
DEFINE • DELIVER • REFER

COACHING BUSINESS GUIDE

Sell a defined outcome.

Leave a written deliverable.

Protect the coaching boundary.

NICHE | SESSION | PLAN | FOLLOW-UP

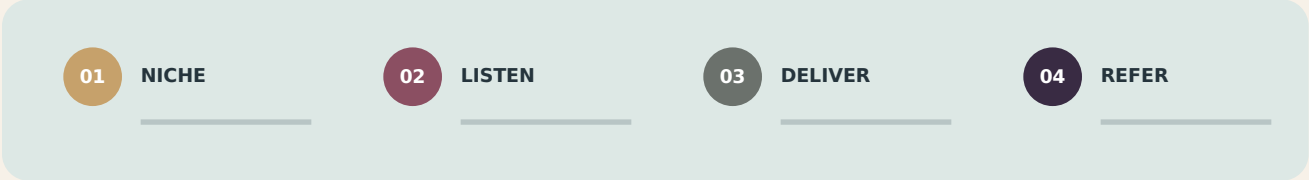
Veteran's Strategic Solutions LLC



START HERE

How to Use This Guide

Read the core guide first. Then use the worksheets to test paid demand, define a specialty and written deliverable, budget coverage and systems, price sessions and engagements, document coaching scope, invoice clients, track conversion, and control privacy, advertising, credential, therapy-boundary, referral, and client-welfare risks.

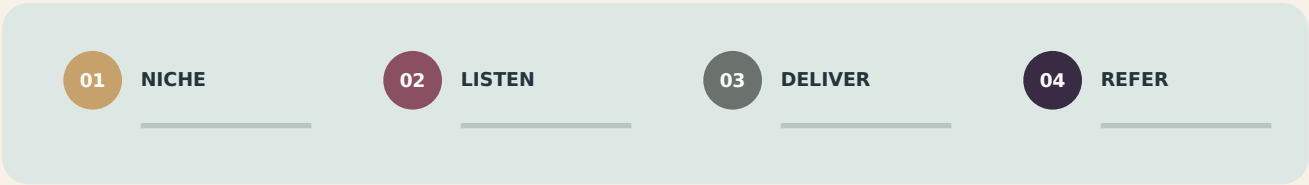


PAID SESSION | Define the customer, problem, desired outcome, boundaries, preparation, and written deliverable.

PIECE	USE
Core guide	Sell one defined session with a written deliverable before building a program, curriculum, funnel, group, or certification plan.
Operating kit	Use the checklist, budget, estimate, coaching agreement, invoice, lead tracker, and compliance page for every client.

CORE GUIDE 01

1. The bet



The core assumption that must be true: that somebody will pay money for advice they could get free somewhere else, because of who is giving it and how it is delivered.

Coaching has no product, no inventory and no barrier to entry. Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting. What you are selling is judgement and attention.

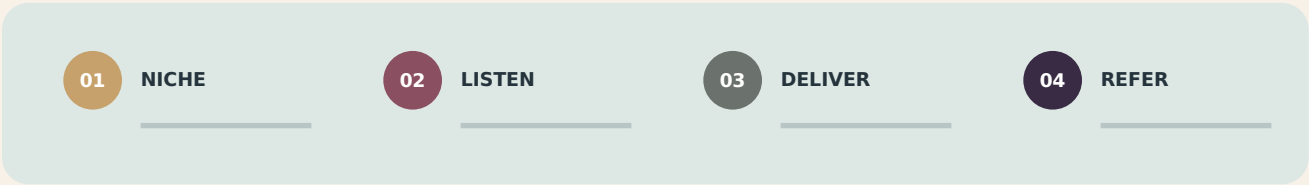
The fastest zero-budget test: find five people in the exact situation you want to coach. Ask each one what they have already paid for to solve this problem. Not what they would pay — what they have paid. If none of them has ever paid anyone for anything in this area, the market is not there and no amount of marketing will create it.

Three reasons this fails before a dollar is spent:

BUSINESS LENS	CONTROL
Niche	Name the exact customer, problem, paying buyer, and trigger.
Artifact	Every paid session ends with a usable written deliverable.
Boundary	Separate coaching from therapy, counseling, legal, tax, financial, and other regulated work.

