

PRESS RELEASE - NEW !

The Coaching Square celebrates that she is the first and only Belgian coaching school who offers an ICF accredited coaching program (ACTP) for Professional Certified Coaches.

The Coaching Square is a Coaching Institute who is the professional partner to companies and organisations in 4 domains:

1. Certification of coaches at the PCC (Professional Certified Coach) level of the International Coach Federation
2. Selection and proposal of certified coaches for the in-house coaching projects
3. Supervision and intervention for in-house coaches
4. Leader Coach programs

The ACTP – or Accredited Coach Specific Training Program – stands for a certification of our 132 hours ROOT-GROW training program by the International Coach Federation (ICF). The rigorous audit has taken 1.5 year and is done by neutral ICF assessors. The audit included a thorough evaluation of the training program, the method, the trainers approach, the participant progress monitoring, the alignment with the 11 ICF competencies, a validation of the certification level and exam procedure and the validation of the professional standard of the training course.



Coaching is a fast growing business segment which cries for the need to distinguish professional coaches from consultant-coaches, trainers, therapists. ICF certification is available through a lengthy procedure of international exams. The ACTP programs allow participants to acquire their certification directly by successful completion of the The Coaching Square program and by proof of the practise hours to ICF only.

The importance of coaching in business is growing. Coaching is both a pro-active and reactive development tool and becomes more and more a solid part of the management development programs. For this reason internal and external coaches must keep investing in their personal growth and their in-depth benchmarking of their coaching competencies and coaching attitudes.

In the next article you find our vision on

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What is the importance of business coaching today?

Business coaching, as development tool, is of big importance to employees for several reasons:

1. The many changes in the economy and financial world cause a need for adaptation to the new world situation. Being a manager demands flexibility and stress resistance. Coaching supports managers **pro-actively** to identify and accept the impact of quick changes in economic and financial situations. In a coaching process managers learn to take different perceptual positions before taking decisions. This guarantees a helicopter view instead of being sucked into daily problems. There is one certainty in this century: things will continue to change at a continuous higher speed. Preparing managers for their task, rather than having to rescue them after they have created some conflicts, is a typical coaching matter.
- Complexity of management is growing by the day. Managing teams demands very complex skills from managers and it is required that they have personal insight in the way they function, in their qualities and pitfalls and that they also understand how people function. Managers can be coached in how to motivate people by giving them appreciation, daring to give feedback and confrontation if needed. Avoiding confrontation at the work place leads to a reactive, unclear and passive situations which leads to more and more demotivation with the team members. Teams will perform best within a feedback culture. The more we allow for people to fear feedback moments, the more we will create impossible and complicated situations. Today managers need to know how to communicate feedback and not only inform their people of their decisions, they need to share why certain feedback is important and to which values it corresponds. This calls for a need for open communication amongst managers and obliges the manager to show his own values and vision. Coaching supports visionary management.
 - Business certainty does not exist anymore so managers today don't always understand their mission in a company as the demand for performance is high and at the same time they need to lead people in the daily performance but at the same time they are not certain about the future of the company and their job. The confusion between operational tasks and leading tasks is big and often an outsider view is needed to mirror the incongruence and paradox of the people and the organisation.
 - Time pressure is enormous because of the 'online' business atmosphere: we have blackberries, mobile phones that oblige us to take on-the-spot decisions. Answering voice-mail and mail is supposed to be done immediately and the time for reflection is limited. This creates an atmosphere of urgency which is often contra-productive. The workload and the pressure are very often rationalized and this keeps a lot of managers in a state of emotional denial. The idea that managing



is a result-oriented task rather than an emotional leadership task creates instability, stress and paradoxically enough low performance and a lot of covering up operations. Coaching is a gift because it makes managers re-consider their vision, mission values and actions. It helps the manager to connect to his “being” consequently to his “being responsible” rather than to his “doing blindly” what habits have thought him. Automatism of habits only results into actions that worked 10 years ago. Coaching helps to creatively come forward with visionary actions that are not based on fear.

