

ACC Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS)

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

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

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 ACC 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.

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.

A3.1 Coach invites the client to identify their desired coaching outcome

A3.2 Coach and client reach an agreement on what the client wants to accomplish in the session

A3.3 Coach shows curiosity about the client and how the client relates to what they want to accomplish

A3.4 Coach attends to the agenda set by the client throughout the session, unless the client indicates otherwise

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.

A4.1 Coach acknowledges client insights and learning in the moment

A4.2 Coach explores the client's expression of feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs, or suggestions

A4.3 Coach expresses support and concern for the client, which may focus on the client's context, problem or situation, rather than the client holistically

Competency 5: Maintains Presence

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

A5.1 Coach is curious throughout the session

A5.2 Coach acknowledges situations that the client presents

A5.3 Coach allows the client to direct the conversation at least some of the time

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 systems and to support client self-expression

A6.1 Coach uses summarizing or paraphrasing to make sure they understood the client correctly

A6.2 Coach makes observations that support the client in creating new associations

A6.3 Coach co-creates a shared vision with the client

Competency 7: Evokes Awareness

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

A7.1 Coach acknowledges the client's new awareness, learning, and movement toward the desired outcome

A7.2 Coach supports the client in viewing the situation from new or different perspectives

A7.3 Coach inquires about or explores the client's ideas, beliefs, thinking, emotions and behaviors in relation to the desired outcome

Competency 8: Facilitates Client Growth

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

A8.1 Coach partners with the client to create or confirm specific action plans

A8.2 Coach asks questions to support the client in translating awareness into action

A8.3 Coach supports the client to close the session

EMPOWERING THE WORLD THROUGH
COACHING.

