

Asia Pacific Alliance of Coaches

Code of Ethics

The Asia Pacific Alliance of Coaches (APAC) was established in the Asia Pacific Region, with the purpose to create a regional forum for coaches to reach new coaching professionalism and collaborate with one another. APAC's goal is to bring the power of coaching to every workplace and home in the Asia Pacific Region.

APAC Members adhere to the following Code of Ethics, to promote best practice and ensure the highest standards are maintained in the coaching relationship between the coach and the client.

Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to set out what the clients can expect from the coach in a coaching relationship, and forms a starting point for any contract subsequently agreed.

APAC members irrespective of their membership type, agree to abide by this Code of Ethics, and will make their client aware of its existence.

If a prospective member at the time of their application for membership does not accept to abide by the terms of this Code of Ethics, the Membership Committee reserves the right to decline their membership application.

Terminology

Coaching: describes a non-exploitative ongoing professional relationship that helps people produce extraordinary results in their lives, careers, businesses or organizations. The overall aim of coaching is to provide an opportunity for the client to work towards living and working in a more satisfying and resourceful way. The basic values of coaching are integrity, impartiality and respect.

Coach: a skilled professional who facilitates the process of any type of coaching, whether in the work environment or outside of it. The coach will take the same degree of care to work ethically whether the coaching is paid or voluntary.

Client: any person who uses the services of a coach. The client will receive the same high standards of service from a coach whether he/she is paying or receiving coaching on a pro-bono basis.

Contract: Terms and conditions on which coaching is being offered, outlining client's as well as coach's expectations and commitment. Contract should be made clear to clients before coaching begins, and subsequent revisions of these terms and conditions should be agreed between the client and the coach prior to change.

The Code

The coach will acknowledge and respect the dignity of all people, and conduct himself/herself in a way that respects diversity and promotes equitable opportunities for everyone irrespective of their personal and cultural background [including and not limited to gender, age, ethnicity, race, religion, nationality and/or disability].

The coach's primary responsibility is to provide the best possible coaching service to the client and to act in a way that is safe and respectful.

The APAC Code of Ethics covers the following aspects:

- Conduct
- Competence
- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Boundaries

Conduct

The APAC coach will:

- a) Conduct her/himself in a manner that reflects positively upon the coaching profession;
- b) Not make verbal or written public statements that are untrue or misleading, and may negatively reflect on the coaching profession;
- c) Demonstrate respect for the variety of different approaches to coaching and will honour the efforts and contributions of other coaches and contributing professionals and not misrepresent them as own;
- d) Construct and honour clear agreements with clients, within the context of professional coaching relationship;
- e) Ensure that the client has a full understanding of the agreement, including confidentiality, financial arrangements and other terms and conditions of the agreement.

Competence

The APAC coach will:

- a) Ensure that his/her level of knowledge, experience and skills are adequate to meet the needs of the client;
- b) Ensure that their capability to deliver coaching service is sufficient to enable them to operate according to this Code of Ethics, as well as the Code of Ethics of any other professional coaching organization he/she may be a member of (i.e. International Coach Federation, Association for Coaching UK, etc.).
- c) Not engage in a client relationship if their capacity is impaired due to personal or emotional difficulties, illness, disability, alcohol, drugs or for any other reason;
- d) Continually develop and enhance his/her level of competence through ongoing participation in relevant trainings and other professional development activities;
- e) Take adequate self- and client-care through maintenance of an appropriate supervisory relationship, either with a qualified coaching professional, or through peer-supervision, to regularly assess own competence and in support of development. The supervisor, or peer-supervisors, will be bound by the requirements of confidentiality referred to in this Code.

Integrity

The APAC Coach will:

- a) Abide by the APAC Values: Integrity/Credibility/Professionalism, Collaboration/Possibilities/Solutions, Teamwork/Fun/Enjoyment, Diversity/Inclusion and Technology/Openness, in an open and transparent manner;
- b) Maintain absolute-confidentiality, agreed with the client at the start of the relationship, except if otherwise authorised by the client or as required by law, or in cases where the coachee has intention to harm himself/herself or others.

- c) Not disclose any client information unless explicitly agreed with the client. The only exception is if the coach believes that there is sufficient evidence of serious harm to the client, or others, in which case she/he will consult with a suitable supervisor prior to taking action on disclosing client information.
- d) Not engage in any conduct with a client that may be deemed as dishonest, unlawful, unprofessional or discriminatory.
- e) Give truthful account of his/her qualifications, experience and expertise, when joining the APAC, as well as to his/her clients and fellow coaches.

Professionalism

The APAC Coach will:

- a) Respond to the client's learning and development needs in line with the client's agenda brought to the relationship;
- b) Refrain from any exploitative conduct with the client, including and not limited to financial and sexual.
- c) Ensure that the duration of the coaching relationship is only as long as is necessary for meeting the clients needs;
- d) Respect the client's right to terminate the contract prior to its agreed termination date.
- e) Abide by the professional responsibilities beyond the termination of the coaching relationship, including the following:
 - o maintenance of confidentiality;
 - o avoidance of exploitation of the former relationship;
 - o safe and secure keeping of client's records and data;
 - o provision of any agreed follow up.

Boundaries

The APAC coach will:

- a) Act within the limits of coaching boundaries and their own competence, recognising where the boundaries may be exceeded and where it may be necessary to refer the client to either a more experienced coach, or to another professional, such as business consultant, medical practitioner, counsellor or psychotherapist;
- b) Be vigilant to the potential for conflict of interest, of either a commercial or emotional nature, and deal with those quickly and effectively, ensuring no harm is done to the client's reputation or emotional state.

Breaches of the Code of Ethics

It is an understanding of all APAC coaches that they will act in accordance with this Code of Ethics, and represent positively themselves and the coaching profession.

However, if a client believes that a coach member of the APAC has acted in a way that is in breach of this Code of Ethics, he/she should raise the matter and seek resolution in the first instance with the coach concerned. Either party may ask the APAC Ethics Sub-Committee member to assist in the process of achieving a 'win-win' resolution.

If a satisfying resolution is not achieved, the client can make a formal complaint to the Ethics Sub-Committee. Complaints will be dealt in accordance with the APAC's 'Disciplinary Procedure'.

APAC coaches will work co-operatively with the Ethics Sub-Committee in resolving any matters of complaint.

If an APAC coach becomes aware of a colleague acting in an unethical manner, it is his/her responsibility to approach the colleague and seek resolution. If the same is not reached, it is responsibility of an APAC coach to then report the colleague to the Ethics Sub-Committee.

If an APAC coach breaches the Code of Ethics, and there is evidence to support this, the Ethics Sub-Committee can recommend to the Executive Committee that the coach be suspended and/or removed as a member of APAC.

At all times both the coach raising the complaint and members of the Ethics Sub-Committee and the Executive Committee must ensure that appropriate confidentiality is kept, so as not to damage the outside reputation of the coach concerned.