CORE GUIDE 01

1. The bet Continued



Competing with free. If the customer is a transitioning service member, he already has TAP, DOL Employment Navigators, VBOC counseling and Boots to Business, all at no cost. Coaching that audience means out-competing free, and free is very good at this.

No proof. A coach with no track record sells a promise. The first three clients are the hardest thing in the business and most people quit before they land them.

Selling hours. One-to-one coaching has a hard ceiling — you run out of weekday evenings long before you run out of ambition.

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2. Who pays, in their own words

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Not the person who benefits. The person who benefits and the person who pays are frequently different people, and the paying customer usually sounds like one of these:

"I've got a good employee who's about to become a bad manager and I don't have anyone to hand him to." — a small employer, 20 to 200 staff, with no internal L&D

"I've been out eight months and I'm still in a job I hate. I don't know what I did wrong." — a veteran who is now employed, has money, and did not get what he wanted the first time

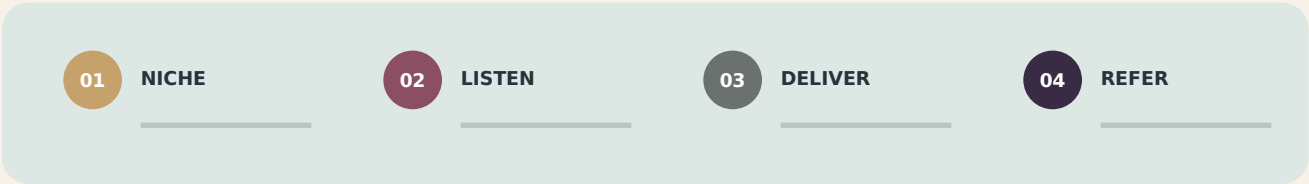
"I need this fixed by the end of the quarter." — an organisation with a budget cycle, not a person with a hope



GROUP DELIVERY | Build repeatable material only after clean one-to-one delivery proves the offer.

2. Who pays, in their own words

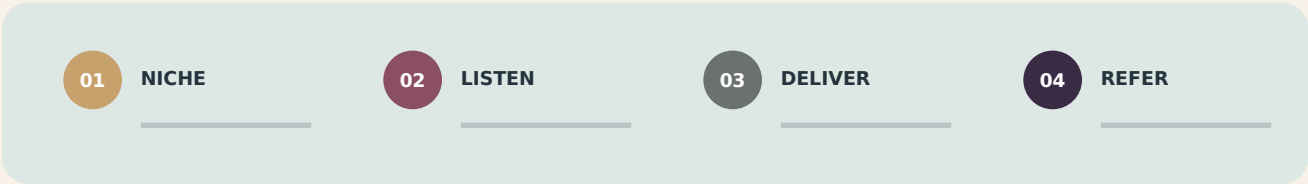
Continued



Note what is missing: the soldier three months from ETS with no income and a free TAP class down the hall. He is the most sympathetic customer and the worst one.

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3. The smallest version you can charge for



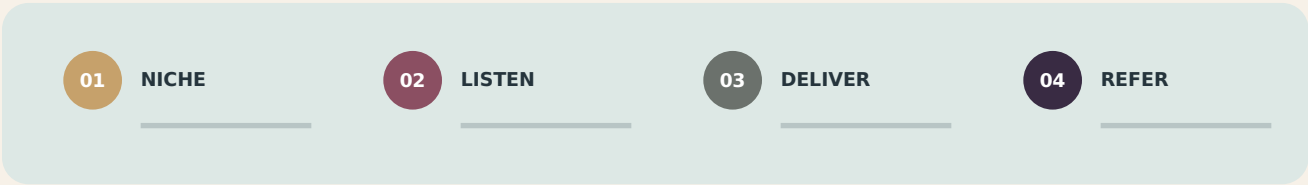
One paid session with a written deliverable. Ninety minutes, and the client leaves with a document — a plan, an assessment, a decision framework — not a good feeling.

The written artefact is what makes it sellable. It is the difference between “we had a chat” and “I bought something.” It is also what gets forwarded to the person who approves the next invoice.

