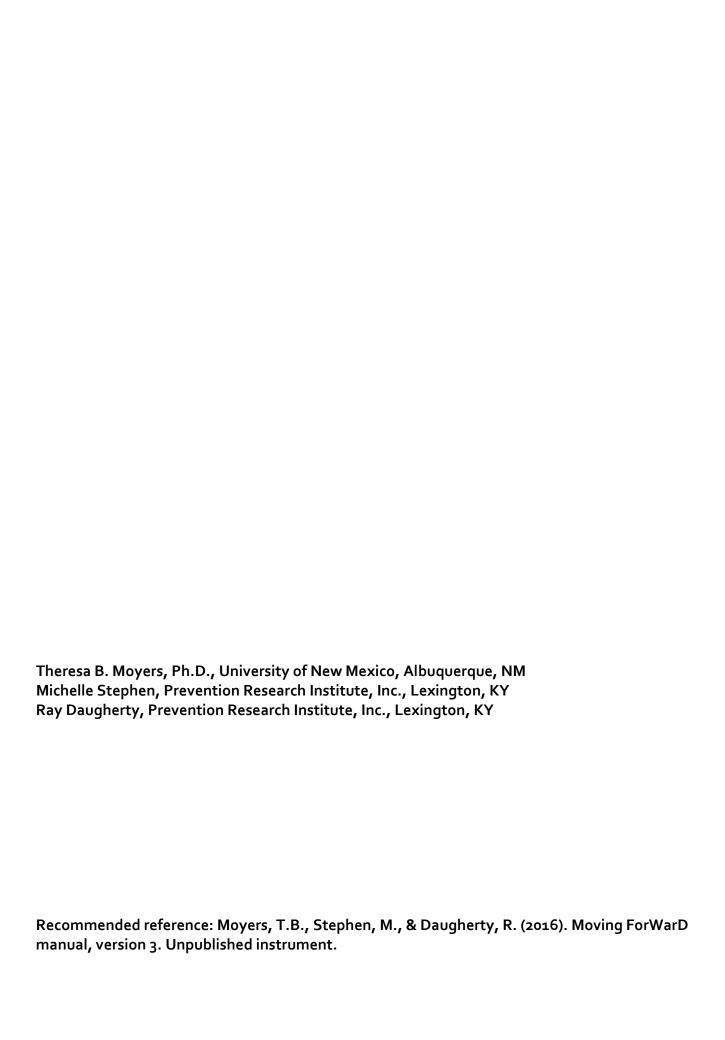
# PRIME For Life.



www.primeforlife.org

version 3



Dear Coder,

Welcome to the Prime Coder Team! We are excited for you to learn and practice the Moving ForWarD Rating Scale (MFWD RS).

Accurately measuring delivery of Prime For Life® has been a longstanding goal of PRI. With the development of the MFWD RS tool, we have reached our goal. The tool is the result of collaboration between PRI staff and Dr. Theresa Moyers who developed and tested similar tools for Motivational Interviewing. Her understanding of Prime For Life, coupled with her expertise in Motivational Interviewing, uniquely qualified her to partner with PRI to develop the MFWD RS.

As Dr. Moyers says, "Even the most effective programs for reducing high-risk alcohol and drug use are only as good as the instructors that deliver them. This is especially true when programs are complex and instructors must have excellent interpersonal skills to convey them, as in Prime For Life. Re-arrests, further progression, and additional threats to public safety can result from effective curricula delivered differently than as designed. The way the program is delivered by the instructor is a critical factor in the success of Prime For Life."

The MFWD RS rates both process and content delivery on a five-point scale ranging from low to high. Process ratings include measures of the instructor's ability to manage resistance, provide direction and convey empathy. Content ratings include conveying understanding of major concepts, adherence to the manual, using video materials, and using workbook exercises.

Preliminary and repeated testing of interrater reliability with the MFWD RS has been promising. PRI will continue to test the validity of the instrument and fine tune the tool as we learn more from coder experience.

