



Heather Fork, MD

## Coach Training Guide

There are quite a variety of coaching programs and schools.

The International Coaching Federation (ICF) is an organization that accredits coaching programs. Graduates of these programs are eligible to be certified at different levels through the ICF depending on the type of training they did and other factors.

Coaching programs also offer their own certifications.

Which program you choose depends on a number of factors including the cost and time commitment, the type of coaching offered (life, business, wellness, etc.) the coaching model, and whether or not in-person training is offered (preCOVID).

Coaching programs can be found by searching on Google.

Another way to search for programs is on the ICF site. The instructions are below.

Start here: [International Coaching Federation](#) (ICF) – The organization that accredits coaching programs.

Search on coaching programs [here](#).

Two main types of programs:

### **ACTP – Accredited Coach Training Program**

The ACTP is considered an all-inclusive coach training program and includes a minimum of 125 hours of coach-specific training, comprehensive instruction around the ICF Core Competencies, Code of Ethics, and the ICF definition of coaching. This type of program also includes mentor coaching, observed coaching sessions, and a comprehensive final exam that evaluates a student's coaching competency.

### **ACSTH – Approved Coach Specific Training Hours**

The ACSTH program is considered an a la carte coach training program. An ACSTH program includes a minimum of 30 hours of coach-specific training, including instruction around the ICF Core Competencies, and observed coaching sessions.

To search on these programs:

Choose ACTP or ACSTH

Then choose Virtual Only, In-person, or Combination ( preCOVID)

Choose Location > Choose Language

When you find a program you're interested in, you can reach out and talk to a representative from the school and inquire about speaking with several graduates. The program may offer a webinar or stand alone course where you can get test the waters before making a full commitment.

Below are descriptions of three popular coaching programs by 5 physician coaches who agreed to share their experiences.

## [Co-Active Training Institute \(CTI\)](#)

Shared by Amie Langbein, DO

[LinkedIn Profile](#)

*I did my coach training with the Coaches Training Institute. At that time, the program was divided into 2 parts- the core curriculum which included 5 weekend long ( Friday-Sunday) in-person trainings: Fundamentals, Fulfillment, Balance, Process, and Synergy. These courses were facilitated by CTI faculty coaches and were extremely hands-on and experiential. Each core training built upon the previous training and involved practical applications of coaching and its techniques.*

*Following the core curriculum, coaches had the option to go through intensive coach certification. Certification involved additional training modules, coach supervision, and evaluation of our coaching of actual clients, a certain number of which had to be paying clients, Coaching pods with other members of your cohort (which were a mix of didactic coaching subject matters and actual coaching) and coaching triads where you practiced coaching peers and were evaluated by your coaching peers. The certification training was followed by a written and an oral coaching assessment. Certification was a deep dive into coaching and there was a good balance between didactic learning and opportunities to practice coaching which was extremely useful.*

*After completing both the core curriculum and certification, we had over 200 hours of coach training and felt well prepared to enter the coaching world and become an ICF certified coach.*

*My coaching is in both the healthcare and the business sectors. I coach medical students and residents as well as professionals from a variety of industries including numerous Fortune 500 companies.*

## [Co-Active Training Institute \(CTI\)](#)

Shared by Karen Barnard, MD

### [Website](#)

*I completed CTI training and certification. What I loved about CTI training was their experiential approach to training, their coaching "philosophy", and the design of the curriculum. I wanted to be trained in a program that had a long history of training coaches, and where I would get practice and feedback. CTI has four coaching cornerstones: people are naturally creative, resourceful and whole, coaching addresses the whole person, coaching evokes transformation, and dance in THIS moment. These cornerstones keep me agile and responsive to coach any situation with a client. Also, the magic of coaching training is that in the process of training, we undergo our own transformation. In many ways, I was my own first client as I saw the impact of coaching on my own life. The connections that I made with the cohort of people that went through training with me are still active and I have developed deep friendships. The training process took me 5 months to complete. The certification took 6 months. During certification, I was assigned a supervisor coach who would listen to recordings of my coaching and provide me with feedback. This was the highest yield learning. A potential downside to training with CTI is that they don't cover business development in depth.*

*I am passionate about empowering physicians to lead lives of courage and authenticity. In my coaching, I work predominantly with two groups of clients: 1. physician leaders, to help them find joy, balance, and fulfillment on the road to leadership success, and 2. physicians who are considering a career transition. I help them figure out what they most want to do and help them navigate the journey to a different career or role. I listen for my clients' dormant dreams, reconnect them to their inner courage, and help them shed old beliefs that may stand in the way of their success.*

Shared by Charity Hix, MD

[charityhix@gmail.com](mailto:charityhix@gmail.com)

*For an idea of the core premise behind iPEC coaching, I recommend the book “Energy Leadership” by Bruce D. Schneider. This book will give you a good idea of whether or not the basic framework resonates with you. It also provides links to videos that further describe Core Energy Coaching. The book is provided with tuition; however, reading it ahead of time actually helped me decide on training through iPEC.*

*My training was entirely online due to COVID. I was initially disappointed with this, but it is quite remarkable how well the online courses were organized. A significant bulk of the training is experienced within three 3-day courses, which can be taken during the week or over a weekend. Each day consists of 10 hours of instruction, but to be honest, the time flew. I really enjoyed the trainings. As a side note, I rented a cute Airbnb for each 3-day session and treated them like mini-retreats. I believe you can register for the first training (and invite a friend for free!) before deciding if you want to invest in the full certification course.*