Do not build a programme, a curriculum, a website funnel or a certification first. Sell one session, five times, and let the fifth client tell you what the programme should be.

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4. What it actually takes



Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.

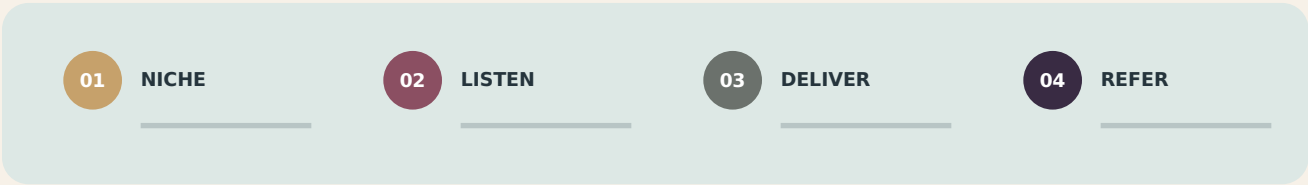
The line you must not cross. Coaching is not therapy and not counseling. The moment the work moves into diagnosing, treating or managing a mental health condition, it lands in licensed territory in both states. Write the boundary into your engagement agreement and refer out when it appears. This is the one legal risk in the whole model.

On credentials: an ICF credential is optional and buys you very little with the buyers above, who care about outcomes and references. Do not spend money on certification before you have paying clients.

Staffing: solo. This line does not need a second person and will not support one for years.

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5. Pricing



Anchor on the mid tier. The single session is a way in, not a business — it prices you as an hour, and an hour is always negotiable. A defined engagement with a named outcome is priced against the cost of the problem, which is a much better argument.

Never price by the hour. It rewards you for being slow and invites the client to shop you against anyone with a lower rate.

The ceiling worth knowing now: one-to-one work full time tops out around \$60-70,000 a year. Group delivery is how this line gets past that — six people in one evening at \$600 each is \$3,600 for the same hours. Build one-to-one first, run groups only after three clean deliveries.

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6. First 90 days, and the one metric

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Days 1–30. Setup guide complete. Five conversations with real prospects, asking what they have already paid for. No website yet.

Days 31–60. Insurance bound. First three sessions delivered, at least one of them paid. Written deliverable built and reused.

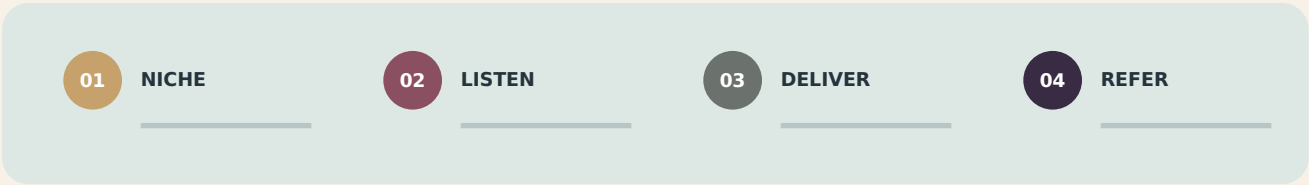
Days 61–90. Convert one client to a multi-session engagement. Ask every client for one introduction.

The metric: conversion rate from free consultation to paid engagement. Not clients, not revenue, not followers. If you cannot convert one in four conversations, the offer is wrong and more marketing will only spread the wrong offer further.



WRITTEN VALUE | Give the client a plan, assessment, decision framework, or next-step record they can use.

7. Honest assessment



This is the cheapest line in the set to start and the hardest to make pay. No equipment, no inventory, low capital, and the work can be delivered across locations. That portability is real — it is the only line here where the location genuinely does not matter.

