



National
School
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Faculty

Harmony
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Center

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Observation Protocol #1 Video Camera

Developed in the field by educators affiliated with NSRF.

The purpose of this protocol is to develop observational reliability between the observer and the observed. An underlying assumption is that no two people observing the same event will see the same thing, as the perceptions and prior experiences of each act as a filter. This protocol provides a way for the observed and the observer to discover what the other “sees” during the observation, and to help each learn to see as much as possible.

Pre-Observation Conference

The person to be observed outlines what will be occurring during the observation.

Observation

To the greatest extent possible the observer acts like a “video camera,” scripting and making note of as many events as possible. Care should be taken to not attempt to interpret or question during the observation.

Debriefing

During the first part of the debriefing, the observer reconstructs the observation from their notes. The observed should listen carefully, taking note of any details that escaped their notice and jotting down anything remembered that is not mentioned by the observer. The observed speaks during the second phase of the debriefing, naming those details of which they were not aware and adding their own.

Note

It is important that both parties refrain from interpretation. To say that the student was bored is very different from saying that the student drew circles and designs in the margins of papers, yawned, and looked out the window. Value statements (such as, “That was a great lesson”) should also be avoided.