

ICF Core Competency Demonstrated Performance for ACC and PCC Credentials

ICF Core Competency	ACC Credential	PCC Credential
Demonstrates Ethical Practice	The ACC coach demonstrates a basic understanding of the ICF Code of Ethics, adhering to fundamental ethical standards. They consistently respect confidentiality and maintain professional boundaries, though they may require occasional support or clarification on complex ethical dilemmas.	The PCC coach fully integrates ethical practice into their coaching, demonstrating an advanced and thorough understanding of the ICF Code of Ethics. They proactively handle ethical situations, showing discernment in complex or ambiguous situations. Ethical decision-making is seamless and confident.
Embodies a Coaching Mindset	The ACC coach shows a growing awareness of the coaching mindset, displaying curiosity and openness. However, they may sometimes default to problem-solving or guiding the client, showing a need for greater self-management in maintaining non-directiveness.	The PCC coach consistently embodies the coaching mindset, demonstrating deep self-awareness and flexibility. They maintain curiosity, trust the coaching process, and consistently foster client autonomy. They seamlessly adapt their mindset to the needs of the client, showing a commitment to ongoing learning.
Establishes and Maintains Agreements	The ACC coach establishes clear agreements with the client regarding the overall coaching process and session goals, though their ability to adjust or revisit agreements mid-session may be limited. They rely on basic techniques to maintain alignment.	The PCC coach demonstrates mastery in co-creating and maintaining clear, flexible agreements with the client. They regularly check in to ensure alignment, and their ability to adjust agreements fluidly throughout the session shows confidence and adaptability.
Cultivates Trust and Safety	The ACC coach creates a safe and supportive space for the client, though their ability to fully cultivate deep trust may still be developing. They show warmth and empathy but may lack nuance in responding to sensitive client cues.	The PCC coach excels at cultivating deep trust and psychological safety, creating an environment where the client feels fully supported to explore their most significant challenges. They are attuned to subtle shifts in the client's emotional state and respond with high emotional intelligence.

Maintains Presence	The ACC coach is generally present and responsive during sessions, though they may occasionally rely on pre-planned questions or struggle to fully adapt to unexpected client directions. Their ability to remain present may waver under pressure.	The PCC coach is fully present throughout the coaching conversation, demonstrating deep engagement and flexibility. They are comfortable navigating complexity and uncertainty, adapting fluidly to whatever arises in the session. Their presence allows for deep, spontaneous exploration.
Listens Actively	The ACC coach listens actively, grasping key points and emotions expressed by the client. However, their ability to capture deeper nuances or unspoken issues may still be developing. They may focus more on the content of what is said rather than fully understanding the whole person.	The PCC coach listens with depth, capturing not only what is said but also what is not said. They are highly attuned to shifts in tone, body language, and emotion. Their ability to listen deeply allows them to reflect and explore key themes that lead to client breakthroughs.
Evokes Awareness	The ACC coach asks open-ended questions and helps the client gain some awareness, though they may rely on pre-planned techniques and lack the confidence to delve deeper into the client's mindset. Their approach to evoking awareness may feel structured or formulaic.	The PCC coach consistently evokes deep awareness by asking powerful, thought-provoking questions that lead the client to significant insights. They confidently navigate the client's thought processes, creating space for exploration and self-discovery in a fluid and flexible way.
Facilitates Client Growth	The ACC coach supports the client in setting goals and creating actions, though they may be more directive in offering suggestions or solutions. The client's sense of ownership over the process may be limited, and growth may focus on short-term objectives.	The PCC coach facilitates lasting client growth by empowering the client to design their own actions, reflect on learning, and take responsibility for progress. They align client actions with their values and vision, ensuring that growth is sustainable and client-driven.

Key Differences Between ACC and PCC Performance

ACC coaches demonstrate a foundational level of competence, focusing on basic skill execution and adherence to the core competencies. They may need more structure and support in maintaining non-directiveness, managing presence, or navigating complex situations.

PCC coaches show a higher level of mastery, demonstrating flexibility, confidence, and depth in their coaching. They co-create with the client in a seamless, natural manner, facilitating deeper insights, fostering trust, and maintaining consistent alignment with coaching principles. They are more adaptable to complexity and better equipped to support client transformation.