

# MCC Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS)

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August 2022



## Introduction

Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales, or BARS, are a type of performance assessment scale that use “behavioral statements” as a reference point to assess an individual’s skills based on a defined set of performance dimensions, using a multi-point scale.

The following Behavioral Statements were designed to represent the demonstration of the ICF Core Competencies at the Master Certified Coach (ACC) level that can be observed within an audio recorded coaching session. Assessors are asked to listen to performance evaluation recordings and rate a candidate’s proficiency in the Core Competencies based on the following seven response options:

- **Exemplary** -- The coach exhibits this behavior completely, effortlessly, and consistently in response to what the client presents.
- **Extremely proficient** – The coach exhibits this behavior consistently with ease in response to what the client presents.
- **Proficient** – The coach exhibits this behavior with ease.
- **Sufficient** – The coach exhibits this behavior.
- **Not quite sufficient** – The coach attempts to exhibit this behavior but does not do so competently.
- **Insufficient** – The coach does not exhibit this behavior in response to the opportunities presented.
- **Not applicable** – There were no opportunities for the coach to exhibit this behavior.

These MCC Behavioral Statements were developed to support a performance evaluation that is fair, consistent, valid, reliable and defensible.

The MCC Behavioral Statements may also support coaches, coach educators, and mentor coaches in identifying areas for growth and skill development in coaching at the MCC level; however they should always be used within the context of the ICF Core Competencies. The MCC Behavioral Statements should never be used as a checklist in a formulaic manner for passing the performance evaluation.

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### Competency 1: Demonstrates Ethical Practice

**Definition:** Understands and consistently applies coaching ethics and standards of coaching.

Familiarity with the ICF Code of Ethics and its application is required for all levels of coaching. Assessors will evaluate a candidate's alignment with Competency 1: Demonstrates Ethical Practice through the following two qualifiers:

1. Coach demonstrates alignment with the ICF Code of Ethics; and
2. Coach demonstrates consistent alignment with the role of "coach."

An assessor should mark each qualifier as "Observed" or "Not Observed." If the coach demonstrates alignment with the Qualifier, the assessor should mark "Observed." If the coach does not demonstrate alignment with the Qualifier, the assessor should mark "Not Observed."

If an assessor finds that a coach does not meet one or both of the Qualifiers for Demonstrates Ethical Practice, the assessor will be required to provide comments describing the assessor's rationale for marking "Not Observed," including citing specific evidence from the performance evaluation recording.

### Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset

**Definition:** Develops and maintains a mindset that is open, curious, flexible and client-centered.

Embodying a coaching mindset—a mindset that is open, curious, flexible and client-centered—is a process that requires ongoing learning and development, establishing a reflective practice, and preparing for sessions. These elements take place over the course of a coach's professional journey and cannot be fully captured in a single moment in time. As such, there are no Behavioral Statements for Competency 2 in the MCC BARS system. Rather, candidates will be assessed on their knowledge of and ability to apply Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset as part of the ICF Credentialing Exam, the written assessment for ICF Credentials.

### Competency 3: Establishes and Maintains Agreements

**Definition:** Partners with the client and relevant stakeholders to create clear agreements about the coaching relationship, process, plans and goals. Establishes agreements for the overall coaching engagement as well as those for each coaching session.

**M3.1** Coach partners with the client to explore the topic or focus of the session at a level that is meaningful to the client

**M3.2** Coach partners with the client to keep the desired outcome as a guide to the coaching conversation in a flexible, gentle and natural manner

**M3.3** Coach notices subtle shifts in the conversation and invites the client to change direction if the client desires

#### **Competency 4: Cultivates Trust and Safety**

**Definition:** Partners with the client to create a safe, supportive environment that allows the client to share freely. Maintains a relationship of mutual respect and trust.

**M4.1** Coach engages the client as an equal partner in a collaborative coaching process

**M4.2** Coach exhibits genuine curiosity about the client as a whole person by inviting the client to share more about themselves or their identity

**M4.3** Coach provides space for the client to fully express themselves, share feelings, beliefs, and perspectives, without judgment

**M4.4** Coach acknowledges the client and celebrates client progress

#### **Competency 5: Maintains Presence**

**Definition:** Is fully conscious and present with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible, grounded and confident

**M5.1** Coach responds to the client in a manner that keeps the conversation flowing with the client leading the way

**M5.2** Coach remains curious and attentive to the client, exploring what the client needs throughout the session

**M5.3** Coach engages in the coaching conversation with ease and fluidity

**M5.4** Coach leverages silence to support the client and the client's growth

#### **Competency 6: Listens Actively**

**Definition:** Focuses on what the client is and is not saying to fully understand what is being communicated in the context of the client's systems and to support client self-expression

**M6.1** Coach responds to client with an invitation into a deeper exploration of client thinking and behaviors

**M6.2** Coach's responses to the client demonstrates an understanding of the client's emotions, energy, or learning and growth, in alignment with the client's agenda

**M6.3** Coach reflects what the client communicates in relation to the context of the whole person

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### Competency 7: Evokes Awareness

**Definition:** Facilitates client insight and learning by using tools and techniques such as powerful questioning, silence, metaphor or analogy

**M7.1** Coach partners with the client to explore the client's stories, metaphors and imagery that support growth and learning

**M7.2** Coach stimulates new client insights with minimal, precise questions

**M7.3** Coach asks questions that challenge the client to explore more deeply or to go beyond current thinking and feeling

**M7.4** Coach shares with fluidity insights, observations, or questions, from the client's words and actions to foster awareness

### Competency 8: Facilitates Client Growth

**Definition:** Partners with the client to transform learning and insight into action. Promotes client autonomy in the coaching process.

**M8.1** Coach checks in with client and their progress, learnings, and insights in natural and spontaneous ways throughout the session

**M8.2** Coach invites the client to sense and reflect on what they are learning about themselves

**M8.3** Coach cultivates an environment for the client to intentionally apply their own learning

### Overall MCC Behavioral Statements

In addition to the Behavioral Statements within Competencies 3 through 8, there are three overall MCC Behavioral Statements that describe MCC level coaching behaviors that extend beyond any one competency area.

**MO.1** Coach invites the client to explore the lens through which the client is observing their current situation

**MO.2** The coach's comments and questions come from the totality of what they have learned about who the client is and their coaching purpose

**MO.3** Coach's invitations to the client primarily focus on exploring deeper learning or a path forward

EMPOWERING THE WORLD THROUGH  
**COACHING.**

