
Professional Certificate in Evidence-Based Coaching Supervision

Models and Approaches in Coaching Supervision

Coaching supervision is a systematic process through which a qualified supervisor supports, challenges, and develops a coach's professional practice. The language used in this field is rich and often overlaps with related disciplines such as psychology, adult learning, and organizational development. Mastery of the key terms and vocabulary is essential for participants in the Professional Certificate in Evidence-Based Coaching Supervision, because precise communication underpins the credibility of an evidence-based approach. Below is a comprehensive catalogue of the most frequently encountered concepts, organized by model families, methodological approaches, and cross-cutting themes. Each entry includes a definition, an illustrative example, practical application tips, and common challenges that supervisors may encounter when using the term in practice.

Supervisee – The coach who is receiving supervision. The supervisee is expected to bring coaching cases, reflections, and learning goals to the supervisory session.

Example: Maria, a newly certified executive coach, presents a difficult client interaction to her supervisor for analysis.

Practical tip: Encourage supervisees to keep a reflective journal between sessions, noting moments of uncertainty, successes, and questions that arise.

Challenge: Supervisees sometimes conceal failures out of fear of judgment, which can limit the depth of supervision.

Supervisor – The experienced practitioner who facilitates the supervisee's development, ensuring adherence to ethical standards and promoting reflective practice.

Example: John, a senior coach with ten years of supervision experience, uses a structured feedback model to guide his supervisee.

Practical tip: Supervisors should model the reflective habits they expect, such as openly discussing their own learning moments.

Challenge: Balancing the roles of mentor, evaluator, and colleague can create role ambiguity.

Reflective Practice – The deliberate process of examining one’s actions, thoughts, and emotions to gain insight and improve future performance.

Example: After a coaching session, a coach writes a brief note about the client’s non-verbal cues and how they influenced the conversation.

Practical tip: Use a reflective framework such as Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle to structure the supervisee’s analysis.

Challenge: Some coaches view reflection as “extra work” and may resist integrating it into their routine.

Feedback Loop – The cyclical exchange of information between supervisor and supervisee that informs ongoing development.

Example: The supervisor provides constructive feedback on a recorded coaching session; the supervisee implements the suggestions and returns a revised session for further comment.

Practical tip: Schedule a brief “feedback checkpoint” at the end of each supervision meeting to confirm understanding and next steps.

Challenge: Feedback can be misinterpreted as criticism, especially when cultural norms around hierarchy differ.

Ethical Boundary – The professional limits that define appropriate interactions, confidentiality, and dual relationships in supervision.

Example: A supervisor declines to coach a client that is also a supervisee’s close friend, to avoid conflict of interest.

Practical tip: Review the International Coaching Federation (ICF) Code of Ethics at the start of each supervisory relationship.

Challenge: When supervisees are also peers, distinguishing supervision from peer support can become blurred.

Confidentiality – The duty to protect the privacy of information shared within supervision, unless explicit consent is given to disclose.

Example: A supervisee shares a client’s sensitive business data; the supervisor must ensure that any case study excerpts are anonymized.

Practical tip: Include a confidentiality clause in the supervision contract and revisit it regularly.

Challenge: Legal requirements for reporting may conflict with confidentiality agreements, particularly in regulated industries.

Coaching Alliance – The collaborative partnership between coach and client, characterized by trust, mutual respect, and shared goals.

Example: A coach establishes a strong alliance by co-creating the agenda with the client at the start of each session.

Practical tip: Supervisors should assess the quality of the alliance by asking supervisees to rate their confidence in the client relationship.

Challenge: Alliance issues often surface indirectly, requiring supervisors to ask probing questions to uncover underlying tensions.

Self-Awareness – The capacity to recognize one's own emotions, biases, and behavioral patterns, which influences coaching effectiveness.

Example: A coach notices an unconscious bias toward senior executives and works to balance attention across all client levels.

