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Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Supervision und Coaching

Ethical Guidelines

of the German Association for Supervision and Coaching e.V.

Preamble

Coaches and supervisory counselors of the DGSv have joined together to represent and further develop their professional and industry-specific interests together. These include discussing and understanding common goals, values and industry-specific questions.

DGSv supervisory counselors and coaches treat each person with respect, irrespective of origin, viewpoint or personal life choices. They acknowledge the unalienable dignity and protection of that dignity for each individual. The work of coaches and supervisory counselors is based on professionalism as well as an ethical and scientific foundation since it involves interacting with both individuals and society.

The work of supervisory counselors and coaches as members of DGSv is based on the ethical standards and shared guidelines of the profession. DGSv coaches and counselors are bound to these founding principles. The Ethical Guidelines reflect the convictions of supervisory counselors and coaches. These convictions are visible in their work with those that they supervise and coach, as well as in the respect that they show to all persons involved in the coaching process.

Behavior towards colleagues and clients as well as in public is directed by the Ethical Guidelines. Professional ethical standards and shared guidelines serve to raise awareness among supervisory counselors and coaches concerning ethical problems that may arise while performing their jobs. The Ethical Guidelines encourage a critical evaluation of personal professional behavior as well as a focus on reflection and continuing education in one's work. In this way, the Ethical Guidelines provide direction and offer protection against one's own overreaching ideas or unrealistic expectations on the part of clients or customers. Furthermore, they list the foundations on which the work of the Ethics Committee is based and advocate for communication of ethical action during training as well as the practical application of the guidelines in the professional world.

In order to achieve the goals of the Ethical Guidelines listed here, the members of the German Association for Supervision and Coaching e.V. confirm and support the following statements.

Self-perception of coaches

Coaching is a consulting process that is based on processes and questions in professional activity, the problems encountered by people involved and their relationships with one another. It serves both to free as well as restrict; it allows for new perspectives and a further personal-professional development of individuals, groups, teams and organizations. As part of this process, various dimensions are taken into account:

- › Person
- › Professional tasks and roles
- › Organization
- › Collaboration and limits
- › Framework conditions
- › Social references



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Despite the diversity and complexity of these aspects, supervision is a form of coaching among other practices that completes or competes with it. For example, boundaries are maintained between the fields of psychotherapeutic practice, organizational development, business coaching, mediation, moderation, instructing and personal experience, even when colleagues possess multiple qualifications in these other fields.

In general coaching practice, supervisory counselors and coaches often work alone. In the practice of their profession, they are therefore particularly cognizant of their autonomy, independence, and personal responsibility. They are obligated to serve the common good. When an inquiry is placed, they reflect self-critically to evaluate whether their own knowledge, skills and personal conditions would be a good fit.

They adjust their approach towards clients and those they coach in a transparent manner. In their work, coaches must preserve both openness and confidentiality. This is observed accordingly when concluding a contract, during the coaching process and finally, in the evaluation phase.

In practice, training and research means that the human and professional quality of coaching, training and research projects takes precedence over economic interests.

This therefore excludes the option of accepting work from totalitarian, sexist, xenophobic or racist organizations.

Acting as a coach

DGSv supervisory counselors and coaches assume the responsibility for their professional activity through knowledge of the possible personal and social consequences on their client systems and place a high value on the personal responsibility and self-determination of others. They behave in such a way so as to avoid foreseeable and preventable damage.

Supervisors and coaches are obligated to limit their supervisory performance to that which has been agreed upon and which lies within the scope of their abilities. A clear demarcation between coaching and other consulting disciplines will be respected, to the extent possible.

Supervisors and coaches cultivate responsible interaction with the relationship of trust that arises from direct or indirect professional relationships.

Each and any form of exploitation or abuse, whether for the sake of economic, social, sexual or other forms of personal interest is absolutely unacceptable.

Members of the DGSv endeavor to maintain a sufficient distance from the system of their clients. They respect the protection of personality rights and are particularly obligated to treat relationships of power and dependence in a responsible manner.

Conduct among colleagues

The members of the DGSv are obligated to cooperate and behave in a collegial manner. Cooperation and conflict management reflects the principles of mutual respect and openness. This does not preclude competition, but loyalty, tolerance and cooperation are to be upheld.



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The acceptance of personal and professional differences is a founding principle of collegial behavior. Members enter into business relationships which are contractually secured and thus protect relationships among colleagues.

Membership in professional association

The goals of the DGSv are published in the by-laws and the publications of the association. The members of the DGSv are obligated to take part in regular continuing education opportunities and evaluation of their professional activity, in accordance with developed standards of quality.

Membership in the DGSv professional association requires loyalty towards the DGSv in the case of membership in various other associations.

Personal obligations

The Ethical Guidelines are the result of constant discussion and reorientation towards these principles among members of the DGSv. The officers of the professional association for supervisory counseling undertake to ensure that the professional-ethical discourse continues among members and the ethical standards are discussed in a public forum.

The Ethical Guidelines are self-binding. Their further development requires the active participation of members of the DGSv.

The Ethical Guidelines are valid as of November 15, 2003.