1. PCC Level 2 / ACTP Path – if you have completed an entire Level 2 or ACTP program (not just part of it).
2. PCC ACSTH Path – if all of your training hours are from an ACSTH program. All of Creative Results Management's training hours are ACSTH since September 2011.
3. PCC Portfolio Path – if some or all of your training hours are not ICF approved. Use this path if you took Creative Results Management's coaching training prior to September 2011.

All three of the above paths apply to some of our training participants. So, we'll show you all three paths' requirements.

ICF PCC Credential Requirements

More information follows this chart for each area. Also, the ICF’s website defines everything.

	PCC Level 2 / ACTP Path	PCC Level 1 / ACSTH Path	PCC Portfolio Path
Coach Specific Training	Graduation from a complete Level 2 or ACTP program.	125 hours Level 1 or Approved Coach Specific Training Hours (ACSTH).	125 documented hours. Including non-ICF approved training.
Work with a mentor-coach	This is part of your Level 2 or ACTP program.	10 hours with a qualified mentor coach. Click here for Coaching Excellence (Mentor-Coaching).	10 hours with a qualified mentor coach. Click here for Coaching Excellence (Mentor-Coaching).
Coaching Experience	Client Coaching log demonstrating 500 hours (450 paid) of coaching experience with at least 25 clients following the start of their coach-specific training. At least 50 of these hours must occur within the 18 months prior to submitting the application for the credential. Sample Log & Instructions		
Performance Evaluation	This is part of your Level 2 or ACTP program.	Submit 2 recordings and transcripts of live coaching sessions.	Submit 2 recordings and transcripts of live coaching sessions.
Coach Knowledge Assessment	A multiple-choice, Web-based exam on the ICF Core Competencies and Ethics.		
ICF Fees	\$375 for ICF Members, \$525 for ICF non-members.	\$650 for ICF Members, \$800 for ICF non-members.	\$750 for ICF Members, \$900 for ICF non-members.

Credential Renewals

All ICF credentials must be renewed every three years.

Renewal Requirements

40 hours of Continuing Coach Education (CCE) in the three years since the initial award of your credential or since your last credential renewal. Of the 40 hours of CCEs required:

1. At least 24 CCEs must be in Core Competencies. At least 3 of these hours must be in coaching ethics.
2. For ACC renewal only, 10 hours of Mentor Coaching with an eligible Mentor Coach over a minimum of three months in the three years since the initial award of your credential or since your last credential renewal.
3. The remaining 16 hours can be in Resource Development or Core Competencies.

Use our free Guide to Renew Your ICF Credential

[It's located here.](#)

Mentor-Coaching

All coaches applying for any level ICF credential via the ACSTH or Portfolio application paths must provide documentation showing completion of ten (10) hours of mentor coaching with a qualified mentor coach. The same sort of documentation is also part of the renewal process for the ICF ACC credential.

If you graduated from the Coaching Mastery Certificate Program, or our Level 1 or Level 2 Certificate programs, you already have 10 mentor coaching hours.

The ICF definition of Mentor Coaching related to the credentialing requirements is: *“For purposes of Credentialing, mentor coaching means an applicant being coached on their coaching skills rather than coaching on practice building, life balance, or other topics unrelated to the development of an applicant’s coaching skill.”*

Mentor Coach Qualifications:

For ACC or PCC portfolio applicant, and ACC renewal applicants:

- Mentor Coach is ICF credentialed at the same level or higher than the credential the applicant is seeking.
- Mentor Coach is not to be under any sanctions from the ICF Independent Review Board for violations of ethical conduct.

Group coaching counts toward the mentoring requirement of 10 hours within the framework described. No more than 70 percent of the required mentoring hours (that is seven hours) can come from group coaching. Additionally, the group being mentored may not consist of more than 10 participants. Check the ICF credentialing pages for more details.

If you graduated from the Coaching Mastery Certificate Program or our Level 1 or 2 Certificate programs, you will have received mentor coaching as part of the program. Your certificate has the mentor coaching information you need for the ICF application.

Creative Results Management’s [Coaching Excellence Program \(EXCEL\)](#) meets the ICF mentor coaching requirement for those who desire to attain their ACC or PCC credential. The focus of this program is to advance your understanding and skills in the ICF core competencies. Through a combination of group and individual sessions participants observe and practice coaching skills to build confidence in preparation for the ACC and PCC Performance and Knowledge exams and to advance coaching effectiveness.

You will receive...

- Two 90-minute individual mentor-coaching sessions.

- Four two-hour group mentor-coaching sessions.
- Documentation for 12-15 training hours, with 10 mentor-coaching hours.

Limited Enrollment: Each EXCEL cohort is limited to ten (10) participants who have completed at least 51 hours of coaching training and have logged at least 50+ client-coaching hours. This ensures maximum learning and individual focus.