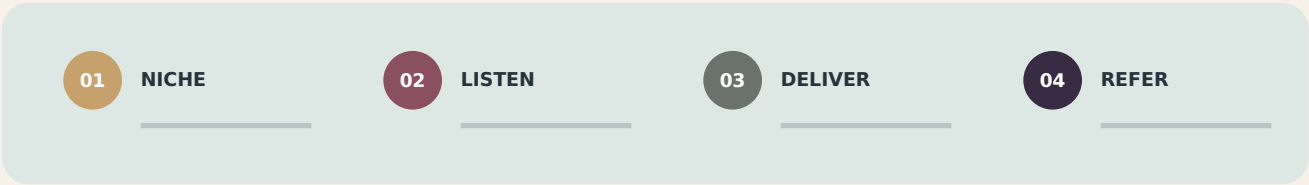
But zero barrier to entry cuts both ways. Everyone can do this, so the market is crowded with people who are not good at it, and the buyer knows that. The differentiator has to be something a customer can verify before paying: a named specialty, a written deliverable, or a reference from someone he trusts.

A supplement, not a spine. Recommended as a second line alongside something that produces cash sooner — not as the thing that pays the rent in year one.

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CORE REFERENCE

Coaching Startup Cost Reference

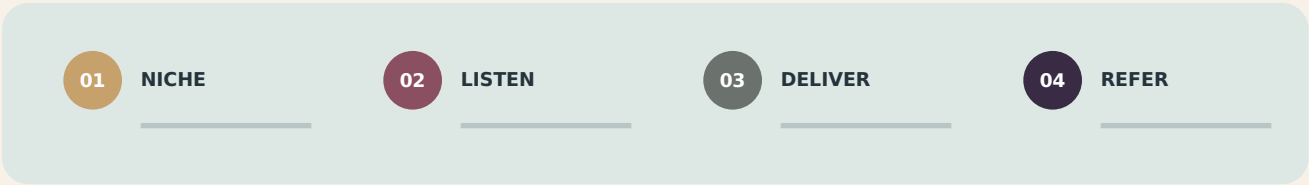


Use the source figures as the planning baseline. Replace local, personal, already-owned, and time-sensitive assumptions with actual quotes and requirements before launch.

Item	Cost	Where
LLC, EIN, bank, domain	See setup guide	—
Professional liability (E&O)	\$25-35/month for pure coaching	Three quotes, always
General liability	About \$32/month	Bundle with E&O, 10-25% off
Video conferencing	Free tier	—
Scheduling and invoicing	Free tier to start	—
Coaching credential (ICF or similar)	\$0 — optional	See below
Realistic startup	\$400-900 first year, mostly insurance	

CORE REFERENCE

Source Pricing Reference



Use the source figures as the planning baseline. Replace local, personal, already-owned, and time-sensitive assumptions with actual quotes and requirements before launch.

Tier	Price	What it is
Low	\$150-250	Single 90-minute session plus a written plan
Mid — recommended	\$1,200-2,500	A defined engagement: four to six sessions over eight weeks, with deliverables and a stated outcome
Premium	\$3,500+ per quarter	Retainer, organisation pays, includes access between sessions

WORKSHEET 01

Startup Checklist

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DONE	ACTION	OWNER DATE NOTES
☐	Define the exact coaching business customer, problem, deliverable, service area or channel, and buying trigger.	
☐	Run the source's smallest low-cost demand test before buying major equipment or committing to long-term overhead.	
☐	Write the offer, inclusions, exclusions, timing, acceptance standard, and customer responsibilities.	
☐	Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.	
☐	Confirm federal, state, local, tax, advertising, privacy, accessibility, contract, and record requirements [VERIFY].	
☐	Obtain general liability, professional liability, property, auto, workers' compensation, cyber, and client-required coverage as applicable [VERIFY].	
☐	Create intake, estimate, scope, approval, delivery, quality-control, incident, invoice, and closeout records.	
☐	Price from actual labor, materials, equipment, travel, payment fees, taxes, rework, overhead, and reserve.	
☐	Complete one paid pilot and document the result only with written customer permission.	
☐	Track the source's one metric, plus gross margin, delivery time, exceptions, referrals, and repeat work.	

