

Fifteen Reasons I Joined an ICF Chapter

By Keith E. Webb

As I talk with coaches, I'm surprised at how few take advantage of local chapters of professional coaching associations like International Coach Federation (ICF). The ICF alone has 168 local chapters in 52 countries. An Internet search may turn up other associations in your area.

For the past 4 years, I've regularly joined monthly ICF chapter meetings where I live. Here's why:

1. **Learn new skills** through programs. I've learned from experts from around the world.
2. **Rub shoulders** with other coaches. I enjoy the "face time", learn from them, and am inspired to raise my game.
3. **Benchmark** what others are doing. How does your practice compare to other professional coaches'?
4. **Give and get referrals**. My coaching niche is non-profit organizations, so I refer corporate clients to others I know and trust.
5. **Be known**. When it comes time to do something in the "coaching world," established, professional relationships would help.
6. **Hang out** with people who understand coaching and are striving for similar results using similar methods.
7. **Stay current** with industry standards. I'm the first to know new coaching practices, marketing, ethics, and ICF organizational changes.
8. **Become credentialed**. I found a mentor-coach, received a reference letter, and was congratulated by the whole chapter on my achievement.
9. **Receive advice**. Twice this past year I've received advice from highly paid coaches for the price of a cup of coffee.
10. **Build professional friendships**. My clients live in other countries. It's nice to have local friendships.
11. **Earn CCEUs**. To renew your ICF credential you need continuing education. Monthly meetings may be your ticket to inexpensive CCEUs.
12. **Open doors** around the world. Being a chapter member in one part of the world naturally links you with coaches in other parts of the world.
13. **Shape the coaching movement**. Coaching is still in its infancy. I can influence the industry from the inside.
14. **Give back** to other coaches. I help other coaches in the chapter.
15. **Get your money's worth**. ICF fees aren't cheap, so take advantage of chapters, virtual groups, and special interest groups.

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