- The human being is a survivor – it is a species that wants to survive whatever happens – despite all the bad news about our climate and the loss of resources of the earth that is brought to us in desperate-making packages, we keep believing that it will become better, that our children will find solutions. The negativism in the messages however demoralizes the human being and interferes with the people who want to lead a company or a division with passion. The coaching spirit helps managers to stand still and to reflect on their decisions and actions in order to create inspiring business that relate to the global changes.

Conclusion:

The manager of today has a need for reconsidering values, mission, and choices. Society puts the bar high and their personal need of recognition is not always met. Coaching offers the manager a safe environment where he can be mirrored, where he can slow down to broaden and challenge his perception and where he can create a space for reflection on his leadership role in the organisation, where he can nurture his creativeness in order to become a charismatic leader.

Why do coaches need a certificate today?

Coaching is one of the fastest growing business segments at this moment. Everybody who wants it can claim to be a coach. Television programs and media support this hype or tendency. For organisations trying to find their way in the jungle of so called coaches, a trusted point of reference is becoming more and more a requirement. Professional associations such as ICF provide orientation and benchmarks in the jungle.

More and more experienced coaches, who have already proven successes with clients, also find their way to international credentialing because they also feel the need to distinguish themselves from other professions and specialisations.

A coach certification becomes more and more important for business coaches as it is the ultimate way for companies to distinguish excellent coaches that are capable to facilitate the achievement of the desired objectives.

The Coaching Square: Broker for ICF certified coaches

The Coaching Square, as a broker partner for coaching projects, has openly chosen only to work with ICF or TCS Professional Certified Coaches for in company coaching projects. A coaching partner who provides coaches with globally the same philosophy on learning processes and who use a common language, makes it easier for the company and their managers to evolve.

Since 5 years we have now supported coaches in their professional growth. About 175 coaches have participated in the ROOT (basic program only) and about 100 participants have finished the ROOT-GROW training program which leads directly to the PCC certification. This network of certified coaches and our specific experience of the coaching culture allow us to coordinate wide coaching programs within management development programs.

International Coach Federation Certification procedure in a nut shell

The International Coach Federation is the largest and oldest worldwide coaching federation that supports the recognition of the “specific profession of Coach” as a distinguished profession from therapy, counselling, training, and consulting. ICF is a neutral organisation, is audited itself and is a democratic structured organisation not based on the interest of some individuals.

ICF is assessing professional coaches at 3 certification levels:

	ACC Associated Certified Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCC • Professional Certified Coaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCC • Master Certified Coaches
Minimum number of experience hours with clients	100	750	2500
Minimum number of specific coaching training program	60	125	200
ICF mentor coaching hours	10	10	10
Reference letters of qualified ICF coaches	2	2	3
Oral exam	Yes	Yes	Yes
Written exam	-	Yes	Yes
Audio file of real life coaching session	-	Yes	Yes

The credentialing route for individuals can be travelled in two ways:

Portfolio route: as an individual you provide all the required proves yourself and you need to pass the exams with ICF assessors directly.

ACTP route: you participate to a program that was audited by ICF and is allowed to take over the ICF exams as part of the program.

Next to assessing individuals ICF has a **referral service to coaching schools and programs** that provide specific coaching programs. Again, ICF specifies 3 levels:

CCEU: hours of training may be counted as Continuous Coach Education Units referring to some specific coaching competencies. These programs are only valid for the portfolio route.

ACSTH: is a program that provides minimum 30 coach specific training hours. When participants apply through the portfolio route, ICF will not need to verify the contents of this program anymore with the link to the 11 Coaching competencies.

ACTP: specific coach training programs allowing the program directors to take over the exam procedure from ICF. The ACTP ROOT-GROW program includes the proof of enough mentor coach hours from PCC/ MCC coaches as well as recommendation letters by accredited ICF coaches and an international ICF exam procedure (written and oral).

The 11 ICF competencies are

- A. The coaching frame work
 1. Respects ethical and professional standards
 2. Establishes a coaching agreement
- B. The co-creative partnership
 3. Establishes an open and confidential learning environment for the client
 4. Is fully present
- C. Effective communication
 5. Listens actively
 6. Powerful questioning
 7. Direct communication
- D. Facilitates learning and results
 8. Creates awareness
 9. Designs actions
 10. Works with planning and goals setting
 11. Manages progress and accountability

What is the consequence of an ACTP coaching school for Belgian coaches?