Practical tip: Incorporate personality assessments (e.g., MBTI, Hogan) into supervision to surface blind spots.

Challenge: Over-reliance on assessments can lead to labeling rather than dynamic growth.

Meta-Cognition – Thinking about one's own thinking processes; a higher-order skill that enhances learning and problem-solving.

Example: After a session, a coach reflects on the mental models that guided their questioning style.

Practical tip: Use "thinking aloud" techniques during supervision to make meta-cognitive processes explicit.

Challenge: Coaches may find meta-cognition abstract and struggle to translate it into actionable insights.

Constructive Feedback – Feedback that is specific, behavior-focused, and oriented toward development

rather than judgment.

Example: Instead of saying "You were vague," a supervisor says, "In the last three minutes you used open questions that could have deepened the client's exploration."

Practical tip: Apply the "SBI" (Situation-Behavior-Impact) model to structure feedback.

Challenge: Cultural differences in directness can affect how feedback is received.

Critical Incident – A significant event or interaction that raises questions about the coach's competence or judgment, often used as a learning catalyst.

Example: A client becomes upset during a session, prompting the coach to examine their response strategies.

Practical tip: Encourage supervisees to document critical incidents promptly, noting emotions, actions, and outcomes.

Challenge: Emotional intensity may inhibit objective analysis unless the supervisor provides a safe space.

Case Study – A detailed narrative of a coaching engagement used for analysis, discussion, and learning within supervision.

Example: A supervisee prepares a case study of a leadership transition coaching project, highlighting goals, interventions, and results.

Practical tip: Use a standardized template that includes context, objectives, process, outcomes, and reflective commentary.

Challenge: Maintaining client anonymity while preserving richness of detail can be difficult.

Learning Agenda – A structured plan that outlines the supervisee's development priorities, resources, and timelines.

Example: A new coach sets a learning agenda to develop competency in "powerful questioning" over the next three months.

Practical tip: Review and update the learning agenda at the start of each supervision cycle.

Challenge: Overly ambitious agendas can lead to burnout; supervisors must help prioritize realistic goals.

Professional Development – Ongoing activities that enhance a coach’s knowledge, skills, and ethical practice.

Example: Attending a workshop on neuro-leadership to complement coaching techniques.

Practical tip: Align professional development activities with the supervisee’s learning agenda and competency framework.

Challenge: Time constraints and financial limitations may restrict access to development opportunities.

Safety Net – The support structures that protect both supervisee and client from potential harm resulting from coaching mistakes.

Example: A supervisor reviews a session where the coach inadvertently triggered a client’s trauma, offering strategies for remediation.

Practical tip: Establish clear escalation protocols for high-risk situations.

Challenge: Recognizing when a situation exceeds the supervisor’s competence and requires referral can be difficult.

Triadic Supervision – A supervisory format that involves three participants: a supervisor, a supervisee, and a client or peer observer.

Example: In a university program, a senior coach observes a live coaching session, providing immediate feedback alongside the supervisor.

Practical tip: Use triadic supervision to model real-time coaching skills and enhance observational learning.

Challenge: Managing multiple perspectives can create information overload for the supervisee.

Peer Supervision – A collaborative arrangement where coaches at similar experience levels support each other’s development, often using structured protocols.

Example: A group of five coaches meets monthly to discuss challenging cases and share resources.

Practical tip: Incorporate a rotating “facilitator” role to maintain structure and accountability.

Challenge: Peer groups may lack the expertise to address advanced competency gaps.

Group Supervision – A supervisory setting where one supervisor works with several supervisees simultaneously, facilitating shared learning and collective reflection.

Example: A corporate coaching team participates in a weekly group supervision session to align coaching standards.

Practical tip: Use breakout discussions to ensure each supervisee receives individualized attention.

Challenge: Dominant personalities can monopolize the conversation, limiting contributions from quieter members.