We are indebted to Dr. Moyers for her assistance with this project and her guidance and support with revisions based on field use and coder input. We would also like to extend a special thank you to Holly Watson of Utah, Lisa Hagen of New Mexico, and Andrea Williams of Kentucky for their hard work and dedication while watching and coding literally *hours* of tape to attain the initial validation of the MFWD RS. Additionally, Katie Wilcoxson of Georgia and Curtis Weiler of Montana have also provided valuable coder input to form Version 3 changes. Finally, we would like to thank the stellar coder team of Craig Anderson, Dianne Hawyard, Lois Keister, and Cindy Watts for participating in the latest reliability examination of the tool. Without your contributions and feedback reliability would have been much more challenging to achieve!

We welcome your partnership with us in this critically important task to optimal program implementation—coding.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stephen
Director of Training

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#### **Order of Tasks**

Your job as a rater will be to rate the instructor of the Prime For Life group for one hour and twenty minutes. The first hour will be devoted to examining the instructor's competence with the content of the course, including familiarity with major concepts, use of the manual, and following the exercises as they are intended. These are the *Content Ratings* and focus exclusively on the expertise of the instructor with the program as it is described in the manual. This rating task answers the question: *What material did the instructor deliver?* 

Once the content ratings are complete, you will have twenty minutes to rate the instructor and then assign ratings in each of three global domains: 1) Finish Line Focus 2) Working With, and 3) Defusing Dissent. These are known as the *Process Ratings* and you may use any observations from either the first hour observing content or the twenty minutes observing the instructor to assess fidelity to the three process measures. When rating instructors in these global domains, however, you will ignore the instructor's knowledge of the material being presented. Instead, you will focus on rating the manner the instructor uses to convey the content. Here you will be answering a different question: *How did the instructor teach?* 

## **Content Ratings**

Please rate the instructor in the following dimensions for the section delivered. Remember you are rating the overall accuracy and comprehensiveness of the course content. Do not confuse these ratings with the instructor's interpersonal skills. Those will be rated in different scales. Here we are only interested in the instructor's *knowledge* of Prime For Life content and *adherence* to the instructor manual.

- A. Instructor conveys understanding of major concepts without confusion.
- B. Instructor **follows manual** in proper order and does not overlook relevant segments.
- C. Instructor **uses video materials** at the correct time and is able to transition between video and lecture comfortably.
- D. Instructor **uses participant workbook exercises** as indicated and pauses to solicit feedback about them.
- E. Instructor is able to complete lectures and exercises without relying excessively on the manual.
- F. Instructor avoids material not included in the manual.

## Use the following scale to rate each statement.

1	The instructor does not display any competence in this domain.
2	The instructor shows some competence in this domain, but it is less than needed to perform well. Gaps in the instructor's abilities are common, but there are some good points as well.
3	The instructor shows average competence in this domain. In general, the instructor performs significantly better in this domain than an untrained instructor would do. Some room for improvement is apparent.
4	The instructor exceeds the minimum needed to manage the group well in this domain. Few instances of poor performance were present and several examples of very good performance were apparent.
5	The instructor is exemplary in this domain. This instructor is a stand-out.
N/O Not Observed	No opportunities to observe this component. (For example, the instructor did not have an opportunity to use the workbook.)

## **Process Ratings**

When rating each of the domains, keep in mind your task is to get a "big picture" or "gestalt" view of the instructor. While particular things might cause you to raise or lower a score, your final evaluation should be based on your impression of everything about that domain "lumped into one." While you may allow details to influence your judgment, do not allow them to draw you away from the big picture as you experience it with the instructor.

#### 1. Finish Line Focus Domain

This domain measures the instructor's ability to provide the direction and structure necessary to complete the course content and bring the class "across the finish line" by the end of the training.

