

Content Outline

The Board Certified Coach Examination (BCCE)

Definition:

The Board Certified Coach Examination (BCCE) is a certifying examination that measures coaching knowledge based on the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) core competencies (i.e., Ethics and Regulatory Guidelines, Coaching Knowledge and Applications, Assessment, and Practice Management) and how to apply the competencies and follow ethical guidelines. The qualifying criteria to take the BCCE are stated in the minimally qualified candidate profile.

Coaching is a professional practice in which the coach has specialized education, training, and experience to help coachees identify specific goals, collaborate with coachees on solutions, and offer strategies that assist individuals, groups, and organizations in reaching identified goals.

Examination Purpose and Measurement Focus

The BCCE provides a standardized measure of the CCE core competencies associated with professional coaching; thus, the BCC certification informs coachees that certified coaches subscribe to professional standards and ethics. The examination's development was based on a national job analysis of 295 credentialed coaches who determined the core competencies of coaching and developed the examination content of the BCCE.

The core competencies associated with professional coaching were determined to be:

A. Ethics and Regulatory Guidelines

Work behaviors in this category include identification and communication of roles and responsibilities of coaches related to ethical and regulatory guidelines.

B. Coaching Knowledge and Applications

Work behaviors in this category include the use of coaching methods and skills that may be necessary for an effective practice.

C. Assessment

Work behaviors in this category include the identification of factors that may influence the process, goals, or outcome of coaching.

D. Practice Management

Work behaviors in this category include skills necessary for sustaining an effective practice.

Target Population and the Minimally Qualified Candidate

The minimally qualified candidate (MQC) for the BCCE has a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution, has completed CCE-approved training for coaching, and has completed the required number of coaching hours. The MQC, through the combination of education, training, and coaching experience, can appropriately demonstrate knowledge and competencies in the domains of Ethics and Regulatory Guidelines, Coaching Knowledge and Applications, Assessment, and Practice Management.

Examination Form

The BCCE is composed of 100 multiple-choice questions that pertain to the field of coaching. Of the 100 items, 80 are scored and 20 are unscored. The 20 unscored multiple-choice questions provide statistical information about items that may be used in future examinations. Both scored and unscored items are of the same structure, and they appear in a randomized order throughout the examination. Applicants for the BCC certification have two hours to complete the test.

Job Analysis and Content Outline

The BCCE was developed based upon a national job analysis of 295 credentialed coaches who identified the competencies most relevant to the field of coaching. This content outline was drafted and approved by the BCCE Subject Matter Expert (SME) Committee in 2020.

The committee's responsibilities included, but were not limited to, defining the BCCE, defining the MQC for the BCCE, developing the examination blueprint by finalizing the content outline and deciding on weighting for each domain, and sorting items into the domains.

Table 1 presents the four domains and the percent ranges and number of scored items on the BCCE for each domain.

Table 1. *The weight for each domain*

	Domain	Percent of items	Number of scored items
1	Ethics and Regulatory Guidelines	15%–25%	12–20
2	Coaching Knowledge and Applications	45%–55%	36–44
3	Assessment	15%–25%	12–20
4	Practice Management	5%–15%	4–12

Table 2. *Knowledge, skills, and tasks related to the domains*

The following work behaviors are supported by the coaching literature and resulted from a job analysis completed by credentialed coaches. These work behaviors are meant to be general in scope and applicable to various contexts (e.g., life, executive, business, career, health and wellness).

I. Ethics and Regulatory Guidelines

Work behaviors in this category include identification and communication of roles and responsibilities of coaches related to ethical and regulatory guidelines.

- A. Obtain agreement on the parameters of confidentiality in coaching
- B. Identify any dual relationship issues that could influence the coaching process
- C. Obtain coachee agreement on the nature of coaching
- D. Obtain coachee agreement on the limits of coaching
- E. Obtain agreement on the process of confidentiality in coaching
- F. Inform coachee about the legal dimensions of the coaching relationship
- G. Agree to accessibility protocols
- H. Obtain authorization for the release of coachee information

- I. Practice liability risk management
- J. Inform coachees of ethical standards of coaching
- K. Explain coach and coachee roles in coaching
- L. Maintain a physically safe environment for service provision
- M. Explain coaching processes to coachee
- N. Apply standards of practice in coaching
- O. Maintain appropriate coachee case notes and records
- P. Operate within the coachee's ethical system without violating coach's own code of ethics
- Q. Adhere to *BCC Code of Ethics*
- R. Clarify roles and responsibilities in sharing data prior to assessment
- S. Establish and maintain trust
- T. Maintain a sense of mutual respect
- U. Establish and maintain confidentiality for virtual coaching

II. Coaching Knowledge and Applications

Work behaviors in this category include the use of coaching methods and skills that may be necessary for an effective practice.

