

SA Business Coaches

Code of Ethical Conduct



Preamble

South African Business Coaches are committed to upholding and instilling ethical behaviour and distinction in both the practice of coaching, as well as in the behaviour of the coach towards their client. It is with this in mind that all South Africa Business Coaches’ accredited coaches must subscribe to the fundamental concepts and principles of ethics defined within this code of conduct. It is through ethical behaviour as a foundation that the competent coach and business coach applies this code in each and every coaching interaction in which they engage.

SA Business Coaches vehemently maintain that in order for a coach to be competent there is a need for accountability in their behaviour. It is through this set of guidelines that that level of accountability is endorsed.

Section One: Definitions

Client: The Client or Coachee is the person(s) participating in the coaching process. This individual is creative, holistic and whole, and has the answers to most of their situations within them.

Coach: The Coach is the competent professional who is responsible for running and managing the coaching relationship so that the coachee achieves their well-formed outcomes. The coach uses core competencies and powerful questions in order to create an awareness within the coachee in order to emotionally, psychologically, or cognitively move the coachee forward in their process.

Coaching: Coaching is process in which at least two people contract with one another and engage in a focused discussion in order to shift the coachee’s perspective; take the coachee forward in their thinking and actions; or help the coachee to unlock their natural potential.

Competencies: Both the ICF 11 Core Competencies, with their sub-competencies, as well as SA Business Coaches definition of competency, which is: Behaviour, Experience, Ability, Knowledge, and Skills.

Conflict of Interest: A realisation that the coach has that they have a personal or professional agenda which may impact on their objectivity. This may present itself in the form of having certain information, working with



another client, being involved in a type of business, or desiring a specific outcome for the client.

SA Business Coach: A professional coach who has graduated through SA Business Coaches training and development activities, and has complied with all the relevant requirements to be a professional business coach. This personal has also signed and pledged accountability to the SA Business Coaches Code of Ethical Conduct.

Coaching Relationship: The mutual agreement between two or more people top contract into a coaching agreement and engage in the coaching process for the mutual benefit of the parties.

Ethics: Moral and virtuous behaviour which is honest and decent. The coach behaves in a manner that is in the best interests of their client, and does not commit any conflicts of interest or unethical actions or speech.

Roles and Responsibilities: Each party within the coaching relationship has specific tasks, behaviours and accountabilities to which they must commit in order for the coaching relationship to be successful and professional. These roles and responsibilities need to be defined up front so that each party in aware and agrees to their role.

Setting: The physical environment in which coaching takes place. This includes the venue, the seating arrangements and details such as sound quality and lighting.

Sponsor: There is a need to be specific as to who the client in a coaching relationship really is. Therefore, we must distinguish between the client and the sponsor. Often, when dealing with an entrepreneur, a business owner, or a self-directed manager, the client and sponsor are the same person. This person is simply referred to as the client. However, often when dealing with a corporate, or in other instances when there is a relationship between the client and the sponsor, the “sponsor” is the body/company (including its representatives) or person who pays for the coaching sessions. This person or company may insist that the coachee attend sessions, and may even co-ordinate these with the coach directly on the coachee’s behalf. It is critical that the coach clearly defines what is confidential and what will be shared with the sponsor up front with the coachee.

Student: The student is the person who is currently enrolled in SA Business Coaches’ coaching course. This person is in the process of becoming a professional Coach or Business Coach.



Well Formed Outcomes: The desired results of the coaching process, which are clearly defined and articulated so that both the coach and the client know what is expected of them to achieve the results.

Section Two: SA Business Coaches Professional Behaviour

I, as a competent and professional coach commit to:

1. Behave in accordance with SA Business Coaches' code of ethical conduct in all my interactions with clients, as well as in all my personal and professional communications, as I am a representative of my profession, and of SA Business Coaches.
2. Conduct myself in an honest and ethical manner, which means I will not tell untruths to my clients, I will speak as directly and straightforwardly as possible.
3. Take the suitable and applicable sanction with my coach, SA Business Coaches' facilitator or to contact SA Business Coaches should there be any ethical violation, in which I am involved.
4. Not to discriminate against any person based on race, gender, religion, disability, belief, political views, homosexuality, ethnic source or any other criteria of whatsoever nature.
5. Ensure that I am fully aware and that I understand the SA Business Coaches' code of ethical behaviour so that I can share the principles with others, and embed the guidelines in my daily operations.
6. Never misrepresent myself, my abilities, or qualifications in any way. I will not mislead others into believing me to be more competent or skilled than I am in order to gain work.
7. Never to take another person's work or ideas and present these as my own.
8. Never to discredit or undermine or minimise another person's contribution to my efforts, skills, knowledge, or inclusion to my work.
9. Create, uphold, save and destroy client's records and information pertaining to coaching sessions, in order to preserve confidentiality and discretion on behalf of my clients.
10. Prepare client reports with integrity and completeness so as to do the client sessions and coaching process the utmost justice.
11. Maintain confidentiality and secrecy when asked to by clients, unless there is the potential of another person being harmed, or damage being done. This includes the potential of an illegal action taking place. The coach is then obliged to discuss this with your coach, or with SA Business Coaches.