Evaluation – Systematic assessment of coaching competence, learning outcomes, and supervisory effectiveness.

Example: A supervisor administers a competency rubric at the end of a supervision cycle to gauge progress.

Practical tip: Combine formative (ongoing) and summative (end-of-cycle) evaluation methods for a balanced view.

Challenge: Over-emphasis on quantitative scores may overlook nuanced qualitative growth.

Outcome Measures – Metrics used to determine the impact of coaching interventions, often aligned with client goals and organizational objectives.

Example: Tracking a client’s increase in employee engagement scores after a leadership coaching program.

Practical tip: Integrate outcome measures into supervision discussions to link coaching actions with results.

Challenge: Attribution can be complex; supervisors must help coaches consider external variables.

Psychometrics – The scientific tools and tests used to assess psychological constructs such as personality, motivation, and emotional intelligence.

Example: A coach uses the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) as part of a client assessment.

Practical tip: Ensure supervisors have a solid grounding in psychometric principles to guide appropriate use.

Challenge: Misinterpretation of psychometric data can lead to faulty coaching strategies.

Validity – The degree to which an instrument accurately measures the construct it claims to assess.

Example: A competency test is validated through correlation with real-world coaching performance.

Practical tip: Discuss the evidence base for each assessment tool during supervision.

Challenge: Some tools lack robust validation in diverse cultural contexts.

Reliability – The consistency of measurement across time, raters, or items.

Example: Two supervisors independently rate the same coaching session and achieve high inter-rater reliability.

Practical tip: Use calibration exercises to improve reliability among supervisors.

Challenge: Subjectivity in coaching assessment can reduce reliability without clear criteria.

Evidence-Based Coaching Supervision (EBCS) – An approach that integrates empirical research, systematic reflection, and practitioner expertise to enhance coaching quality.

Example: A supervisor references peer-reviewed studies on the efficacy of solution-focused questioning when coaching a supervisee.

Practical tip: Maintain a curated library of research articles and encourage supervisees to apply findings to case work.

Challenge: Keeping abreast of the rapidly expanding coaching literature demands continual scholarly engagement.

GROW Model – A classic coaching framework consisting of Goal, Reality, Options, and Will, often adapted for supervision to structure case analysis.

Example: In supervision, the coach states the client's Goal, the supervisor helps clarify the Reality, they brainstorm Options, and commit to Will-focused actions.

Practical tip: Use GROW as a scaffold for supervisees to articulate their coaching plans clearly.

Challenge: Over-reliance on GROW can limit exploration of deeper systemic or narrative dimensions.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) – An approach that focuses on strengths, successes, and positive possibilities rather than deficits.

Example: A supervisor asks, "What worked well in your last session, and how can you build on that?"

Practical tip: Blend AI with critical reflection to maintain balance between positivity and rigorous analysis.

Challenge: AI may be perceived as "soft" if not coupled with concrete performance metrics.

Reflective Cycle – A structured sequence of observation, description, analysis, and action planning used to deepen learning.

Example: A supervisee records a coaching interaction, describes what occurred, analyses underlying assumptions, and plans adjustments.

Practical tip: Encourage use of the "What? So What? Now What?" framework to keep reflections concise.

Challenge: Time pressure can lead supervisees to skip the analysis stage, reducing learning depth.

Integrated Model – A supervisory approach that combines multiple theoretical perspectives (e.g., psychodynamic, systemic, cognitive) to address complex coaching scenarios.

Example: A supervisor draws on psychodynamic concepts to explore transference while also applying systemic lenses to map organizational dynamics.

Practical tip: Map each theoretical lens to specific client issues to avoid conceptual overload.

Challenge: Supervisors must be competent across several paradigms to integrate them effectively.

Systemic Supervision – A perspective that views coaching within the broader relational and organizational context, emphasizing patterns, roles, and feedback loops.

Example: A supervisor helps a coach identify how a client's family dynamics influence workplace behavior.