WORKSHEET 02

Equipment and Budget Worksheet

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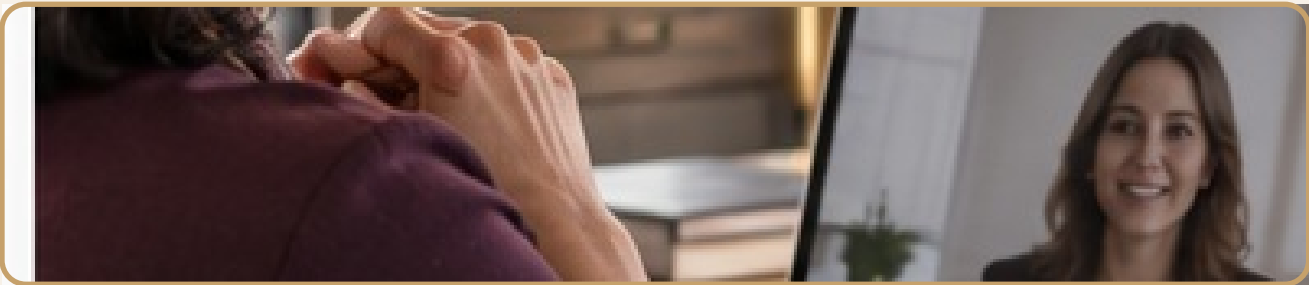
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COACHING SYSTEM | Standardize intake, scheduling, consent, privacy, payment, notes, referral, and follow-up.

ITEM	NEEDED	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL	NOTES
Formation, registrations, licensing, tax setup, contracts, and professional review [VERIFY]				
General liability, professional liability, property, auto, workers' compensation, cyber, and required coverage [VERIFY]				
Core equipment, tools, supplies, safety gear, storage, maintenance, replacement, and backups				
Computer, phone, software, scheduling, payment, e-signature, records, security, and backup				
Website, business email, phone, listings, signage, accessibility, privacy, and marketing [VERIFY]				
Original intake, estimate, scope, checklist, quality, incident, invoice, and closeout templates				
Training, credentials, continuing education, renewal, testing, and professional memberships [VERIFY]				
Vehicle, delivery, travel, fuel, mileage, parking, tolls, rental, and route costs as applicable				
Bookkeeping, merchant fees, taxes, legal review, data protection, and records [VERIFY]				
Contractor, employee, payroll, supervision, quality control, and administrative support [VERIFY]				
Working capital, refunds, rework, claims, chargebacks, downtime, deductibles, and reserve				

BUDGET CONTROL

TOTAL ESTIMATE: _____ TOTAL ACTUAL: _____ CASH RESERVE: _____

WORKSHEET 03

Pricing and Estimate Template

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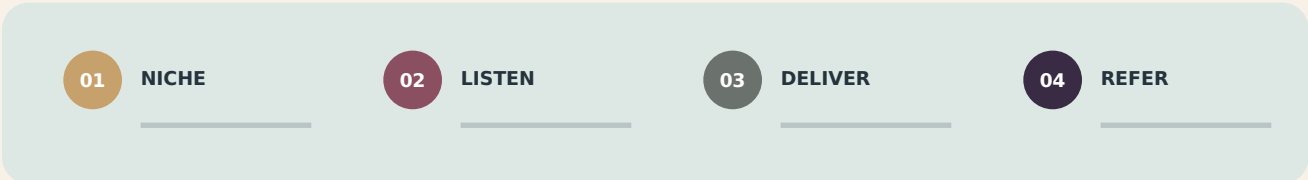
CLIENT	SERVICE LOCATION	ESTIMATE NUMBER	DATE

SERVICE OR INPUT	BASIS	AMOUNT
Discovery or intake	Customer and scope	
Core service or product	Quantity and basis	
Materials or direct costs	Actual or allowance	
Labor or professional time	Hours or fixed scope	
Equipment, delivery, or travel	Written basis	
Documentation and quality control	Included or added	
Approved option or add-on	Written basis	
Rush, after-hours, or change [VERIFY]	Written basis	
Tax or required fee [VERIFY]	Confirmed basis	
Total estimate		

