

## What is Coaching Supervision?

Supervision is the process of someone bringing his or her professional work to another individual in order how to do that work better. The UK Chartered Institute of Professional Development (CIPD) defines coaching supervision as a structured formal process for coaches with the help of a coaching supervisor to improve the quality of their coaching, grow their coaching capacity and support themselves and their coaching work.

Professional supervision has been the norm for health and social science practitioners for decades. Most therapists and psychologists consider it inconceivable that they could go about their work without regular supervision. Increasingly supervision is being adopted as “better practice” by coaches.

One way of identifying what supervision does is to think of it as a process of Reflection, Insight and Support. This way of understanding Coaching Supervision underlines the fact that supervision enhances ‘seeing’, the seeing into one’s coaching work, the illumination of subtle processes in coaching conversations and of blind spots in oneself and in one’s thinking. ‘Supervision’ is an enhanced view, a super-vision of one’s work. It provides a sounding board and helps the coach expand their awareness, toolkit and quality.

### How Does Coaching Supervision Help?

A process of reflection with a Coach-Supervisor helps the coach to become aware of relevant strengths and areas of development and to become stronger and more confident across a range of conversations. CS explores and clarifies what goes on in these conversations and enables coaches to be intelligent about creating effective conversation in every ‘coaching moment’.

Coaches in supervision often refer to the relief of having time and space to think about particular aspects of their work and especially to think/reflect with a trusted colleague who will explore their coaching work with them and contribute to their understanding. This support enables the coach to contain and resolve some of the more challenging parts of their work:

- their frustrations with coachees
- their concern that they are not doing enough
- the difficulty of keeping to coaching outcomes when the coaching ‘flow’ is going off the road, the undue influence of the organization or of key stakeholders which might reduce coach effectiveness
- unexpected emotional material either within the coach or in the coachee
- ‘challenges’ in the coaching relationship

### What to Bring to Supervision?

There are no fixed rules about what you can and cannot bring to supervision. Supervisees may bring anything that might impact their coaching, whether it is professional, technical or personal. Typical issues include:

- A challenge you are facing with a coachee
- Personal or work changes or challenges affecting your coaching work
- Tensions, problems or conflicts in a work relationship or team
- Challenges in the “system” in which the coach’s client operates (i.e. organizations, markets, industry, culture, economy, etc.)
- Fears, concerns, anxieties
- A pattern or trend you are noticing in your coaching
- Anything you want to understand better, makes sense of
- What to do when “getting stuck” during coaching
- Feeling frustrated with a coachee who is not progressing
- Perceiving one’s coaching as not effective
- Further development as a coach

*“I have a place to go to voice concerns or frustrations when I'm struggling with a coachee...”*