Practical tip: Use genograms or systemic maps to visualize relational patterns during supervision.

Challenge: Systemic analysis can become overly complex, obscuring actionable insights.

Narrative Supervision – An approach that treats the coaching story as a co-constructed narrative, focusing on language, identity, and meaning.

Example: A supervisor invites the coach to re-author a client's story of "failure" into a narrative of "learning."

Practical tip: Apply narrative questioning ("What would you say if you were the hero of this story?") to uncover alternative perspectives.

Challenge: Coaches unfamiliar with narrative techniques may feel uncertain about "storytelling" relevance.

Cognitive-Behavioral Supervision (CBS) – A model that applies cognitive-behavioral principles to coaching, emphasizing thought patterns, beliefs, and behavioral experiments.

Example: A supervisor helps a coach identify a client's limiting belief ("I must be perfect") and design experiments to test its validity.

Practical tip: Use thought-record worksheets during supervision to capture cognitive distortions.

Challenge: Translating CBT techniques into a coaching context requires careful alignment with coaching ethics.

Solution-Focused Supervision – A brief, goal-oriented approach that concentrates on desired outcomes and resources rather than problems.

Example: A supervisor asks, "What would success look like for your client next week, and what steps can you take now?"

Practical tip: Combine solution-focused questioning with a rapid-feedback cycle to maintain momentum.

Challenge: May overlook underlying systemic issues if not balanced with deeper inquiry.

Developmental Model – A framework that outlines stages of coaching competence, often ranging from novice to expert, guiding supervision focus at each level.

Example: A novice coach is supervised on foundational skills, while an advanced coach receives strategic development support.

Practical tip: Align supervision objectives with the supervisee's developmental stage using a competency matrix.

Challenge: Coaches may resist being "graded" into stages, fearing stigma.

Competency Model – A set of defined capabilities (knowledge, skills, attitudes) that constitute effective coaching practice, used as benchmarks in supervision.

Example: The ICF Core Competencies serve as a reference point for evaluating coaching performance.

Practical tip: Conduct periodic competency audits to identify gaps and celebrate strengths.

Challenge: Over-reliance on checklists can reduce coaching to a box-ticking exercise.

Transfer of Learning – The application of knowledge and skills acquired in supervision to real-world coaching contexts.

Example: After discussing active listening techniques, a coach intentionally applies them in the next client session.

Practical tip: Set specific "transfer goals" at the end of each supervision meeting and follow up on progress.

Challenge: Without deliberate practice, new insights may remain theoretical.

Learning Transfer Cycle – A model that describes the phases of acquisition, retention, and application of learning, often visualized as a loop.

Example: A supervisee learns a new questioning strategy (acquisition), practices it in role-plays (retention), and uses it with a client (application).

Practical tip: Use spaced rehearsal and peer coaching to reinforce retention.

Challenge: Inconsistent reinforcement can cause decay of newly learned skills.

Action Plan – A concrete set of steps that a supervisee commits to implementing before the next

supervision session.

Example: The coach will record three coaching sessions, identify three moments of effective questioning, and share excerpts.

Practical tip: Keep action plans concise (3-5 items) and time-bound for clarity.

Challenge: Overly ambitious action plans can lead to incomplete execution and reduced confidence.

Self-Regulation – The ability to monitor, evaluate, and adjust one's own behavior and emotional responses during coaching.

Example: A coach notices rising frustration during a session and employs a calming technique to maintain presence.

Practical tip: Incorporate mindfulness check-ins into supervision to enhance self-regulation awareness.

Challenge: Coaches may underestimate the impact of their emotional states on client outcomes.

Boundary Management – The practice of establishing, maintaining, and renegotiating professional limits to protect client and coach wellbeing.

Example: A coach declines a client's request for personal advice outside the coaching contract.

Practical tip: Role-play boundary scenarios in supervision to rehearse appropriate responses.