The consequence of the accreditation of our ROOT-GROW program is that Belgian coaches can do their ICF exam to become PCC (Professional Certified Coach) in Belgium in 3 languages: Dutch, French or English. Especially to many Dutch speaking people, it was a burden to do a coaching exam directly with the International Coach Federation in French or English.

Until now it was only possible to obtain your PCC certificate in Belgium by preparing an extensive portfolio procedure in which you needed to proof you followed a specific coaching program together with all the necessary documents, recommendations, etc. This procedure is a real time intensive and costing exercise. Next to that, the stress of doing an ICF verbal telephone exam with an unknown assessor can be avoided by a face-face coaching in the trusted and more save setting of the ACTP program.

The biggest advantage for all participants of an integrated program like ROOT-GROW is that certification follows an intensive period of personal guidance and group feedback. Participants have no surprises anymore what concerns the criteria for certification as they are constantly focussed on the meaning and the practice of the 11 ICF coaching competencies during training, exercises and supervision.

The ROOT-GROW program is aiming to support professional coaches, both in business and life coaching, to become more aware and self responsible for the steps they take in the journey with clients.

What is the added value of an ACTP accreditation for the ROOT-GROW program?

The ACTP label for the ROOT-GROW program means that The coaching Square delivers a certificate based on a rigorous audit and is not an auto-proclaimed certificate as do many other educational and commercial organisations who try to link themselves to universities who don't have the knowledge nor the field-experience of coaching.

The ICF ACTP approval is accepted in 85 countries so it is an international rather than a local certification label.

The ACTP certification process encouraged The Coaching Square to build a program and describe its methods and exercises that builds professional coaches and is not only a program for self-development. The reflection and the experience of the 3 senior coaches-partners of The Coaching Square have made the creation of this program possible. The creation of the ACTP program is an extremely intense process that involved 2 years of

work, lot of effort and reflections as well on knowledge, possibilities as on methods, didactics and practice.

Not only the program but also the trainers have been reviewed – the training has been filmed and has been tested twice before we could submit it for applications. The oral exams and feedback forms have been reviewed to make a distinction on the passing criteria.

The ACTP accreditation means that the coaching program offered by The Coaching Square reflects in a balanced way the 11 coaching competences. The ROOT-GROW program has been audited in the most detailed way to check if the 11 coach competences are sufficiently represented. Exams and tests have been reviewed in depth and are considered to be at the desired level of exigence. That is why exams can be taken over by the assessors of The Coaching Square. The advantage of an exam procedure built into a program is that participants are involved in a learning process that is continuously monitoring the participants and that leads to an examination package that shows the on-going integration of the coaching competences.

Coaching is not therapy, is not consultancy, is not counselling, is not mentoring, and is not training. The aim of coaching is very well defined by ICF and the ethic and deontological code of ICF guarantees that the ACTP program is really building coaches and not trainers or other.

ACTP also guarantees that the Coaching program is in continuous evolution as it is followed up by a worldwide organisation which has a broad view on coaching as is ICF.

