Agile Alliance Agile Coaching Ethics Initiative - Release 1.0 for feedback

This is the first release of the [Code of Ethical Conduct for Agile Coaching.](#)

A group of 23 volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds is working to come up with content which we hope will be of value for the community. Our hope is that anyone taking on the role of an agile coach at any level in an organisation will be able to use this Code to help guide their behavior when faced with ethical dilemmas.

When considering the topics to be include in the Code, we came up with the following guidelines:

- To be an ethical consideration a topic needs to be something that someone can do as soon as they sign up to the code. As a new agile coach I can read the statement and apply this immediately in practicing my profession
- In order to be an ethical consideration it must be something where there is broad agreement that it risks causing harm to myself, the profession or others if I do not abide by the statement
- These points must be applicable to people who are internal agile coaches, external agile coaches and those practicing agile coaching as part of another role (for example a manager in an organisation who is expected to also be an agile coach, likewise someone in the role of Scrum Master is often taking on some or all aspects of agile coaching)

These guidelines have led us to the point where we feel that there are some points that we can confidently agree on and are happy to release these to the wider community for feedback.

In addition to the bullet-point code we also plan on releasing sets of Ethics Stories which provide more background and intent behind the statements in the code and provide examples of how the statements can be applied in different contexts. These Ethics Stories and the Code itself will be living documents which will evolve based on feedback from the community.

We welcome your feedback - does the Code resonate with you, what are we missing, what is unclear, are there any points that should not be included?

Please send an email to AgileCoachingEthics@agilealliance.org with your feedback

The Code of Ethical Conduct for Agile Coaching

Preamble
People serving in an agile coaching role are expected to act ethically, but what does that mean in practice?

The intent of this Code of Ethics (Code) is to provide guidance for people undertaking agile coaching activities , working with individuals, teams and organisations to guide the types of behaviours, advice, and approaches expected of them.

Agile coaching is an evolving profession encompassing many disciplines including individual, team and systemic coaching, facilitating, teaching and mentoring, all applied with an open and deliberate bias towards using agile approaches to help address the client's needs.

The intention of this Code is to provide an evolving single source of ethical guidance for agile coaching across the broad range of constituent disciplines.

This Code is not a legally binding contract that mandates what a person can and cannot do.

The complexity of agile coaching means that you will inevitably encounter difficult situations.This Code is intended to assist you by directing you to the variety of ethical factors that may need to be taken into consideration

Anyone who embraces the Code strives to act ethically, even when doing so involves making difficult decisions. They act courageously, even if there is a personal negative impact. This Code will help support you when these difficult decisions need to be made and you can provide it in support of your decisions to your clients. It supports you to communicate about your actions.

The signatories of this Code are multicultural, multigenerational, and affiliated with many different groups. We believe that the power of this movement is amplified when we set aside differences and lift each other up in pursuit of a better way. We commit to supporting each other in difficult decisions and courageous conversations.

This Code will be supported by additional explanations in a clarifications and ethics stories document (still to be written).

As an ethical agile coach I commit myself to the following:

- Confidentiality and information security
  I will protect information shared with me and won't disclose it without agreement or legal reason.

- Acting within your ability
  I will be open and transparent about my skills and experience and I won't claim to have abilities or knowledge that I do not have.
  I will be honest with the client if I believe they need another form of professional help.

- Introspection and continuing professional development
  I will engage in introspection and I will engage with a peer group or mentor to explore ethical and other challenges in my agile coaching work.
  I will seek to improve my self-awareness and effectiveness through professional development.

- Conflicts of interest
  I will be transparent about any potential conflicts of interest with all who might be affected and I won't act with dishonor.
  I will withdraw from the relationship if a conflict cannot be adequately managed.

- Social responsibility, includes diversity and inclusion
  I will seek opportunities to bring different voices to the conversation and I won't condone, allow or perpetuate discrimination in any form.
  By my action and inaction, I will strive to leave society better than I found it.

- Ensuring the relationship is valuable for both coach and the client
  I will ensure that the relationship remains valuable and I won't extend it unnecessarily.
  I will be honest about any perception of declining value.

- Agreeing on boundaries
  I will ensure we have an agreed scope.
  I will work with the client to understand their needs rather than impose my own solution.
  I will not collude with an organisation that is pursuing purposes at odds with the Agile Manifesto's Values and Principles.

- Abuse of power
  I will not abuse my power to influence others for personal gain.

- Responsibility to the profession
  I will uphold the reputation of the agile coaching profession.
  I won't condone and will challenge unethical behaviour in other Agile Coaches.
  I will attribute other's ideas appropriately and avoid the appearance they are mine