- A. Use silence
- B. Use mirroring
- C. Ask affective questions
- D. Use the linking process
- E. Ask analytical questions
- F. Use challenging statements or questions
- G. Use/model effective nonverbal communication
- H. Use paraphrasing
- I. Use summarizing
- J. Ask clarifying questions
- K. Ask connecting questions
- L. Ask probing questions
- M. Interpret nonverbal communication
- N. Ask exploratory questions
- O. Ask reflective questions
- P. Use empathy
- Q. Use open-ended questions as a method of investigation
- R. Provide encouragement
- S. Use active listening
- T. Demonstrate compassion

- U. Use ambiguity
- V. Use metaphors
- W. Assist coachee to adapt and modify coachee's belief and value systems to achieve goals
- X. Modify the coaching process based on any issue that influences coachee's goals
- Y. Use humor
- Z. Use reframing
- AA. Challenge coachee to test assumptions and biases
- AB. Use appropriate reinforcement techniques throughout the helping process
- AC. Assist coachee in understanding belief and value systems that impact goals
- AD. Exhibit curiosity
- AE. Assist coachee in understanding their current perspective (framing)
- AF. Assist coachee in gaining new perspective (framing)
- AG. Recognize culturally sensitive communication
- AH. Assist coachee in understanding the balance of life roles in careers
- AI. Discuss work–life balance with coachee
- AJ. Model self-disclosure
- AK. Coordinate coaching plan with other service providers
- AL. Offer insight
- AM. Promote effective decision-making
- AN. Explore ideas
- AO. Assist coachee in role transitions
- AP. Assist coachee in building skills
- AQ. Assist coachee in building confidence
- AR. Facilitate coachee's development of decision-making skills
- AS. Assist coachee with managing conflict
- AT. Foster effective communication
- AU. Provide candid and clear feedback
- AV. Provide coaching via distance technologies
- AW. Co-create a comprehensive coaching plan
- AX. Facilitate coachee's use of information resources in coaching
- AY. Assist coachee in locating relevant information and resources
- AZ. Co-develop coachee's goal regarding whether it is conceivable, believable, achievable, measurable, and desirable, given a coachee case
- BA. Clarify coachee barriers related to decision making
- BB. Assist coachee in understanding the potential risks in decision-making and strategies to minimize risks
- BC. Assist coachee in identifying, developing, and using appropriate support systems
- BD. Clarify coachee barriers related to goals

- BE. Create coachee accountability plan
- BF. Assist coachee in setting short- and long-term goals
- BG. Assist coachee in creating a personal action plan
- BH. Assist coachee in identifying potential strategies for meeting goals
- BI. Assist coachee in clarifying goal(s)
- BJ. Accommodate coachee's communication needs when possible
- BK. Facilitate communications with coachees who have limited language proficiency and provide referrals when necessary
- BL. Affirm coachee's autonomy
- BM. Facilitate coachee's access to additional services and resources
- BN. Facilitate coachee's self-coaching skills
- BO. Support coachee's development of a sustainable plan for post-coaching
- BP. Maintain a nonjudgmental approach in the coaching process
- BQ. Maintain honest and straightforward communication
- BR. Assist coachee in moving from awareness to action
- BS. Provide acknowledgment
- BT. Gain permission before challenging
- BU. Assist coachee in identifying relevant life experiences
- BV. Model the acceptance of a challenge
- BW. Encourage reevaluation of goals
- BX. Model creativity
- BY. Challenge coachee to move beyond their comfort zone
- BZ. Demonstrate flexibility in coachee goal revision
- CA. Use immediate interactions to advance the coaching process
- CB. Model self-awareness
- CC. Model acceptance
- CD. Facilitate openness
- CE. Model effective interpersonal communication
- CF. Assist coachee in taking action based on data
- CG. Discuss coachee's progress toward accomplishing goals
- CH. Provide peer coaching when appropriate
- CI. Generate possibilities and brainstorm

III. Assessment

Work behaviors in this category include the identification of factors that may influence the process, goals, or outcome of coaching.

