

Navigating the ICF Credentialing Process

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A common theme among coaches is an authentic desire to guide and inspire others to take action that propels them forward. Therefore, it was natural for me to emerge from my *personal* ICF certification process with a strong desire to facilitate others' credentialing journey. I wanted to use my experience and hard-won insights as a frame for facilitating others journey so they can arrive at their destination feeling confident enough to ace the exam!

Having been through the process, I know first-hand how intense it can be. Just the thought of sorting through the paperwork, understanding the requirements, and evaluating where you are in relation to them can feel overwhelming.

The good news is that I have learned the best practices for making it easy! I have taken my recipe for walking through the process and formalized it so I can help others move through the continuum—be it gaining their first credential or advancing through to PCC or MCC.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, or experiencing fear or hesitation, hold these thoughts in mind:

Keep your eye on the prize. It is so easy to lose sight of the goal when you're buried in the minutiae of gathering data. The aim of certification is to create a distinction for yourself that underscores your professionalism and sets you apart. Remind yourself that this journey will yield an enormous return on your time and money investment.

Chunk it down and just take one step. When you look at the myriad pieces of the process individually, you will find it remarkably do-able. Avoid thinking about it like running a marathon, and adopt a stage-by-stage approach. I like to say the only way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time. The first bite is to call a coach you respect to act as your mentor—the rest will fall into place if you select well. Taking the first step is

more than half the battle! Start now. In three months time, you will feel and be ready to take the exam!

Select a mentor who will make it dynamic, fun, and whose middle name is organization. If they have a structure to lend you, all you need to do is show up! A good mentor will literally walk you through the process, step by step, week to week. Before you know it, you have all your data captured, feeling confident to demonstrate the core competencies in a conversation.

If trust is a function of competence and commitment, then, an ICF credential signals to potential clients that *you* are trusted by the closest entity this industry has to a governing board to facilitate positive change. When you look at the value inherent in that, in dollars and *sense*, why wouldn't you start the process now so you can reap the rewards sooner rather than later? There is never going to be a "better" time.