Link: <http://www.creativeresultsmanagement.com/EXCEL>

Note:

- Dates & times for three hours of individual mentor coaching will be scheduled directly with your Mentor Coach following completion of the four group sessions.
- All Group Sessions must be done live voice-to-voice (ICF requirement). Missed Sessions may be made up for \$150 per session.
- Maintaining your Reflection Journal throughout the EXCEL Program will reinforce your learning opportunities and skill development.

The Coaching Excellence Program (EXCEL) is a result of Creative Results Management's commitment to advance the practice of coaching and to reinforce and recognize the value of professional coach-specific training and credentialing for those in Christian ministry.

When will you receive Mentor Coaching?

How will your Mentor Coach be working with you?

Reflective Journaling

You are encouraged to keep a “learning log” where you record the learning and application from reflecting on your client work. This Reflective Journal for Coaches is a place to consider some of the key issues that have arisen, and your insights about how you coached and ways to improve. You can order a copy of the new [Reflective Journal for Coaches](#) at our store.

Your personal reflection and self-generated feedback are powerful tools to help you improve your coaching competencies. After each coaching session take a moment to coach yourself:

- What happened in you?
- What can you learn?
- What would you like to do next time?

Example:

Working with the client I found myself feeling quite judgmental about their behaviors and underlying beliefs. While my feelings were kept hidden from the client, my thoughts were very distracting and prevented me from listening with real depth. There is also the risk that my own feelings could have an impact on the client. I am realizing how important it is for me to suspend judgment during my sessions so that I can be fully present with my coachee.

Consider

Try out reflective journaling on a recent coaching conversation.

Coaching Experience

Just a few things to keep in mind...

In keeping with the ICF Code of Ethics, you must obtain consent from your clients to release their names to ICF in the event it becomes necessary to contact them. Should ICF deem it necessary to contact clients in order to confirm they were coaching clients of the applicant, ICF will not discuss specific topics of the coaching. The simplest way to do this is to include the following in your coaching agreements:

ICF Credentialing: In order to be certified by the ICF as a professional coach I need to tell them who I've coached, but not the contents of the coaching. I will give the ICF your name, dates of the coaching relationship, total hours coached and your contact information. Rest assured, the content of your coaching will remain confidential. You may be contacted by the ICF to verify that you were indeed coached by me, but will not be asked to reveal the content of the coaching process.

What constitutes a client-coaching hour?

- ACC candidates are required to complete an attestation of 100 hours (75 paid) of coaching experience with at least eight clients following the start of your coach-specific training. At least 25 of these hours must occur within the 18 months prior to submitting the application for the credential.
- Client coaching hours can be counted after beginning any ICF-approved coach-specific training that has at least 30 hours. Since all Creative Results Management classes are in one big program, if you take more the 30 hours of training from us, you can count your client-coaching hours from your first class.
- A client-coaching hour is 60 minutes of actual coaching with someone who has hired you as a coach and not in any other capacity.
- Mentor coaching or coaching supervision is not accepted as a client coaching hour.
- Coaching must be done in person or by telephone or other voice-to-voice technology.
- Paid hours shall be any hours for which any kind or amount of compensation, including barter, is received.
- Only 25% of the minimum hours needed to qualify for the credential can be pro-bono hours, including complimentary sessions.
- Teaching coaching classes does not count as client-coaching hours.

- There shall be no limitation of client-coaching hours by specialization or niche.

There are two steps to reporting your coaching experience to the ICF:

1. You will attest to a series of statements regarding meeting all ACC coaching experience requirements.
2. Enter your total number of hours.

Consider

If you haven't already reached 100 hours, determine the month when you intend to complete your 100 client-coaching hours. Write it in the box.

ICF Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA)

The Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA) is a tool that can be used to measure coaches' understanding of the knowledge and skills important in the practice of coaching. The CKA tests coaches on their understanding of the body of knowledge that includes the ICF definition of coaching, Core Competencies and Code of Ethics.

ICF CKA Process

Once you apply for a credential, the ICF will review your application and then contact you via email with a status update containing the next step in the review process. The steps for a credential application review vary depending on the path in which the applicant applies for the credential.

You will receive an email invitation to complete the CKA once your application review is complete. The invitation will come via email with further instructions on completing the CKA.

You will receive an immediate score after you finish the CKA. After you pass, you will wait for final approval of your credential.

How To Prepare for the ICF CKA

Your coaching training has prepared you to successfully pass the ICF CKA. The CKA is based on 3 things:

1. The ICF definition of coaching
2. The ICF Core Competencies
3. The Code of Ethics

Review each of these documents prior to taking the CKA.

It takes two and a half to three hours to do the online exam. Be rested and somewhere you can concentrate. Nearly all of our participants have reported passing this exam.

