



The management of boundaries and the coach-client relationship is a crucial aspect of Ikigai Coaching practice. It lays the foundation for a healthy, ethical, and effective working alliance.

Clarifying roles, responsibilities, and mutual expectations is the first step in establishing clear boundaries. From the outset of the relationship, the Ikigai Coach clarifies their role as a facilitator and catalyst for awareness, not as an expert providing ready-made answers. They also clarify the client's responsibilities: to engage actively in the process, to experiment with new perspectives and actions, to report on their progress. This initial clarification helps avoid future misunderstandings and disappointments.

For instance, the Ikigai Coach might share a document outlining the "rules of the game" of the coaching relationship, and invite the client to express their expectations and questions in a dedicated conversation.

Maintaining ethical and professional boundaries is essential to preserving the integrity of the relationship and the well-being of the client. The Ikigai Coach refers to a code of ethics that guides their behavior and decisions. They commit to respecting the confidentiality of discussions, to avoiding conflicts of interest, to not exploiting the client's vulnerability. They are also careful not to create dependency, by encouraging the client's autonomy and responsibility in their journey.

In practical terms, this may mean declining an invitation to a friendly or romantic relationship with a client, referring a client to a therapist when clinical issues emerge, or refusing an overly expensive gift that could influence their judgement.

Adequately managing relational challenges is a key skill for the Ikigai Coach. The phenomena of transfer (emotional reactions of the client towards the coach) and counter-transfer (emotional reactions of the coach towards the client) are common in helping relationships. The Ikigai Coach learns to identify and use them constructively. Rather than ignoring or acting them out, they address them with tact and kindness, as an opportunity to explore the client's relational patterns.

For instance, if a client expresses disproportionate anger towards the coach following a challenge, the coach can invite them to explore how this situation echoes other relational experiences, and how it can shed light on their relationship to authority in their Ikigai quest.

Cultivating a reflective posture and relational hygiene allows the Ikigai Coach to remain aligned and effective in their support. Through regular supervisions and ongoing personal work, they develop a fine awareness of their own issues, boundaries, and needs. They learn to self-regulate, to take care of themselves to better take care of the relationship. They adjust their availability and involvement based on their internal state and other commitments.

In practical terms, this can mean scheduling restoration periods between sessions, consulting a supervisor facing a delicate relational situation, or declining a client when the request exceeds their field of expertise.

In summary, the management of boundaries and the coach-client relationship is a subtle art that refines with experience. It requires clarity, empathy, and assertiveness from the Ikigai Coach. By cultivating both caring and structuring coaching relationships, the Ikigai Coach creates the optimal conditions for the client to open, experiment, and deeply transform.

Key takeaways :

- Clarifying roles, responsibilities, and mutual expectations at the beginning of the coach-client relationship is crucial to establishing clear boundaries and preventing misunderstandings.
- The Ikigai Coach must maintain ethical and professional boundaries by referring to a code of ethics, respecting confidentiality, avoiding conflicts of interest and preserving the client's autonomy.
- Adequately managing relational challenges, such as transfer and countertransfer phenomena, is a key skill for the Ikigai Coach. They should address them with tact and kindness, as an opportunity to explore the client's relational patterns.
- Cultivating a reflective posture and relational hygiene allows the Ikigai Coach to stay aligned and effective in their support, thanks to regular supervisions, continuous personal

work and adjusting their availability based on their own boundaries and needs.

- The management of boundaries and the coach-client relationship requires clarity, empathy, and assertiveness from the Ikigai Coach, to create optimal conditions for the client's openness, experimentation, and profound transformation.