*The trainers vary over the 3 sessions, so you have the opportunity to see different coaching styles and energy. The sessions allow for a lot of coaching practice, some one-on-one and some in groups. This allows you to get feedback from your peers and trainers. The small group breakouts allow you to observe your peers coaching, which I found helpful for identifying coaching styles I might like to emulate. Additionally, there are near-weekly online webinars facilitated by multiple trainers over the duration of the certification program. The webinars deep-dive into topics covered in the 3-day courses and, for the most part, need to be attended live. Recordings are also provided for later review.*

*Outside of the 3-day courses, you also get practice coaching one-on-one with 2 different peers (12 one-hour sessions per peer), within a group (12 one-hour sessions), and with a mentor coach (6 30-minute sessions). The mentor coach provides extremely helpful feedback for improving your coaching skills and tracking whether you are advancing in terms of meeting the International Coaching Federation core competencies. You can also participate in 3 sessions with a success coach, though I didn't find this very helpful.*

*Additionally, the "homework" modules allow for introspection and exploring the "what" and "why" of coaching. The homework also helps you explore your future goals as a coach and how you will incorporate the iPEC principles into your coaching style. Additional videos and resources are provided for exploring a variety of coaching niches. Training includes, if you choose to complete the modules, certification in administering the Energy Leadership Index assessment and specialization in COR.E Dynamics (which includes exploring one or more of 4 categories: leadership, performance, transitions, and wellbeing). There is also a training module for getting started in the business of coaching. I can't comment on the last 2 aspects just yet as I haven't completed them. Overall, I am pleased with the program.*

*As iPEC seems to attract a highly diverse and motivated group of individuals, I have appreciated the opportunity to expand my network and meet many like-minded individuals with whom I have shared my journey.*

## Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching - iPEC

Shared by Manuela Powell, MD

### Website

*I could talk about this program for hours. I HIGHLY recommend it all the time, I cannot imagine a better program, honestly.*

*There's a ton of coaching:*

*24 sessions with 2 different peer clients (in which there should always be a little time for feedback)*

*12 sessions of group coaching (in each session someone coaches someone else, and the group gives feedback)*

*6 sessions with a success coach (you coach them and get feedback)*

*6 sessions with a mentor coach (same; and they need to approve you so that you get certified, so it's part of the final exam)*

*(Pre-COVID) There are 3 live modules, 30 hours each (Fri-Sun), in which you coach a lot, in small groups, in pairs, or in front of the whole class, always with the instructors giving you feedback. There are 24 live webinars, one every week, in which you can ask questions and get coached.*

*Other than that, we get a bunch of different certifications, not only CPC, but also ELI-MP (Energy Leadership Index Master Practitioner, it's an assessment exclusive to iPEC coaches, which Forbes said it's "the one assessment companies should give their employees"—if you want to check it out, it's at [energyleadership.com](http://energyleadership.com)), and COR.E Dynamics specialist (which is a systematic approach to creating optimized performance), which you can do in 4 different areas: transitions, leadership, performance, and well being (you can do as many as you want, one is included in tuition, the others are \$100 each).*

*Also, there are plenty of programs you can buy to use with your clients—you can adapt them, or just use them as-is, and they're pretty awesome too (useful for 1:1 or group coaching).*

*They also have a lot of events going on after you graduate. There are webinars for various themes constantly, challenges, etc, all of this free of charge. There are also a few FB groups, and they're incredible, so helpful.*

*Seriously, I couldn't love it more! And if I would say what could be even better, I'd only say that the business building education is not that strong. They do have a program included with tuition, that's supposed to teach you about email lists and funnels and whatnot, but I didn't even do it, since there's so much of this available elsewhere. I don't feel that's a major drawback, because this is something you can definitely learn outside of school, and there are so many different approaches that I feel it's even better if people go and figure this out on their own.*

### [The Life Coach School](#)

*Shared by Karen Leitner, MD*

#### [Website](#)

*Coach Certification at the Life Coach School takes 6 months and currently costs \$18k as of April 2021. When you sign up you also receive access to a program called Self Coaching Scholars which contains a ton of information, resources, lessons and courses for self-study. There is a podcast called the Life Coach School Podcast which goes over a lot of the material used in coaching and I would recommend anyone interested listen to see if it resonates. It is how I discovered the school and my love of coaching.*

*The program consists of weekly zoom classes with master-certified teachers and 10 students x 6 months. Weekly class video lessons accompany, along with a curriculum book and workbook where the weekly homework is found. You are required to submit 5, 30-minute audio coaching sessions for review as well as perform supervised coaching practicum calls which you must pass to become certified. There is also an exam at the end you need to pass. There are 12 mandatory hours of peer coaching though most people do significantly more. I completed roughly 200 hours of coaching on my own.*

*After 6 months when you are certified, you then decide if you want to do deeper work into applied coaching, or alternatively you can choose the entrepreneurial track for those starting coaching businesses.*



*As far as why I chose this program: It centers on something called the Thought Model which is a way of examining the patterns and results of our lives, drawing on cognitive-behavioral techniques and very applicable to every situation. Using the model we can understand and change our thoughts and feelings to create results intentionally. I find that for physicians (I coach women physicians) it is very helpful to have a model or an algorithm of sorts to process situations that are challenging and break them down to see where we have control that we didn't realize we have. Coaching using the model has helped me go from feeling overwhelmed to feeling capable and valued. It helped me navigate in my career, empowered me in my negotiation skills, improved my relationships with myself and others, and allowed me to find fulfillment in my life that had been lacking. It is a privilege to be able to help women physicians do the same.*

## **Summary**

There are many excellent coaching programs for you to explore, even though feedback for only three schools was included here.

Take your time to explore different options, talk to graduates, and assess what is most important to you in a program.

Coach training will give you much more than coaching skills. It has the potential to transform your life. Enjoy the journey.