

AIR FORCE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT COACH STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Purpose

The purpose of these Standards of Conduct for Conflict Management Coaches is to:

- a) provide standards of ethical practice for the conduct of conflict management coaches; and
- b) promote confidence in conflict management coaching as a process for helping people enhance the way they engage in and manage conflict.

If any of the following standards of conduct are implicated in a way that may diminish the effectiveness of the coach, coaches shall decline or discontinue providing services, if requested or appropriate. SAF/GCD or the ADR Manager may be consulted for guidance and will not pass judgement if a coach declines to provide coaching services for any reason.

Definitions

- a) “Client” refers to the person being coached;
- b) “Conflict management coach,” also known as “conflict coach,” refers to a person specifically trained and approved by the Air Force to coach individuals to reach their conflict management goals;
- c) “Conflict management coaching” or “conflict coaching” refers to a one-on-one voluntary process in which a trained coach supports and assists a person in gaining increased competence and confidence in managing his/her conflict. It is a future-oriented conversation in which the coach takes a client through a step-by-step process that focuses on identifying and executing the client’s conflict management goals, which may include the resolution of a dispute; and
- d) “Referral” is the act of a person or organization suggesting that an Airman use a conflict management coach.

Standard 1: Self-Determination

Conflict management coaches:

- a) Honor the guiding principle of self-determination;
- b) Understand and operate on the basis that the client is responsible for the outcome of coaching, based on their particular objectives, motivations and selected plans of action;
- c) Respect and support clients’ right and ability to select the options and solutions that work for them in their efforts to reach their goals;
- d) Do not advise clients how to manage and solve their disputes and conflict;
- e) Know when to refer clients to other services, resources and relevant information; and

Honor the principle that conflict management coaching is a voluntary process and that clients or coaches may choose to terminate the process.

Standard 2: Confidentiality

Conflict management coaches

- a) Shall respect the confidentiality of the information that clients share unless required to disclose information by law or the client: (a) authorizes disclosure in writing; (b) reports an act of fraud, waste, or abuse; (c) reveals he/she has committed or intends to commit a crime or harm him/herself or others; or (d) shares information that is in violation of security clearance requirements. Coaching sessions do not benefit from the privilege associated with doctor/patient, chaplain/penitent, or therapist/counselee relationships.
- b) May share non-identifiable information for educational and statistical purposes.
- c) May take personal notes or correspondence during a coaching session, but may not circulate or communicate such notes in the course of government business. If notes are requested, the coach will confer with the client and SAF/GCD to address the request for information.
- d) May save notes taken during a coaching session for subsequent coaching sessions. When notes are maintained by conflict management coaches, they shall store them in a way that ensures confidentiality and privacy that complies with any applicable AF organizational policies and legislation (e.g., Privacy Act of 1974, AFI- 33-332 etc.). They shall immediately dispose of all notes at the end of the final coaching session (usually the fourth session) upon completion of the conflict coaching relationship.
- e) May confirm with clients, and a referral source if applicable, the terms and limitations of confidentiality before coaching begins by way of a written agreement.
- f) Who discover they are coaching for the other person in a client's dispute or conflict shall not share any confidences conveyed to them by either of the clients.

Standard 3: Conflicts of Interest

Conflict management coaches

- a) Shall put forth best efforts to avoid an actual or perceived conflict of interest between themselves, any referral source, and clients who request their services.
- b) Shall reveal any known affiliation that may cause a perception or actual conflict of interest or bias.

- c) Shall make best efforts to avoid providing services to anyone in their chain of command on the basis that supervisors have enforcement and/or reporting obligations or may mentor their employees, which is distinct from coaching.
- d) Shall decline to coach a prospective client who is on the other side of a conflict situation with a person the coach is currently coaching or has already coached.

Standard 4: Professional Conduct

Conflict management coaches shall conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively upon the U.S. Air Force and the fields of professional coaching and conflict management.

- a) Treat all clients with dignity, respect and courtesy.
- b) Demonstrate respect for clients' values, civil and human rights, culture, religion, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, rank/grade, and other characteristics.
- c) Remain non-judgmental and impartial about clients, persons who may be involved in the client's conflict, and the issues raised.
- d) Not promise or suggest specific results from the coaching process.
- e) Not overstate their qualifications, expertise or experience.
- f) Confirm client capacity and be mindful of factors that may impede clients' active participation in the process.
- g) Maintain sufficient competence by continuing to participate in training and other developmental initiatives to further develop and sustain knowledge, skills and abilities.
- h) Comply with Merit Systems principles.