#### **Evidence of Finish Line Focus**

Organized
Goal oriented
Recognizing diversions and avoiding drift
Weaving participant comments and make connections
Linking concepts together for flow of the material
Uses time well

#### **Evidence for low Finish Line Focus**

Drifting away from topic

Chatting

Dwelling on detail Getting off track Needlessly lingers

#### 2. Working With Domain

This domain captures the instructor's skill at forming a respectful collaboration with participants.

#### **Evidence of Working With Evidence for low Working With** Respectful Commanding Confrontational Engaging Playful **Empowering** Overly Directive Disrespectful Yielding the expert role Talking Over Detached Using inclusive language Delivering by Rote Reading from manual

### 3. Defusing Dissent Domain

This domain captures the instructor's skill at managing active resistance within the class.

#### **Evidence for Defusing Dissent**

Responding by reflecting
Not taking resistance personally
Not arguing
Moving on
Seeing resistance as normal

#### **Evidence for low Defusing Dissent**

Arguing
Pushing back
Needing to "win the fight"
Hostile
Confrontational

#### "Finish Line Focus" Domain

This domain measures the instructor's ability to provide the direction and structure necessary to complete the course content and bring the class "across the finish line" by the end of the training.

Instructors high in Finish Line Focus have the goal of completing the course material clearly in mind at all times. They are organized and goal-oriented without being rigid. They can recognize diversions and disconnect from them graciously so that the larger learning goal of the course can be met. They can weave participant comments and questions into the current class topic or one that has been discussed previously. Because they have the "big picture", they can draw connections between modules when participants speak up and anticipate information to come. These instructors give the impression that the course structure is a worthwhile and vital point of the class.

Instructors low in Finish Line Focus are missing the big picture of the course. They are diverted into spending too much time in some content areas and not enough in others. They may spend too much time chatting with participants so that course material is neglected. These instructors give few structuring statements to participants. They do not provide transition statements from one topic to another. They have difficulty remembering and relating content from previous modules and/or anticipating material to come. These instructors do not appear to be actively planning and working toward the goal of completing the course by end of the allotted time. These instructors give the impression that the course structure is an unnecessary burden to completing the class.

#### Differentiating Finish Line Focus Domain from Related Concepts

Differentiating Finish Line Focus from Program Competence

Finish Line Focus should not be confused with knowledge of the Prime For Life program. It is true that instructors with a very poor grasp of the Prime For Life program are not likely to score well in the FLF domain. Nevertheless, instructors who have significant knowledge gaps may still show excellent skills in organizing their groups and moving them forward efficiently. Conversely, instructors with excellent program knowledge may lack the ability to direct groups so that the content is covered as intended.

Differentiating Finish Line Focus from Rigidity

Finish Line Focus does not mean that the instructor should rely on a boring rendition of the manual without any tailoring for the particular group he/she is teaching. Finish Line Focus is like having a compass so that the instructor knows the destination for the group, but can still use flexible means to arrive at that end.

#### **Examples of Finish Line Focus**

#### Example 1

*Participant*: That sensation-seeking thing reminds me of my friend Greg. He is a race car driver. That guy is awesome. But he is a little crazy. And he drinks too much for sure.

Another Participant: Did you see his race last week? He almost flipped it.

Participant: I saw that. I wonder if he was drinking during that drive.

*Instructor*: Sounds like Greg is a good example of someone who is high in sensation-seeking. We will see more in a moment about how having this characteristic might affect people like Greg's risk for alcohol problems. (OR) Based on what we have learned about this trait, how might sensation seeking influence drinking choices?) (High)

#### Example 2

*Instructor*: So that's how our psychological influences and state dependent learning can influence our drinking choices.

*Participant*: That's not what Dr. Sara says on the radio. She says it's just a choice and if you drink too much and take it out on your kids you're just a jerk.

Another participant: Easy for a woman to say that.

*Instructor*: (laughing) Well, I'd love to give my opinion about that but I can see we might get waaaayyy off track. What about it, though? Does anyone here notice how psychological influences make a difference in our own drinking choices? (High)

#### Example 3

*Instructor:* So to get our group started tonight let's go around the room and hear your story of the night you were arrested. Be sure to add in all of the details you can, your blood alcohol level, how much you drank, other drugs you used. Joe, why don't you get us started. I read your arrest report in the paper. It was pretty interesting! (Low)

#### Alternate low example

*Participant*: I don't understand this state dependent learning thing. Isn't it just being more relaxed, and that is why people do things better?