12. Have the intellectual honesty to be aware of my own limitations or if an issue that I am faced with goes beyond my scope of work and expertise.
13. Introspect and maintain the self-awareness to recognise if I have a personal issue or agenda which may conflict with or impact on my ability to remain objective with a client.
14. Be aware of my own internal dialogue and personal problems to ensure that my professional coaching performance is not impaired and that my clients receive the best of my coaching abilities at all times. If I am not able to proceed with this, I will contact either the relevant professional or SA Business Coaches to assist me. I will also ensure that my client's receive the best care, either by delaying their sessions, or referring them to professional SA Business Coaches' colleagues during the duration of my impairment.
15. Not bad mouth or negate the effort that SA Business Coaches has invested into me as part of my personal and professional development.

Section Three: Privacy, Confidentiality and Discretion

I, as a competent and professional coach commit to:

1. Uphold the strictest levels of confidentiality with all client and sponsor information at all times.
2. Have a clear agreement up front with both my client and sponsor regarding what and how information gleaned by me during the coaching sessions will be shared between myself, my client and their sponsor.
3. Discuss the circumstances which may require disclosure of confidential information with both my client and the sponsor. These circumstances include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Illegal activity,
 - b. Pursuant to valid court order or subpoena, or
 - c. Potential risk of danger to self or to others.

Section Four: Behaviour towards the Client

I, as a competent and professional coach commit to:

1. Always respect another person's value system – even if you do not understand it, or agree with it.
2. Always listen to another person's point of view.



3. Have a cultural understanding and value for the other person.
4. Do not force your views and belief onto someone else.
5. Always be honest, if you tell a lie, it will be worse later on, than if you were honest up front.
6. Always keep your promises.
7. Always be on time.
8. If you are not sure of something, rather say “I don’t know”, instead of giving inaccurate information.
9. Never mislead someone.
10. Never allow someone to believe something which you know is untrue.
11. Never discriminate against anyone.
12. Always treat everyone fairly.
13. Take care of the people you have promised to look out for.
14. Conduct yourself responsibly and accept accountability for your actions.
15. Always be gracious, professional and ethical.
16. Ethically speak what I know to be the real and true benefits of coaching to clients, prospective clients or sponsors.
17. Prior to engaging in a coaching relationship, be sure to explain and ensure clear understanding on:
 - a. The nature of coaching,
 - b. Limitations of coaching – you cannot make a person change
 - c. Confidentiality,
 - d. Financial commitment required, and
 - e. Commitment and responsibilities required of the client.
18. Ensure clear coaching agreement is in place with each clients before beginning the coaching relationship.
19. Ensure clear coaching agreement is in place with each sponsor before beginning the coaching relationship
20. Honour the terms of your coaching agreement.
21. Be responsible for and sensitive to and cultural, religious or ethical requirements which may impact on meeting settings, times of sessions, venue requirements, physical limitations, or certain boundaries which may be necessary with your client.
22. Do not, under any circumstances engage in any sexual or romantic relationship with current clients, sponsor, or past client for 6 months after the conclusion of your coaching relationship.



23. No member of your company, or member of staff may engage in sexual or romantic relationship with a current client or sponsor, or with a previous client for 6 months after conclusion of the coaching relationship.
24. The client has the right to terminate the coaching relationship at any point during the process. Unless there is something specific which you have committed to with a sponsor, which then requires a meeting with the sponsor, in order to resolve the issue.
25. The client must gain value from the coaching process at all times.
26. Should the client not be gaining value from you, or should you feel that you are not suitably qualified or experienced to assist the client, you have an ethical obligation to refer the client to a colleague from SA Business Coaches, or to discuss the matter with SA Business Coaches.

Section Five: Conflict of Interest

I, as a competent and professional coach commit to:

1. Be vigilant and aware of any potential conflict of interest or actual conflict of interest which arises when in discussion with a client, and either to discuss this conflict openly with my client, or to remove myself from the coaching relationship when such a realisation occurs.
2. Proactively try to avoid conflicts of interest, by not coaching competitors or potentially partners who may need to discuss one another in the session.
3. Ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for coaching within an organisation to prevent any form of conflict of interest arising. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. The conflict of interest between a client and a sponsor;
 - b. The conflict of interest between two parties who may be competing for the same position; or
 - c. The conflict of interest between two clients who may be in a personal relationship with one another
4. Any form of additional or unknown compensation from a third party for referrals should be disclosed to the client and/or sponsor
5. Regardless of the amount of compensation received, each coaching client should be treated equally, and should receive the same level of professionalism, competence and service from you.



Section Six: Professional Guidance

I, as a competent and professional coach commit to:

1. Seek professional guidance in the form of consultations or mentorship from SA Business Coaches when I feel that I require some assistance.
2. To maintain my professional standards to keep abreast of new developments in the coaching world, by either attending ongoing sessions by SA Business Coaches, completing online courses, or seeking other forms of educations
3. Continual professional development and growth so that I can provide a competent and professional service to my clients.

Section Seven: Pledge to the SA Business Coaches' Code of Ethical Conduct

I hereby commit to work in accordance with an ethical foundation so that I am able to honour the obligations which I make to my clients and sponsors. I will comply with SA Business Coaches' code of ethical behaviour and as such I will comply with the sections of this Code of Ethical Conduct and I will work competently in accordance with the guidelines set herein. I hereby state my accountability to this Code of Ethical Conduct, to be present and create awareness in the best interests of my clients, and to perform as a competent professional at all times.

Full Name of Coach

Date Signed

Signature of Coach

Witness