TOTAL ESTIMATE	DEPOSIT OR AUTHORIZATION	VALID THROUGH

WORKSHEET 04

Coaching Agreement and Authorization



FIELD	AGREED DETAIL
Customer, legal entity, contacts, billing, service or delivery location, dates, and decision-maker	
Customer need, current condition, objective, constraints, success standard, and source documents	
Selected offer, quantities, deliverables, inclusions, exclusions, options, and completion standard	
Schedule, access, dependencies, customer preparation, approvals, delays, and communication	
Materials, equipment, substitutions, delivery, storage, utilities, security, and site conditions [VERIFY]	
Inspection, testing, checklist, documentation, acceptance, correction, and handoff	
Change orders, added work, hidden conditions, cancellation, rescheduling, and out-of-scope requests	
Fee, deposit, expenses, tax, invoicing, payment, late payment, refunds, and chargebacks [VERIFY]	
Licensing, permits, insurance, safety, privacy, accessibility, and customer-required controls [VERIFY]	
Warranty, maintenance, service response, damage, loss, limitation, and claim procedure [VERIFY]	
Confidentiality, records, photos, data, testimonials, portfolio use, retention, and deletion [VERIFY]	
Completion, acceptance, closeout, support period, complaint, dispute, termination, and signatures [VERIFY]	

Invoice Template

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BUSINESS	CLIENT	INVOICE NUMBER	DATE DUE

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	RATE	AMOUNT
Discovery or intake			
Core service or product			
Materials or direct cost			
Delivery or travel			
Documentation or quality control			
Approved option			
Approved change			
Tax or required fee [VERIFY]			

SUMMARY	AMOUNT
Subtotal	
Tax [VERIFY]	
Credits / adjustments	
Total	
Balance due	

Coaching Lead and Client Tracker

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DATE	LEAD SOURCE	NEED OR SCOPE	QUOTE	STATUS NEXT STEP

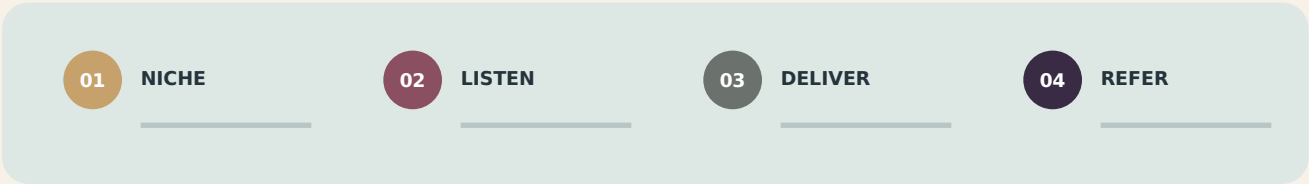
DATE	PROSPECT	OFFER	PAID	DELIVERED	REFERRAL

ONE METRIC

FREE-TO-PAID CONVERSION: _____ PAID ENGAGEMENTS: _____ REFERRALS: _____

WORKSHEET 07

Coaching Compliance and Client-Protection Page



Check licensing, zoning, and tax rules for your own city and state before starting.

CHECK	CONTROL	INITIALS NOTES
☐	Licensing, zoning, tax, advertising, privacy, accessibility, safety, environmental, and local rules are confirmed [VERIFY].	
☐	Required insurance, certificates, limits, exclusions, additional insureds, drivers, workers, and subcontractors are confirmed [VERIFY].	
☐	Written scope defines the offer, exclusions, responsibilities, schedule, acceptance, payment, warranty, and change control.	
☐	Equipment, tools, vehicles, products, software, storage, access, and backups are inspected and fit for the actual work [VERIFY].	
☐	Training, credentials, permits, inspections, records, recurring renewals, and customer requirements are current [VERIFY].	
☐	Customer, payment, property, employee, health, identity, and confidential data are minimized and protected [VERIFY].	
☐	Pricing, credentials, affiliations, testimonials, savings, results, and outcome claims are truthful and documented.	
☐	Incident, damage, spill, injury, complaint, refund, breach, interruption, and escalation procedures are written [VERIFY].	
☐	Work stops for unsafe conditions, missing authorization, inadequate coverage, prohibited scope, deception, or requirements outside competency.	

STOP RULE

Do not begin or continue until the coaching scope, credentials, privacy, records, consent, outcome claims, referral plan, and boundary from therapy, counseling, diagnosis, legal, tax, financial, or other regulated work are clear [VERIFY].