Challenge: Cultural expectations around relational closeness can complicate boundary enforcement.

Power Dynamics – The influence of authority, expertise, and status within the coaching and supervision relationship.

Example: A senior executive client may unintentionally dominate a session, affecting the coach's ability to explore deeper issues.

Practical tip: Use power-mapping tools to surface and address hidden power structures.

Challenge: Discussing power can be uncomfortable for both coach and supervisor, requiring a safe supervisory climate.

Coaching Presence – The state of focused, non-judgmental attention that a coach brings to the client, enabling deep listening and attunement.

Example: A coach maintains a calm, open posture, signaling full engagement during a client's narrative.

Practical tip: Video-record coaching sessions and review moments where presence fluctuated.

Challenge: Fatigue and multitasking can erode presence, especially in virtual environments.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) – The capacity to perceive, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively in interpersonal contexts.

Example: A coach detects a client's underlying anxiety and adapts the conversation to create safety.

Practical tip: Incorporate EI assessments into supervision to track growth over time.

Challenge: EI development is often non-linear and may plateau without targeted interventions.

Meta-Modeling – A linguistic technique derived from neuro- linguistic programming (NLP) that identifies and challenges limiting language patterns.

Example: A supervisor helps a coach notice a client's use of "always" and explores alternative phrasing.

Practical tip: Practice meta-model questioning in supervision role-plays to build fluency.

Challenge: Critics argue meta-modeling can appear manipulative if not grounded in ethical practice.

Scaffolding – The supportive structures provided by the supervisor to facilitate the supervisee's skill acquisition, gradually withdrawn as competence grows.

Example: Early in supervision, the supervisor provides a detailed feedback template; later, the supervisee uses a simplified version.

Practical tip: Explicitly discuss the level of scaffolding needed at each stage of development.

Challenge: Determining the optimal timing for removing scaffolds can be subjective.

Calibration – The process of aligning supervisors' rating standards to ensure consistency and fairness across

assessments.

Example: Two supervisors independently rate the same coaching session and discuss discrepancies to reach agreement.

Practical tip: Conduct calibration workshops quarterly to maintain rating reliability.

Challenge: Calibration can be time-intensive, especially in large supervisory teams.

Peer Review – The systematic evaluation of coaching work by fellow coaches, often used as a quality assurance mechanism.

Example: A coach submits a recorded session for peer review, receiving written comments on technique and impact.

Practical tip: Combine peer review with supervisor feedback to triangulate perspectives.

Challenge: Peer reviewers may lack the depth of expertise required for complex cases.

Supervision Contract – A written agreement that outlines the purpose, scope, confidentiality, fees, and expectations of the supervisory relationship.

Example: The contract specifies a quarterly review of competency progress and the process for terminating supervision.

Practical tip: Review the contract at the start of each new supervision cycle to reinforce shared understanding.

Challenge: Overly rigid contracts can stifle flexibility needed for emergent learning needs.

Reflective Dialogue – An interactive conversation that encourages mutual reflection, questioning, and meaning-making between supervisor and supervisee.

Example: The supervisor asks, "What did you notice about your own assumptions during that client interaction?"

Practical tip: Use open-ended prompts and pause for silence to deepen reflective dialogue.

Challenge: Some supervisees may dominate the conversation, limiting reciprocal reflection.

Learning Transfer Transfer – A typographical error often encountered in literature; the correct term is “learning transfer,” emphasizing the movement of knowledge from supervision to practice.

Example: A supervisor corrects a supervisee’s misunderstanding of “learning transfer transfer” by clarifying the concept.

Practical tip: Provide a glossary of common terms to avoid such confusion.

Challenge: Terminology inconsistencies can undermine credibility if not addressed.

Micro-Supervision – Short, focused supervisory interactions (often 15-30 minutes) targeting specific skill refinements or immediate feedback needs.