Here's all the details at the ICF's page, including sample questions under the FAQs: <https://coachingfederation.org/credentials-and-standards/credentialing-exam>

Client Coaching Recording and Transcript

The ACC ACSTH and Portfolio process includes a performance evaluation where ICF Assessors will review one recorded coaching session. You are required to pass this performance evaluation at the ACC level in order to be awarded the ACC credential. The PCC requires two recordings and transcripts.

If you're in our Level 1 or Level 2 Certificate programs, you will submit a recording as part of the Level 1 or Level 2 Assessment. Follow the instructions in those courses rather than the information below.

Preparation

Before preparing for your performance evaluation, study the ICF Core Competencies and observe them in your coaching. Have your Mentor Coach provide feedback on how your coaching demonstrates each of the ICF Core Competencies, and which competencies you might need to practice. The ICF Competencies level chart provides information about what assessors are listening for when they conduct your performance evaluation.

Record several coaching sessions and select one session that demonstrates use of a wide variety of the ICF Core Competencies.

Procedure

For the purpose of completing your performance evaluation, you will upload an audio recording of an actual coaching session when completing the online ACC Credential application. Keep a copy of the file you submit for your records.

Here are some general points to keep in mind:

1. Focus on Determining the Outcome of the Session with FIRE. (You've already learned how to do this well – you'll do great on your exam!)
2. Check-in to see how things are going in middle of the session (e.g. where do you want go next? What are you learning about yourself as you talk?) Check-in about progress and learning along the way.
3. Don't rush questions. Remember to pause. Good questions flow out of good listening.
4. Allow for your client's participation in directing the session. Don't rush to action since self-awareness/learning is a key aim in your coaching.
5. Remember to ask questions that serve the client – not for your own curiosity.

We are confident that our graduates have been exposed to all the skills they need to do

well in their ACC examination. Passing the PCC takes a much higher skill level than ACC. We suggest working with a mentor coach prior to submitting recordings. Ask your mentor coach to review your recordings to find the ones most likely to pass.

Recording File Guidelines

Review your selected coaching session and make sure the conversation is clear, audible and that only first names have been used during the coaching session. An inaudible recorded coaching session will result in lower scores for the performance evaluation and delays in the credentialing process. Use of services such as Skype is not recommended to produce recordings for the performance evaluation due to possible disconnections during the session.

Files submitted for performance evaluation must be:

- Of a complete coaching session (not edited) lasting between 20 and 60 minutes. Those that exceed 60-minutes will not be scored.
- From an actual coaching session between you and a paid or pro bono client (not part of coach training). The client may not be a coach unless they are a regular client.
- In one part. Multiple files for one coaching session will not be reviewed.
- In MP3 or WMA formats. Video files and other formats will not be accepted.
- 95 megabytes or less. Use a lower bit rate to decrease file size, if needed.
- Uploaded when completing the online credential application. Providing a URL to download or stream audio recordings will not be accepted.
- Labeled/named with your name and a number, i.e., JoeSmith1.mp3 and JoeSmith2.mp3.

Languages

Available languages in which a performance evaluation can be completed are: Danish, English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish. If a language is not listed, you may submit recordings in that language for review but an English transcript must be provided. Use of an interpreter is not permitted.

Transcript Information

As part of the performance evaluation, candidates must submit transcripts for each recorded coaching session submitted when completing the online credential application.

The transcription process involves converting the conversation captured in voice-recorded coaching sessions (audio files) into word-for-word text format. Your coaching session transcript should include the full word-for-word conversation that took place between you and your client during your coaching session. A reader of the transcript would be able to see who was speaking, the coach or the client, at any given time in the conversation.

Transcripts should be in the same language as the recording, unless the language isn't listed in the list of languages, in which case it should be in English.

Transcripts must be provided in PDF, MS Word, or similar type word document file format.

You can type the transcript yourself or use a service such as <http://rev.com>. Be sure to listen to the recording and correct the transcript. They are rarely perfect.

Credential Application Check List

The ICF has an easy-to-use online application. Online applications are accepted year-round.

The following Check List will help streamline your application process for the ACC or PCC:

1. Join the ICF – the cost is \$245/year. (This equals only \$20 per month!). The ICF Membership fee is pro-rated depending on when you join. The membership year is April through March. <http://www.coachingfederation.org>
2. Review the ICF's requirements for the ACC or PCC and download a sample application: <http://www.coachingfederation.org/> > ICF Credential > ACC Paths or PCC Paths
3. Complete your coaching training program and receive documentation to submit online. If you can't find it, login at <https://creativeresultsmanagement.com/> and click Profile and scroll down to find a link to your certificate (and your ICF coaching training log if you were enrolled in CORE prior to September 2011).
4. Complete your mentor coaching either through our Level 1 or Level 2 Certificates or the Coaching Mastery Certificate Program or Coaching Excellence (Mentor Coaching) Program. If you can't find your EXCEL certificate (or other course certificates) search your email for the subject: "ICF credits for" and you'll find them.
5. Review the ICF Code of Ethics - <http://www.coachfederation.org/ethics/>
6. Create an ICF Folder on your desktop that includes all documentation needed to complete the application:
 - a. **Your Client Coaching Log** – which you are updating after each coaching conversation.
 - b. **Coach Training certificates.** If you can't find your CORE or Mastery certificates, login at <https://creativeresultsmanagement.com> and click Profile and scroll down to find a link to your certificate (and your ICF coaching training log if you were enrolled in CORE prior to September 2011). If you can't find your EXCEL or Elective certificates search your email for the subject: "ICF credits for" and you'll find them.
 - c. **Mentor coaching start, finish, and mentor coach's name.** There's no certificate to upload. You will select your mentor coach from a list on the online application. Then put the first date you met and the final one-on-one date you met. For Mastery participants these dates are on your Mastery graduation certificate. For EXCEL participants, use the date of the first group session and the date of your 2nd one-on-one one.

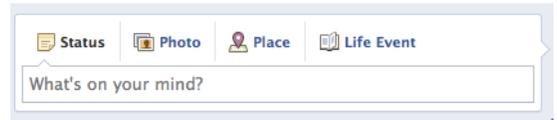
Practical Support

- 1. Identify the support you need to attain your credential.**
Don't go it alone. Find a partner or group of coaches who can encourage you toward your goal.



- 2. Write down your plan.** Have a specific plan that will enable you to attain your ICF credential by the end of the year. Know which steps you are working on, and what you need to do to complete that step.

- 3. Post your goal publicly.** Tell as many people as possible that you are working to achieve your ICF credential this year. They will add encouragement.



- 4. Report on your progress.** Each month, tell the same group of people how you have progressed toward your goal. As you get closer to submitting your application online, you may want to report your process weekly.



- 5. Join a local ICF Chapter.** Check the ICF website to locate one in your area. The chapter meetings and activities will provide encouragement personally, and offer a supportive environment as you pursue your credential. Find a [chapter](#).



- 6. Anticipate your celebration!** Plan in advance how you will celebrate. Think of the satisfaction you will have at attaining your goal and reward yourself when you are done.

Consider

How will you pursue the support you need to attain your goal?

Next Steps

Write down three important steps that you can take in the next 30-60 days to move toward your goal!

1.

2.

3.

Credentialed CRM Graduates and Faculty

Over 400 of our graduates are now credentialed with the ICF!
Imagine what it will be like add your name to the list!

MCC

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kim Z. • Walt H. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Your Name Here!</i>
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PCC

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dawn A. • Dave D. • Todd D. • Craig C. • Walt H. • Gary R. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John R. • Katie R. • Bryan W. • Keith W. • Lori W. • <i>Your Name Here!</i>
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ACC

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takeshi T. • Kirk K. • Mark T. • John L. • Ruth C. • Michael S. • Stan T. • Karen N. • John V. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David G. • Michael S. • Kevin S. • Bethany E. • Kristen C. • Martin K. • Scott S. • <i>100s of others...</i> • <i>Your Name Here!</i>
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Suggested Action Steps

- Review the ICF Credentialing Process and identify your next steps toward attaining your credential.
- Make your goal public! Let people around you know your intention to achieve this goal!
- Create your ICF Folder. Include all the documents required to submit your application.
- Find the support you need to succeed.
- Register for CRM's [Coaching Excellence Program](#) once you've reached 50+ coaching hours.
- Prepare to record a coaching session, if needed.
- Write to us to let us know when you pass! Send a photo of you and we'll make a special banner and post it on our social media. (email: help@crmcoaches.com)

Questions:

Creative Results Management is committed to advance the practice of coaching and to reinforce and recognize the value of professional coach-specific training and credentialing for those in Christian ministry.

If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to [email us](#).

FAQs

What is the ICF and how is Creative Results Management connected to it?

ICF is a commonly used acronym for the International Coaching Federation. Founded in 1995, the ICF's core purpose is to advance the art, science, and practice of professional coaching. As the leading global coaching association, the ICF is working toward this goal by setting high standards, providing independent certification, and building a worldwide network of credentialed coaches. All Creative Results Faculty hold ICF credentials and are highly committed to training excellence in line with ICF standards. We are a Level 2 ICF-Approved Coaching Education Provider.

Do my training hours count toward my coaching hours?

No. Only hours of actual coaching with someone who has hired you as a coach and not in any other capacity will count toward your credential.

What if I don't have a record of all my coaching hours? Can I still count those hours?

No. You can only submit the hours for which you have accurate records.