



Ethics and confidentiality are fundamental pillars of the coaching relationship, which ensure the integrity, safety and effectiveness of the support process. Beyond technical and relational skills, the Ikigai Coach commits to adhering to a stringent ethical framework, which protects the interests and privacy of the client while promoting a working alliance based on trust and mutual respect.

The code of ethics is the cornerstone of coaching ethics. It defines the principles, values and rules of conduct that the Ikigai Coach undertakes to respect in their professional practice. These principles include integrity, honesty, benevolence, non-maleficence, justice and responsibility. By adhering to a recognized code of ethics, such as that of the International Coach Federation (ICF) or the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC), the Ikigai Coach joins a practice community that promotes ethical excellence and professionalization of the coaching profession.

Confidentiality is a cardinal principle of coaching ethics. The Ikigai Coach commits to preserving the confidentiality of all information shared by the client within the context of coaching, whether personal, professional or sensitive. This confidentiality covers not only the content of the discussions but also the very fact that the client is receiving coaching. The only exceptions to this principle are situations where the law requires confidentiality to be lifted (imminent danger to the client or others) or when the client gives explicit consent to share certain information (for example, with their manager in the context of professional coaching).

The coaching contract is an essential tool for establishing an ethical framework and confidentiality rules. From the beginning of the coaching process, the Ikigai Coach establishes a clear and detailed contract with the client, specifying objectives,

arrangements, roles and responsibilities of both parties. A specific clause on confidentiality is included, detailing the coach's commitments and any possible limitations. This contract is a legal document that protects both parties and clarifies the structure of the relationship.

Respecting limits and roles is another crucial aspect of coaching ethics. The Ikigai Coach is careful not to overstep their role and competencies, keeping strictly within the boundaries of personal and professional development coaching. They aim to avoid creating confusion or dependence in the client by maintaining a posture of non-judgment, non-advising, and non-intrusion in their life choices. If issues beyond the scope of coaching emerge (psychological issues, legal difficulties...), the Ikigai Coach refers the client to competent professionals.

Managing conflicts of interest is also part of coaching ethics. The Ikigai Coach is vigilant in identifying and avoiding any situation where their personal, financial or relational interests might interfere with the client's interests or the independency of their judgment. For example, they refrain from coaching a close relation or direct subordinate to avoid any bias or pressure. If a potential conflict of interest is unavoidable, the Ikigai Coach informs the client with full transparency and seeks solutions with them to handle the situation ethically.

Supervision is a valuable tool for ensuring the ethics and quality of the Ikigai Coach's practice (sub-module 9.4). By regularly working with an experienced supervisor, the coach can gain perspective on their practice, identify blind spots and areas of vulnerability, and find resources to handle complex or delicate situations. Supervision is a confidential space where the coach can discuss ethical dilemmas, counter-transferences, or relational difficulties, to bring a caring and constructive light to them.

Anecdote: During a coaching session, Sophia, a 38-year-old client, shared her difficulty balancing her professional and family life, a source of tension with her partner. As the sessions progressed, a bond and closeness developed between Sophia and her Ikigai Coach. One day, Sophia invited her coach to dinner at her home to continue the discussion in a more informal setting. Although touched by this gesture of trust, the coach politely declined the invitation, explaining with care that it might blur the lines of the coaching relationship. He reaffirmed his commitment to supporting Sophia strictly within the professional context of coaching, while encouraging her to cultivate convivial moments in her private life. This clarification of roles and boundaries preserved the working alliance and refocused the coaching on its objectives.

To develop their ethics and confidentiality management, the Ikigai Coach can rely on several resources. Initial and ongoing training on the ethical and deontological issues of coaching is a must for acquiring solid guidelines. Regular reading of codes of ethics and specialized publications helps to stay updated with changes and thoughts on the subject. Peer exchange in practice groups or intervision (sub-module 9.4) is a valuable source of shared experiences and reflection on ethical dilemmas encountered. Finally, self-work and

continual personal development helps the Ikigai Coach clarify and embody their own values, turning them into reliable compasses in their professional practice.

By cultivating rigorous ethics and responsible confidentiality management, the Ikigai Coach lays the foundations for quality, respectful and integrous coaching. This ethical posture, at the intersection of deontology, reflexivity and emotional maturity, vouches for professionalism and excellence in the coaching practice. It helps to build the reputation and credibility of the Ikigai Coach, positioning them as a reliable and responsible professional serving their clients' development. More than that, this ethic is a humanist commitment serving the respect for dignity, autonomy and personal fulfillment of each person accompanied on the way to their ikigai.

Points to remember:

- Ethics and confidentiality are fundamental pillars of the coaching relationship, ensuring the integrity, safety and effectiveness of the support process.
- The code of ethics defines the principles, values and rules of conduct that the Ikigai Coach commits to respect. Adhering to a recognized code (ICF, EMCC) places the coach in a community promoting ethical excellence.
- Confidentiality is a cardinal principle. The Ikigai Coach preserves the confidentiality of all information shared by the client, except for legal exceptions or explicit consent.
- The coaching contract establishes the ethical framework and rules of confidentiality. It specifies the objectives, arrangements, roles and responsibilities of each party.
- The Ikigai Coach respects their role's limits, maintains a non-judgmental, non-advisory and non-interference posture. They refer the client to other professionals if necessary.
- The Ikigai Coach diligently identifies and avoids conflicts of interest that might interfere with the client's interest. They handle unavoidable situations transparently.
- Supervision allows the Ikigai Coach to ensure ethics and the quality of their practice by gaining perspective and resources for complex situations.
- To develop their ethics, the Ikigai Coach relies on continuous training, reading of the codes of ethics, peer exchange and self-work.
- A rigorous ethical position is a sign of professionalism, building the reputation and credibility of the Ikigai Coach. It is a humanist commitment serving the client's personal fulfillment.