Example: After a live coaching session, a supervisor conducts a micro-supervision to debrief on a single intervention.

Practical tip: Schedule micro-supervision immediately after critical incidents for maximum relevance.

Challenge: Limited time may restrict depth of analysis; supervisors must prioritize key learning points.

Macro-Supervision – Longer, strategic supervisory sessions (typically 90-120 minutes) that address broader developmental themes, career planning, and systemic considerations.

Example: A quarterly macro-supervision reviews the supervisee’s overall competency trajectory and future aspirations.

Practical tip: Use macro-supervision to revisit the learning agenda and adjust long-term goals.

Challenge: Balancing macro-level discussion with immediate case concerns can be demanding.

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) – The integration of the best available research evidence, practitioner expertise, and client preferences to inform coaching decisions.

Example: A supervisor cites a meta-analysis on the efficacy of strengths-based coaching when guiding a supervisee.

Practical tip: Develop a habit of summarizing key research findings in a “evidence brief” for each supervision

session.

Challenge: Translating academic jargon into practical coaching language requires skillful interpretation.

Research Literacy – The ability to locate, appraise, and apply scholarly research to coaching practice.

Example: A supervisee demonstrates research literacy by critically evaluating a study's methodology before recommending its use.

Practical tip: Conduct journal club sessions within supervision to practice research appraisal.

Challenge: Time constraints may limit deep engagement with research literature.

Critical Reflexivity – The ongoing, systematic examination of one's own positionality, assumptions, and power influences, particularly in the context of supervision.

Example: A supervisor reflects on how their cultural background may shape feedback delivery.

Practical tip: Incorporate reflective journaling on positionality as a regular supervisory exercise.

Challenge: Engaging in critical reflexivity can be uncomfortable and may surface unconscious biases.

Constructivist Lens – A perspective that views knowledge as co-constructed between coach and client, emphasizing subjective meaning making.

Example: A supervisor encourages a coach to explore how the client's story shapes their perception of challenges.

Practical tip: Use collaborative meaning-making exercises to deepen constructivist insight.

Challenge: Balancing constructivist openness with the need for actionable outcomes can be tricky.

Phenomenological Approach – A method that seeks to describe lived experience without imposing interpretive frameworks, often used to explore client consciousness.

Example: A supervisor guides a coach to ask the client, "What does this situation feel like for you right now?"

Practical tip: Practice phenomenological interviewing techniques in supervision role-plays.

Challenge: Coaches may find it difficult to suspend judgment and maintain pure description.

Action Research – A participatory research method where practitioners systematically investigate their own practice to generate actionable knowledge.

Example: A coach designs an action research cycle to test the impact of a new questioning technique on client goal attainment.

Practical tip: Document each action research phase (plan, act, observe, reflect) within supervision records.

Challenge: Action research requires rigorous documentation, which can be burdensome for busy coaches.

Logical Framework (Logframe) – A planning tool that links inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact, useful for designing coaching interventions and supervision goals.

Example: A supervisor helps a coach map a client's development plan using a logframe to ensure alignment with organizational objectives.

Practical tip: Use a simplified logframe template for quick supervision check-ins.

Challenge: Over-complicating the logframe can distract from relational aspects of coaching.

Developmental Assessment – An evaluation that identifies a coach's current stage of professional growth and suggests targeted developmental actions.

Example: Using a developmental ladder, a supervisor places a supervisee at the "Emerging Practitioner" stage.

Practical tip: Re-assess developmental stage periodically to capture growth or regression.

Challenge: Developmental labels may be perceived as judgmental; framing should emphasize growth potential.

Competency Gap Analysis – The process of comparing required competencies with current performance to identify areas needing improvement.

Example: A supervisor conducts a gap analysis revealing the supervisee's need to strengthen "Powerful Questioning."

Practical tip: Prioritize gaps based on client impact and supervisee readiness.

Challenge: Gaps may be numerous; focusing on a few at a time prevents overwhelm.

