

## Model Standards of Ethical Conduct for Conflict Coaches

*These model standards were drafted by CINERGY® Coaching (November, 2004) and have considered the Codes of Ethics for both the International Coach Federation and the International Association of Coaches.*

### Definition

1. The purpose of these Model Standards of Ethical Conduct for Conflict Coaches is:
  - a. to provide standards of practice and principles for the conduct of conflict coaches;
  - b. to promote public confidence in coaching as a process for managing conflict; and
  - c. to inform coaching participants of the model standards of practice for conflict coaching.
2. For the purpose of these Model Standards of Ethical Conduct for Conflict Coaches:
  - a. “Sponsor” refers to the person, organization or entity that retains a conflict coach on behalf of a staff member. The sponsor and client (see b.) may be one and the same;
  - b. “Client” refers to the person being coached;
  - c. “Conflict coaching” refers to a one-on-one voluntary and confidential process, in which a trained coach supports and assists people to reach their goals for improving the way they manage conflict or disputes. The process is essentially a conversation in which clients choose the focus and coaches provide the structure that maintains it. Further, conflict coaches help people to explore different ways for reaching their objectives and to develop methods for preventing unnecessary conflict, resolving disputes and generally, enhancing their conflict management skills. Conflict coaching is not counselling or therapy; and
  - d. “Conflict coach” refers to a person specifically trained to coach people in a process that helps them reach their goals and objectives, regarding the management of conflict and/or disputes.

### Self-determination

3. Coaches maintain the guiding principle of self-determination, as the cornerstone of conflict coaching.
4. Conflict coaches understand and operate on the basis that the responsibility for the outcome of coaching is the clients’ and is based on their particular motivations, choices and actions.
5. Conflict coaches respect and support clients’ right to choose the goals, options and solutions that work for each client and do not take on the role of problem-solver.
6. Conflict coaches do not advise clients how to manage their disputes and conflict.
7. Conflict coaches may refer clients to other resources and provide relevant information they may require, to help clients reach their goals.

## Dignity, Integrity and Courtesy

8. Conflict coaches treat all clients and sponsors with dignity, integrity and courtesy.
9. Conflict coaches respect all clients' values, civil and human rights, including their culture, religion, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and so on.

## Non-Judgemental, Objective and Impartial

10. Conflict coaches are obliged to remain non-judgemental, objective and impartial with respect to clients' conflict, the issues raised and any other persons who may be involved in the dispute or conflict.

## Personal Issues

11. If at any time, personal issues impair or interfere with coaching performance, conflict coaches will immediately determine whether it is appropriate to suspend or terminate coaching relationships.

## Voluntariness

12. Conflict coaches honour the principle that conflict coaching is a voluntary process and that clients may choose to terminate the process, if they desire.
13. Conflict coaches may choose to terminate the process and shall ensure proper closure with the client, in circumstances such as when: (a) they do not believe they are able to remain non-judgemental, objective and impartial about the client or "the other side"; (b) they do not believe they are competent to provide conflict coaching; (c) there is a conflict of interest that precludes the coach's effectiveness and/or the client's trust; (d) personal issues have an adverse impact on the coach's performance; and/or (e) it is evident that the client is not benefiting from the process or indicates s/he has lost faith in the coach or the coaching process. Coaches may refer the client to other conflict coaches, if they or clients choose to terminate the process.

## Confidentiality

14. Conflict coaches respect the confidentiality of the names of clients and the information that they share, unless: (a) disclosure of the information is authorized in writing, by them; (b) clients reveal an intent of harm to themselves or others; (c) information is required for educational and statistical purposes (in which event no names or identifiable information will be used); (d) it is required by any applicable law(s) and court order; and/or (e) as required by the coach, to defend himself/herself from a client's complaint (in which case, only information relevant to the substance of the complaint may be disclosed).
15. When notes are maintained by conflict coaches, they shall store or dispose of them and any related documents in a way that ensures confidentiality and that also complies with any organizational policies and applicable legislation.
16. Conflict coaches ensure that verbally or by way of a written document or agreement, clients, sponsors and others who refer or retain the coach, are notified of the terms and limitations of their confidentiality.

17. In some cases, verbal or written reporting may be required as part of the conflict coaching retainer/contract. In this event, clients will be involved directly with the coach, in the method and extent of any disclosure to the sponsor or other person to whom reporting is required, e.g. person who may function in a supervisory position to the client.
18. Conflict coaches obtain agreement from sponsors and clients before providing their names as references.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

19. (i) As much as feasible under the circumstances, conflict coaches will not purposely put themselves in a situation in which there is a potential or actual conflict, between their interests and the interests of clients who request or, are referred to them for their coaching assistance; and  
  
(ii) If there is a chance conflict coaches may be requested to be the coach for the other side(s) of a client's dispute or conflict, they will advise prospective clients when they first meet, that this possibility exists. If it does occur, conflict coaches will not disclose that they are coaching both (all) people, unless it is required or requested, under the circumstances. In any case, conflict coaches will not convey confidences shared with them, by either (any of) the clients.

### **Professional Conduct**

20. Conflict coaches will not overstate their qualifications, expertise or experience in conflict coaching.
21. Conflict coaches conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively upon the coaching and conflict management professions.
22. Conflict coaches will not promise or suggest specific results, from the conflict coaching process.
23. Conflict coaches do not knowingly exploit any aspect of their relationship with clients or sponsors, for their personal, professional or financial benefit.
24. Conflict coaches are responsible for establishing clear and appropriate boundaries regarding physical contact with clients.
25. In addition to terms and limitations of their confidentiality, conflict coaches will ensure before coaching begins, that clients and sponsors, or others who retain them if not the clients themselves, understand what conflict coaching is and their respective roles and responsibilities.
26. When applicable, conflict coaches will ensure their compensation, billing schedule and any other terms of their retainer are confirmed, in advance of commencing coaching.
27. Conflict coaches only take credit for their own work and do not copy others' research, work or materials, without the originating source's written permission.
28. Conflict coaches continue to participate in training and other developmental initiatives, to further develop and sustain their knowledge, skills, abilities and competence, as a provider of conflict coaching.