

ICF Credential holders top 6,000

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Increased consumer demand has contributed to a record number of coaches now holding an ICF Credential. More than 6,000 coaches representing 65 countries are currently credentialed by the ICF, which marks an unprecedented commitment to coaching excellence and the coaching industry's highest standards.

ICF Director of Credentialing and Program Accreditation George Rogers reports 1,000 ICF Credentials have been awarded over the last nine months. This number represents a 20 percent growth since reaching 5,000 credential holders on May 15, 2009. Rogers believes this is the fastest growth period of 1,000 credential holders in the program's 11-year history.

Rogers commented the rise in ICF Credential holders can be attributed not only to increased consumer demand, but also to streamlined application and testing processes, ICF Assessors who volunteer their expertise and time to the program, and Accredited Coach Training Programs that prepare coaches for credential requirements.



Last year's Credentialing and Program Accreditation Committee Chair Pat Mathews, MCC, commented, "It's clear that ICF members and other coaches value the credentialing program. Our surveys have affirmed this. The milestone of reaching 6,000 credential holders is important to the coaching profession and to our clients. It raises the bar for the profession."



Pat Marum, PCC, 2010 Credentialing and Program Accreditation Committee Chair, said she remembers hearing about a survey several years ago that predicted a huge international increase in desire to hold an ICF Credential. "These statistics demonstrate evidence of that prediction," she said. "The statistics also mean that we need to judiciously consider how to manage that growing interest with regard to the globally credible development of coaching."



Work Accomplished

In 2009, the passionate reaction and healthy debate among ICF Credentialed coaches and members, ICF leaders and other stakeholders, about proposed changes to the ICF Credentialing system may have overshadowed other fruitful projects of the ICF Credentialing Committee. One project that may have indirectly contributed to the increased number of credential holders and added overall value to the current system was the creation of the current *ICF Credentialing Policy Manual*.

"Through the efforts of the 2008 Committee, various subcommittees and the 2009 Committee, we have a comprehensive, complete guide to the credentialing process," Pat Mathews said about the new manual. "This enables coaches who are applying for credentials to find the answers to their questions in one place, making the process more user-friendly."

Other steps forward in 2009, Mathews noted, included a new model of training for ICF assessors by utilizing record-

77 percent of coaching clients consider coaching credentials or certification **"important"** when selecting a coach to hire.

44 percent of coaching clients consider credential or certification was **"very important."**

2009 ICF Global Coaching Client Study

ings from credential applicants, collating the results and conducting discussion to enable assessors to hone their skills. In addition they studied coaches in the United Kingdom regarding supervision to help determine the role ICF might take on this topic. All of these projects were completed by the Committee while also facilitating many phone calls in regard to the credentialing proposal and gathering input from subcommittees and members.

"Given the tremendous amount of member input in regard to credentialing, it's clear that our program is valued," Mathews said. "Our challenges will be to assure that we are improving our measurement system and that it meets the needs of our coaches, our clients and the organizations we serve as we move into the future."

Moving Forward

Speaking of the future, the 2010 ICF Credentialing Committee hit the ground running in January with direction to develop a credentialing work plan for review at the ICF Board of Directors meeting on March 18.

"Our first task has been the development of a work plan, drafted for Board approval, which covers not only our normal yearly Committee activities, but now includes our best thinking about the steps to take to ensure that ICF is able to define and develop the most effective and strongest possible criteria for professionalism for future generations of coaches," Marum said.

"I recently heard [ICF Past President] Diane Brennan, MCC, describe ICF's membership interest in, and participation in, the discussion around credentialing as a rainbow of awareness—what a lovely metaphor," Marum continued. "Well, we now engage in developing the pot of gold at the end of that rainbow, in terms of solid international recognition of what it means to hold an ICF Credential."