Learning Transfer Strategies – Specific techniques designed to enhance the application of supervisory learning in coaching practice.

Example: Role-play, spaced rehearsal, and peer coaching are common learning transfer strategies.

Practical tip: Assign a "transfer buddy" who reviews each other's implementation of new skills.

Challenge: Without accountability mechanisms, transfer strategies may fade.

Supervisory Alliance – The collaborative partnership between supervisor and supervisee, mirroring the coaching alliance, built on trust, clarity, and shared purpose.

Example: A supervisor and supervisee co-create a supervision agenda, reinforcing mutual ownership.

Practical tip: Periodically check in on the quality of the supervisory alliance using a brief rating scale.

Challenge: Misaligned expectations can erode the alliance, requiring renegotiation.

Ethical Decision-Making Model – A structured pathway for resolving ethical dilemmas, often involving steps such as identifying the issue, consulting codes, seeking advice, and documenting actions.

Example: A supervisor guides a coach through the model when a client requests confidential information about a colleague.

Practical tip: Keep a decision-making checklist handy for quick reference during supervision.

Challenge: Complex dilemmas may not fit neatly into linear models, necessitating flexibility.

Triadic Feedback Model – A feedback structure that incorporates perspectives from three sources: the supervisor, the supervisee, and a third party (e.g., client or peer observer).

Example: After a live coaching demonstration, the client provides feedback, the peer observer notes strengths, and the supervisor synthesizes both.

Practical tip: Use the triadic model to triangulate feedback, enhancing reliability.

Challenge: Coordinating three feedback sources can be logistically demanding.

Coaching Supervision Cycle – The repeating sequence of planning, observation, reflection, feedback, and action planning that structures the supervisory relationship.

Example: Each month, the supervisor follows the cycle: set objectives, review session recordings, reflect together, give feedback, and create an action plan.

Practical tip: Visualize the cycle on a whiteboard during supervision to keep participants oriented.

Challenge: Deviations from the cycle (e.g., skipping observation) can weaken learning outcomes.

Learning Objectives – Specific, measurable statements describing what the supervisee will know or be able to do after supervision.

Example: “The supervisee will demonstrate three different reframing techniques in the next client session.”

Practical tip: Write objectives using the SMART format (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound).

Challenge: Vague objectives lead to ambiguous assessment and reduced motivation.

Feedback Sandwich – A feedback technique that frames constructive comments between two positive observations.

Example: “You created a safe space (positive), but you interrupted the client twice (constructive), and your summarizing skills were strong (positive).”

Practical tip: Use the sandwich sparingly; overuse can make feedback feel formulaic.

Challenge: Some coaches perceive the sandwich as insincere, preferring direct feedback.

Reflective Journaling – The habit of writing regular, structured reflections on coaching experiences,

emotions, and learning.

Example: After each session, a coach logs reflections on what went well, what challenged them, and what they intend to try next.

Practical tip: Provide journal prompts to guide depth and focus.

Challenge: Journaling fatigue may set in; encourage brief, frequent entries rather than long essays.

Coaching Ethics – The principles and standards governing professional conduct, including confidentiality, competence, and respect for client autonomy.

Example: A coach refuses to provide therapy for a client whose issues exceed coaching scope.

Practical tip: Review ethical scenarios regularly in supervision to reinforce standards.

Challenge: Ethical gray zones often arise, requiring nuanced judgment.

Boundary Crossing – A temporary, intentional breach of a professional boundary that serves a therapeutic or developmental purpose, distinct from a boundary violation.

Example: A coach shares a personal anecdote to illustrate empathy, enhancing client connection.

Practical tip: Discuss any boundary crossing in supervision to evaluate its appropriateness and impact.

Challenge: Differentiating crossing from violation can be subjective, especially across cultures.

Boundary Violation – An unethical breach of professional limits that harms the client or compromises the coaching relationship.

