**New ICF Credentialing Exam Schedule Format**

**There are 8 sample questions, here are the first 4 questions to discuss and decide which response is the Best action for a coach to take, and which is the Worst action for a coach to take.**

## Sample Exam Questions

The following four items are representative of the types of questions that may be on the ICF Credentialing exam. For each item, the candidate is asked to identify the BEST action and the WORST action for the scenario. The questions are designed to measure a candidate’s ability to apply the updated ICF Core Competencies in realistic coaching situations, where more than one possible response may be reasonable. Correct responses are shown in bold and italicized.

For each scenario-based item, four possible response options are provided. Each response is designed to represent a plausible action that a coach may take in response to the situation presented. One response option is considered the “best” possible response of the four options presented based on the action’s alignment to the ICF Core Competencies. Another is considered the “worst” possible response of the four options presented based on the action’s misalignment with the Core Competencies.

**Question 1**

A coach is meeting with a prospective client who is growing a new business. The coach and potential client quickly establish an easy connection. The coach is excited about the opportunity to work with the client. As the coach and client are ending their conversation, the prospective client briefly mentions the name of their new business. The coach recognizes the business, as the coach is an investor in a more established competitor business in the same community. What should the coach do?

**What is the BEST action?**

* Not say anything. Try to keep their role as an investor in a competing business separate from their role as a coach.
* Share that the business name sounds familiar and make a mental note to determine whether it is a competitor business later that evening.
* Share their role as investor in the competitor business only if the potential client follows up to pursue coaching with the coach.
* Share their role as an investor in a competing business and acknowledge the possibility of a conflict of interest with the client.

**What is the WORST action?**

* Not say anything. Try to keep their role as an investor in a competing business separate from their role as a coach.
* Share that the business name sounds familiar and make a mental note to determine whether it is a competitor business later that evening.
* Share their role as investor in the competitor business only if the potential client follows up to pursue coaching with the coach.
* Share their role as an investor in a competing business and acknowledge the possibility of a conflict of interest with the client.

**Question 2**

A client struggles with delegating tasks at work to other team members. During the last session, the client shared that an important project they are leading is falling behind schedule. The coach supported the client in identifying strategies to delegate tasks to other team members. At the next session, the client reports back and shares, “In the end, I decided to complete all the tasks myself. That was the only way to get them done on time.” The coach feels disappointment that the client did not follow through on their plans to delegate. What should the coach do?

**What is the BEST action?**

* Immediately reflect back on their last session with the client and identify what they could have done differently to support the client in following through on their plans.
* Take a breath and acknowledge that the client is responsible for their own choice of whether to follow through with their stated plans or not.
* Set aside their disappointment for now and focus on the current session with the client. Decide to reflect on this situation during an upcoming session with their mentor coach.
* Praise the client for meeting the project deadlines, but ask why the client failed to support their team members’ development.

**What is the WORST action?**

* Immediately reflect back on their last session with the client and identify what they could have done differently to support the client in following through on their plans.
* Take a breath and acknowledge that the client is responsible for their own choice of whether to follow through with their stated plans or not.
* Set aside their disappointment for now and focus on the current session with the client. Decide to reflect on this situation during an upcoming session with their mentor coach.
* Praise the client for meeting the project deadlines, but ask why the client failed to support their team members’ development.

**Question 3**

A client comes to a session appearing stressed. When the coach asks what the client wants to talk about, the client frantically lists a major event they are planning at work, a large family gathering they are organizing, and caring for their aging parents. What should the coach do?

**What is the BEST action?**

* Ask the client if they need to take a moment before starting the coaching sessions, since they seem stressed.
* Ask the client to share more about their aging parents.
* Acknowledge that the client has shared three significant challenges that they are facing, and ask the client which one they would like to explore first.
* Ask the client to begin with the major event they are planning at work, since they mentioned it first.

**What is the WORST action?**

* Ask the client if they need to take a moment before starting the coaching sessions, since they seem stressed.
* Ask the client to share more about their aging parents.
* Acknowledge that the client has shared three significant challenges that they are facing, and ask the client which one they would like to explore first.
* Ask the client to begin with the major event they are planning at work, since they mentioned it first.

**Question 4**

A university biomedical researcher is working with a coach to improve their interactions with colleagues. The client is a very analytical thinker and can easily explain detailed data points and complex graphs, but seems reluctant share anything personal with the coach. In previous sessions, the coach encouraged the client to describe how they felt at social events, but the client seems highly uncomfortable, answering only with short, one-word responses. When the client arrives to their session today, the client silently hands the coach a journal. The client has written several, detailed entries over the last week about their experience attending a university luncheon, a faculty party, and a staff development workshop since their last session. While the client says little to the coach in the moment, their entries show deep reflections about the anxiety the client experienced at these events and their desire to overcome social anxiety. What should the coach do?

**What is the BEST action?**

* Acknowledge the reflection work the client has done, and ask the client if they feel comfortable exploring some of the emotions they described in their journal.
* Ask the client if they would summarize the entries they detailed in their journal for the coach.
* Ask the client to identify some steps they can take to overcome the anxieties they wrote about.
* Ask the client what new awareness they developed about themself through the journaling process.

**What is the WORST action?**

* Acknowledge the reflection work the client has done, and ask the client if they feel comfortable exploring some of the emotions they described in their journal.
* Ask the client if they would summarize the entries they detailed in their journal for the coach.
* Ask the client to identify some steps they can take to overcome the anxieties they wrote about.
* Ask the client what new awareness they developed about themself through the journaling process.