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Public or Private Certification

What is the difference and which one is right for your community?

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When considering becoming certified with Positive Approach® to Care, it is sometimes difficult to sort through the various options. If you are part of an organization that may be interested in sending more than one learner for certification, it may be helpful to understand the options available to make the best choice. There are many similarities between the public and private certifications, but also some important differences.

When you attend a public certification, you go to the location where the course is being held. There will be a variety of people there and it is valuable to share ideas with folks from different types of communities. The travel cost you incur is paid by the individual attending the course. The course format is very similar between public and private certifications with pre-course work that is to be completed before the classroom days. You will have two full classroom days of instruction and interaction with the other learners. Following the course, you are assigned to a mentor who will support your skills, build your confidence, and help you to become certified. When you return to your facility after the course, you will begin to apply some of the concepts you learned to your work setting.

The goal of the private certification course is to build a team of skilled individuals who can complement each other's roles. Some of the learners are trainers and some are coaches. Trainers bring content to groups of staff such as new employees, refresher classes for seasoned employees, staff meetings, and *Lunch and Learns*. Trainers deliver that content in a way that is sensitive to various learning styles using the Adult Experiential Learning Cycle.

Coaches drill the skills that the trainer has presented. Think about this scenario: Have you ever been to a workshop or seminar that was really excellent and you went back to your facility intending to try out many new ideas, only to become sidetracked by the daily grind, and your new ideas fizzled? The job of the coach is to keep small bits of learning alive and moving forward into new habits. There is a focus on one small piece of learning at a time, and coaches learn to provide feedback in an effective way that helps staff identify growth areas for themselves. It is this consistent attention to new skill formation that helps with sustainability.

When an organization opts for a private certification, the PAC team comes to the organization and conducts the two-day class, creating a group of trainers and a group of coaches who will learn to work together within their community. There is strength in a team that can share challenges and victories in working with staff. Time is spent with the learners discussing how they will apply their skills and work together, for instance one trainer who provides in-service training to a couple of different units and a coach on each unit to help imbed skills. One of the advantages of the private certification which is

different from the public certification is that the learners who attend are solely from that organization. This allows us to individualize and customize the training to meet needs. Also, time can be spent on the units observing residents and practicing some of the new skills.

Some organizations plan their training in phases, sometimes starting small with one person attending a public certification, then as interest grows and budget allows, bring a private certification course to build a team.

If you still have questions about the best fit for achieving certification within your organization, please connect with [Debi](#) or [Diane](#) and we will be happy to brainstorm options that will fit your goals, budget, and timeframe.