

To:

From: Rey Carr <rcarr@islandnet.com>

Subject: Coaching News and Events (January 18, 2010)

Cc:

Bcc:

Attachments:

---

## COACHING NEWS

ISSN 1708-9026

January 18, 2010

---

Thanks for requesting a subscription to The Coaching News. This newsletter is a publication of Peer Resources (<http://www.peer.ca>), and is distributed at no cost every 45-60 days. Back issues of The Coaching News are available at (<http://www.peer.ca/thecoachingnews.html>). All articles are written by Rey Carr unless otherwise indicated. Anyone who would like to contribute an article or information for an upcoming issue of the newsletter can contact Rey Carr at [rcarr@peer.ca](mailto:rcarr@peer.ca)

Peer Resources is a non-profit, member-supported organization dedicated to identifying coaching information from around the world and turning it into knowledge, support, resources of value to coaches, the coaching industry, and the general public.

---

### TOPICS:

- Is Accreditation Valid in Coaching?
- Attend a Top Level Coaching Event
- Coaching Referral Services Study
- Five Studies and Resources to Guide Coaching Practice
- What's New in the Coaching World
- Join the Peer Resources Network
- Details About The Coaching News

### IS ACCREDITATION VALID IN COACHING?

Almost everyone who has attended a college or university has heard of the term "accreditation." And many prospective coaching school participants often begin their search for a school with the idea that it should be "accredited." However, this may be both an irrelevant condition and based on false assumptions. This article is intended to increase knowledge of the practice of accreditation, examine the dubious practices that are used for "accrediting," and decrease any notion that a coach training school must be accredited to be worthwhile.

Similar to traditional colleges and universities, many coaching schools participate in an accreditation system. But the similarity between the US-based and European-based rigorous accreditation procedure and status for colleges and universities bears little resemblance to the poorly-designed, but often-mentioned accreditation system used by coaching organizations. Here's why:

The International Coach Federation (ICF), the Progressive International Coaching Board ([PCIB](#)), and the Certified Coaches Alliance ([CCA](#)) are three of the organizations that review schools to determine their eligibility for accreditation. However, the three accrediting systems have neither been approved nor authorized by experts or credentialing associations in the accrediting field such as [AAAC](#) or the accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

Another organization, the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (WABC), has also developed an accreditation system for business coach training, and their accrediting system is based on widely-accepted and practiced standards by accreditation experts.

In Europe the European Coaching Institute ([ECI](#)) and the Association for Coaching (AC) are accreditation agencies. However, they accredit individual courses and not schools.

In the last four years (2005-2009) additional organizations have emerged which claim to provide accreditation to coach training programs. The proliferation of these organizations, while possibly well-intended, has virtually eliminated the credibility of accreditation as a way for individuals to use "accreditation" as a yardstick for measuring quality. The current use of "accreditation" in the coaching field has a number of troubling aspects:

- There are no external sources to hold coaching accrediting agencies accountable;
- The current system of accrediting coaching schools by coaching associations has been criticized as a way of micro-managing the curriculum of the individual coach training organizations and reducing innovative or alternative forms of effective training;
- Accrediting agencies for colleges and universities are closely monitored and reviewed by government or public agencies and typically have boards of directors that are completely independent of the schools they are responsible for accrediting; no such independence exists with regards to coaching schools and their [accreditors](#) at coaching associations;
- While colleges and universities do pay considerable fees to obtain and maintain accreditation which is an extensive and labor-intensive procedure, critics of the coaching school accreditation system claim that it is a revenue generating system for the coaching associations which invest minimal time and effort in the review process;
- There are no standards that all accrediting agencies for coaching must adhere to—they have generally just been created by that particular association;
- There is a lack of wide-spread acceptance of accrediting for coach training;
- There are clearly conflicts of interests between reviewers who are often graduates of the same schools they rate;
- There are minimal reporting of results, specific criteria or follow-up examinations;
- Continuous monitoring is virtually ignored and unlike colleges and universities, no coaching school has ever lost accreditation status for violations or poor reporting and maintenance of standards; and
- Virtually all accrediting organizations in coaching use questionable or vague criteria to determine accredited status.

While accreditation typically means that the school has been reviewed by an external source, in the coaching industry such a review is typically neither independent nor reliable. Most importantly accredited status does not necessarily mean that "non-accredited schools" provide less value or poorer quality programs. At the same time many excellent schools have also obtained accredited status.

We suggest that coach training program applicants check with each school as to how it does assess the quality of its program and services regardless of the school's accreditation status.

One puzzling practice has been developed by the International Coach Federation. They use the terms "accredited" and "approved" to apply to different categories of coach training organizations. What makes it puzzling is that the ICF website does not explain the difference in meaning between the two terms. This might lead visitors to believe the two terms are synonyms and possibly will lead to even greater confusion about accreditation.

Members of the Peer Resources Network have access to the best guide about accreditation, sources of accreditation, and coach credentialing, in the state-of-the-art paper, *A Guide to Credentials in Coaching: Types, Issues, and Sources*. Although this paper was published in 2005 when there were 195 coach training organizations offering 65 credentials, the principles and practices described are just as accurate today as they were four years ago. The only difference is that there are now 435 coach training organizations offering more than 175 credentials.

(Editor's Note: In North America, the term "accreditation" or "accredited" is generally associated with an organization; whereas in Europe and Australia the term is often used to describe an individual's certification. Coaches in Europe and Australia will often use the term "accredited" to mean what coaches in North America would call "certified" or "credentialed.")













To learn more about the people quoted in this issue or to access more of what they have to say, consider becoming a member of the Peer Resources Network (PRN). Members receive a monthly newsletter 60-90 days earlier than The Coaching News that contains the same text plus additional articles not available in The Coaching News plus links to all quoted sources. Membership is fee-based and the benefits and features are listed at <http://www.peer.ca/PRN.html>.

Follow us on Twitter at [http://www.twitter.com/Peer\\_Resources](http://www.twitter.com/Peer_Resources)