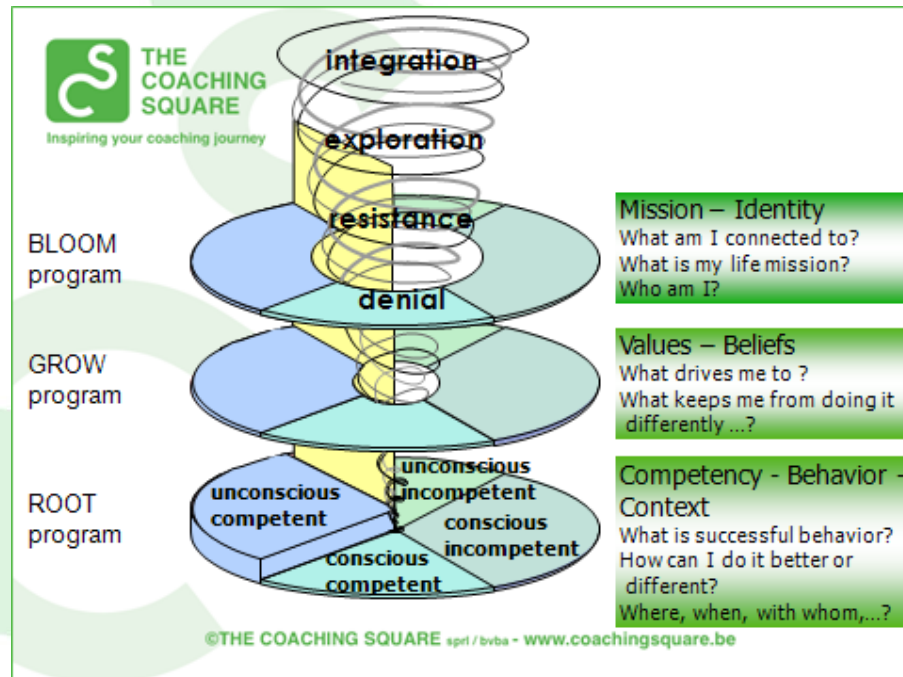
ACTP doesn't only qualify the state of the art of the coach but also stands for a continuous improvement process of the individual.

The ACTP certification guarantees the seriousness and professionalism of the Coaching Square in its way of approaching the coaching profession with rules and specific ethics and not only a derivation of eg. therapy or a fashionable behaviour of consultants.

The ACTP certification demands that the program director is Master Certified Coach, that the program has a minimum of 125 training hours and 6 individual supervision moments. This approach guarantees that The Coaching square builds professional coaches who can work on every level of business needs in order to create sustainable change.

And last but not least: there is a **huge financial advantage** for coaches to follow a ROOT-GROW ACTP program because this program is acknowledged to deliver the PCC certificate (apart from proving the 750 hours of experience of ICF directly) and so all costs for supervisions and even mentor coaching are included. The additional cost for the portfolio route can easily add up to 3300€ on top of the training program costs.

The ROOT-GROW program



The ROOT® - GROW® program are one concept that leads to being able to coach at all logical levels starting from a level of comfort. Every coach who wants to work professionally within organizations will need both parts.

We divide our program into 2 parts because of different reasons:

- The ROOT® is a program that can also be chosen by the manager or the leader coach as an in-depth program for coaching competencies. The mix of managers and participants who choose for a profession as coach, is very important and provides rich contacts and experiences. True problem cases from the field are brought into exercises as subject.
- The ROOT® training program only provides a lower threshold for time and budget.
- Some coaches like to digest the ROOT elements and deeply integrate the skills and knowledge first in their practice before they take a new step ahead.
- The ROOT® program offers enough hours of face-face training hours to independently apply for the ACC level of certification. (ACC = Associated Certified Coach).

In the ROOT® program we will explore all logical levels: from context to mission. Different exploration tools will allow the coaches to identify on what level the question of the coachee is situated. All exploration and confrontation skills are covered and coaches will be able to refer to the driving values behind action as well as name the limiting thoughts that hinder the achievement of results. ROOT Coaches will challenge customer

by mirroring the driving beliefs and explore from a comfortable positions what resistances keep you from doing what you want.

During the GROW© program we build on these skills and the attitude of the coach. Coaches with a lot of experiences may also join this group if they show a profound maturity in aware process guidance, questioning, result orientation, action planning and follow-up during an intake session. In the GROW© we offer tools en methods to actively explore belief and support the client to reshape personal limiting beliefs into empowering beliefs. A belief without an action plan or choices will not lead to success and that is why coaches of the GROW program will still need to be able to make suitable actions and discuss follow-up and self-monitoring with the client, just as it was covered in the ROOT program. In the GROW program we will put a lot of accent on the qualities of being co-creative in the development process and use competencies that allow the coach to be fully present. The coach is a mental and a bodily receptor of signals and needs to be able to mirror what might be of importance to the growth of the client.