- A. Recognize when coachee needs a referral for other professional services
- B. Clarify coachee's current use of alcohol and/or other substances
- C. Identify alternative coaching approaches for coachees with special needs
- D. Identify any sexual orientation factors that could influence the coaching process
- E. Identify multicultural issues that could influence coachee goals
- F. Identify learning issues that could influence coachee goals
- G. Identify any racial factors that could influence the coaching process
- H. Identify health issues that could influence coachee goals
- I. Identify potential for coachee to harm self and/or others
- J. Identify any gender factors that could influence the coaching process
- K. Identify any spiritual factors that could influence the coaching process
- L. Identify any multicultural factors that could influence the coaching process
- M. Identify other issues that could influence coachee goals
- N. Identify any health factors that could influence the coaching process
- O. Identify any developmental factors that could influence the coaching process
- P. Identify relationship issues that could influence coachee goals
- Q. Identify any other issues/factors that could influence the coaching process
- R. Identify behavioral issues that could influence coachee goals
- S. Explore differences in organizational environments
- T. Clarify coachee attitudes toward work and workers
- U. Clarify coachee decision-making processes
- V. Identify coachee's preferred processes for meeting goals
- W. Clarify coachee personal parameters (e.g., values, beliefs, needs, interests, tendencies) related to choices and alternatives
- X. Assess coachee strengths related to goals
- Y. Identify coachee readiness for coaching
- Z. Monitor coachee progress toward goal attainment
- AA. Monitor coachee progress in coaching
- AB. Identify any past coachee experience with helping services
- AC. Observe coachee behaviors in the moment
- AD. Use various assessment strategies appropriate to the coaching process
- AE. Use available coachee data in support of the assessment process
- AF. Use various assessment strategies appropriate to the goals of the coachee

- AG. Assist coachee in interpreting assessment results
- AH. Assess the culture of coachee's environment
- AI. Assess coaching outcomes

IV. Practice Management

Work behaviors in this category include skills necessary for sustaining an effective practice.

- A. Integrate appropriate coaching theories, strategies, and models in assisting coachee
- B. Seek supervision as needed
- C. Correspond as needed with coachee
- D. Advocate for the practice of coaching
- E. Be aware of different modalities of delivering coaching services
- F. Seek mentoring as needed
- G. Promote awareness of coaching
- H. Collaborate with coachee on appropriate termination
- I. Consult with other professionals when appropriate
- J. Self-assess strengths, development gaps, and limitations as a coach
- K. Maintain a referral network
- L. Identify any personal barriers to coaching effectiveness
- M. Assess individual effectiveness as a coach
- N. Use coaching-related research
- O. Maintain needed knowledge and skills with continuing education
- P. Conduct post-coaching follow-up activities, including evaluation of services
- Q. Clarify roles and responsibilities with any sponsor as appropriate
- R. Prepare an estimated timeline for coaching services
- S. Seek feedback from coachee regarding the coaching process

Sample Items

The following sample items are provided as a representation of the types of questions that can be asked from the different competency areas.

Ethics and Regulatory Guidelines

When creating a written agreement for your coachee on the limitations of coaching, what should be included?

- A. that coaching is not considered therapy, counseling, or psychotherapy
- B. an understanding of the coach's prior career credentials
- C. that as a credentialed coach you are not required to keep records or schedules
- D. descriptions of non-coaching services you might provide, e.g., massage therapy

Coaching Knowledge and Applications

A coach wants to inspire additional perspectives regarding the coachee's viewpoints. How should the coach do this?

- A. by drawing a vision map for the coachee
- B. by asking thoughtful, reflective questions
- C. by offering the coachee a skills assessment
- D. by explaining the coaching process

Assessment

You have just completed training on a new assessment tool for coaching and are eager to try it on your current coachees. Before moving forward, you should first consider

- A. if this tool is appropriate for your current coachees.
- B. any additional cost to your coachees.
- C. continuing your coaching engagements but experimenting with the new tool.
- D. amending the coaching contract.

Practice Management

Jack is a manager within a large corporation. Last year his department's sales profits dropped. The company board decided to provide Jack with coaching to help him get the department back on track. Which statement would a coach make to clarify the degree of confidentiality with the coachee?

- A. "I will need to include your supervisor in the session when I discuss the coaching process."
- B. "I'll need to share our session notes with administration throughout our work together."
- C. "Please feel comfortable to speak your mind. Everything we discuss is confidential as required by law."
- D. "Our work on mental disorders that impede financial goals will remain confidential."

Question Number	Key	Domain
1	A	Ethics and Regulatory Guidelines
2	B	Coaching Knowledge and Applications
3	A	Assessment
4	A	Practice Management