Example: A coach engages in a romantic relationship with a client.

Practical tip: Establish clear policies on prohibited behaviors and enforce them consistently.

Challenge: Early detection of violations relies on vigilant supervision and a culture of openness.

Transferability – The extent to which skills learned in supervision can be applied across different coaching contexts, populations, or settings.

Example: A coach transfers active listening skills from executive coaching to career counseling.

Practical tip: Discuss transferability during supervision to broaden the coach's repertoire.

Challenge: Some skills are context-specific, limiting direct transfer.

Supervision Fidelity – The degree to which supervision adheres to its intended model, processes, and standards.

Example: An auditor reviews supervision recordings to assess fidelity to the Integrated Model.

Practical tip: Use a fidelity checklist to monitor compliance.

Challenge: High fidelity may constrain creativity; supervisors must balance structure with flexibility.

Outcome Evaluation – The systematic appraisal of coaching results, often using quantitative and qualitative data to determine effectiveness.

Example: A post-program survey shows a 20% increase in client confidence scores.

Practical tip: Incorporate outcome evaluation into the supervision agenda to close the learning loop.

Challenge: Attribution bias can inflate perceived impact if not carefully analyzed.

Self-Assessment – The process by which a supervisee evaluates their own performance, strengths, and development needs.

Example: A coach rates their competency in "Goal Setting" as "developing" and seeks targeted supervision.

Practical tip: Pair self-assessment with external feedback for triangulation.

Challenge: Self-assessment can be overly optimistic or harsh, depending on the individual's self-perception.

Peer Coaching – A reciprocal arrangement where two coaches alternate roles as coach and client, providing mutual learning opportunities.

Example: Two supervisees schedule monthly peer coaching sessions to practice new techniques.

Practical tip: Use structured peer coaching frameworks to maintain focus and quality.

Challenge: Peer coaching may lack the expertise needed for complex issues, necessitating supervisor oversight.

Supervisor Credibility – The perceived authority, expertise, and trustworthiness of the supervisor, influencing supervisee engagement and learning.

Example: A supervisor with a robust research portfolio is viewed as highly credible by evidence-based practitioners.

Practical tip: Demonstrate credibility through transparent sharing of experience, references, and ongoing learning.

Challenge: Credibility can be undermined if the supervisor fails to model the competencies they teach.

Supervision Competence – The set of skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for effective supervision, including listening, questioning, feedback, and ethical judgment.

Example: A supervisor demonstrates competence by facilitating reflective dialogue and providing balanced feedback.

Practical tip: Conduct supervisor self-evaluation using a competence framework to identify growth areas.

Challenge: Maintaining competence across diverse models and client industries demands continual professional development.

Reflective Supervision – A supervisory approach that prioritizes reflective inquiry, encouraging supervisees to explore underlying beliefs, emotions, and systemic influences.

Example: The supervisor asks, "What assumptions are you bringing to this client interaction, and how might they shape your approach?"

Practical tip: Use reflective prompts that target different levels (personal, relational, systemic).

Challenge: Some supervisees may resist deep reflection, preferring concrete skill instruction.

Supervision Documentation – The systematic recording of supervision sessions, action plans, assessments, and learning outcomes, serving as a legal and developmental record.

Example: A supervisor maintains a secure digital file containing session notes, competency ratings, and client case summaries.

Practical tip: Adopt a standardized documentation template to ensure consistency.

Challenge: Balancing thorough documentation with confidentiality constraints requires careful anonymization.

Learning Transfer Barriers – Obstacles that impede the application of supervisory learning, such as time pressure, lack of resources, or organizational culture.

Example: A coach learns a new technique but cannot apply it because the client's organization restricts certain interventions.

Practical tip: Identify barriers during supervision and co-create strategies to overcome them.

Challenge: Some barriers are systemic and may require advocacy beyond the supervisory relationship.

Supervision Evaluation Framework – A