Purpose — To demonstrate, compare, and contrast the four most commonly used NSRF observation protocols.

Preparation — Choose a video 15-20 minutes in length of a teacher teaching a class. Make sure the video only shows the teacher and the students — no background music or added voiceover commentary, and the video must actually show a class being taught rather than someone talking about teaching or lecturing without any visible students. Preview the video to make sure the teacher isn’t faultless, but also isn’t struggling too much. If the video you have available is less than ideal, make note of the time signature for particularly interesting parts so you may you may fast forward to those spots for expediency’s sake. You will also need to create a focusing question for the subgroup who will be practicing the Focus Point Protocol. Make sure the room in which you’ll lead this activity is set up with appropriate technology so the entire room can view the video clearly, simultaneously.

Steps:

1. Setup activity — (5 min.) Explain that the CFG Coaches’ Handbook includes the NSRF’s four most commonly used observation protocols, and certified CFG coaches may download them and others from the NSRF website. (A CFG Coach may download and copy protocols for members of their group and other colleagues, but should not forward PDFs, republish, or broadly distribute printed copies.) The four protocols used in this activity are: Observer as Learner (p 84), Video Camera (p 86), Focus Point Protocol and Worksheet (p 87) and Interesting Moments (p 89).

   Review the purpose statements written at the top of each protocol by having volunteers read them aloud. Emphasize that NSRF observation protocols are designed for peers to observe each other and should never be used for evaluation purposes. Also, discuss the importance of the pre- and post-conference meetings in all the observation protocols.

2. Setup group — (7 min.) Divide the participants into four subgroups, and assign each subgroup one of the protocols, which they will later “teach” to the entire group. Have the subgroups gather together, read the protocol (aloud or silently), and then, as a group, answer these questions:
   
   • What is the point of this protocol?
   
   • Where should the observer focus when using this protocol?
   
   • How will notes be taken during the observation session?
   
   • Does this protocol require a preconference? If so, what should be discussed?

   During this time, give the subgroup following the Focus Point Protocol their focusing question.

3. View video — (15-20 min.) Present the video so that all subgroups watch simultaneously, while each participant takes notes according to their protocol. If the video you selected is less than ideal, you may want to fast forward to particularly interesting parts.

4. Subgroup meetings — (7-10 min.) Have the participants gather again in their subgroups. Looking
at their assigned observation protocol, each group should discuss the observed video, following the post-observation conference steps. Consider these questions in your subgroup:

- **Who should speak first, the observer or the observed?**

- **After observing the teacher in this sample video and following your assigned protocol, what would you share in the post-conference (as the observer)? Be as specific as possible (based on your notes).**

- **What kinds of things might the observed teacher share in that meeting?**

- **Is there anything you need to keep in mind when having this conversation?**

5. **Prep sharing** — (5-7 min.) Remind all participants that someone from each subgroup will share out and “teach” the other subgroups about their assigned protocol. Each subgroup should pick their spokesperson and help them prepare to:

- **State the name of their protocol and page number.**

- **Describe the purpose of the protocol and how it works.**

- **Describe the preconference.**

- **Describe the post conference by actually sharing out what they would say to the observed based on their notes from watching the video.**

- **Answer any questions that other subgroups might have about their protocol.**

6. **Share out** — (5-7 min. each subgroup = 20-28 min. total) Have each subgroup share their protocol with the whole group.

7. **Debrief** — (5 min.) Debrief using these questions.

- **What aspects of this practice activity felt most helpful to you as a CFG coach?**

- **What aspects of the observation protocol your subgroup reviewed felt most helpful? What parts felt like they may push one or both participants into their personal “danger zone”?**

- **In what ways did these observation protocols surprise and inform you?**

- **Did you notice any tendencies or patterns in what was observed, or in your response to what was observed? If so, what can you learn from those tendencies or patterns?**

- **Do you have any hopes or fears specifically around using NSRF observation protocols in your school(s)?**