*Instructor*: Let me clarify, the window starts at about .08 to .11 for most people. SDL is different from being mildly relaxed, which can happen with people drinking in the 123 range. This BAC would occur above 123 consumption for most people.

Participant: How do they measure BAC?

*Instructor:* BAC is a measure of blood alcohol content. We talked about this in the impairment section when we looked at risk for crash and injury.

Participant: What were those risks again?

Instructor: Let's go back to that image. Re-teaches it again.

*Participant:* So blood alcohol level is one thing, how do they measure that with other drugs like marijuana?

*Instructor:* We watched a short clip on that, would you like to view it again? (Instructor goes on and on getting very diverted from original question.) (Low)

#### **Evidence of Finish Line Focus**

Organized
Goal oriented
Recognizing diversions and avoiding drift
Weaving participant comments and make connections
Linking concepts together for flow of the material
Uses time well

#### **Evidence for low Finish Line Focus**

Drifting away from topic Chatting Dwelling on detail Getting off track Needlessly lingers

## "Working With" Domain

This domain captures the instructor's skill at forming a respectful collaboration with participants.

Instructors high in the Working With domain convey a sense of genuineness and egalitarianism in their interactions with participants. They yield the expert role frequently during the course. They actively encourage participants to think of themselves as experts in their own situations. They are respectful, engaged and lively, even when using highly structured teaching content. They actively encourage participant involvement and incorporate examples and stories from participants in the class material. They do not hesitate to use appropriate examples from their own experiences to make a point about the program. Instructors high in this domain seem collaborative and even playful. They convey a sense that their job is to explore important information with participants and the way it may or may not apply to their lives.

Instructors low in the Working With domain lack a sense of excitement about and engagement in the material they are delivering. They show little interest in participants as persons and tend to overemphasize their role as an expert. They do not integrate the responses of participants when presenting didactic material and they do not adjust their examples to meet the unique vocabulary and stories of each class. Instructors low in the Working With domain appear to be "talking over" the heads of participants and may seem rote, disrespectful, or detached. These instructors convey a sense that their job is to give information to individuals who need to hear it.

#### Differentiating Working With Domain from Related Concepts

Differentiating Working With from Program Competence

Working With should not be confused with the accuracy of program content. An instructor may receive high scores in the WW domain even when competence with the course material is sub-par. Conversely, an instructor may follow the program carefully, but deliver it in a style that is low in WW.

#### Differentiating Working With from Permissiveness

Working With should not be confused with permissiveness. Instructors who collaborate with participants do not simply give up the direction and structure necessary to move through the coursework. They teach in a style that conveys that they are willing to collaborate with participants, not a spirit of "anything goes." While instructors high in Working With may give up some control of the direction of discussions, they can gently lead the class back to the relevant materials at hand. Being detached from, permissive with, or uncommitted to the course objectives does not indicate the presence of Working With.

## **Examples of Working With**

#### Example 1

*Participant*: How is the trigger level supposed to be different from tolerance? Don't you raise your trigger if you have high tolerance? I just don't get it.

*Instructor*: I'm glad you asked. A lot of people get confused by this idea and I bet others in the room are wondering too. It's kind of like two parts of a multiplication equation where each part depends on the other to get the result. Let's draw it on the board. (High)

*Instructor*: We covered that during the last session. I think it was when you were in the bathroom. Maybe you could ask someone for their notes. (Low)

#### Example 2

Participant: Well, how much is it safe to drink then if you are out partying and you don't want to get busted again for DUI? My husband says two beers is ok, but my mother says just don't drink at all.

*Instructor*: This is confusing—we hear so many things from different people. We can see what research says and figure out the answer together as we develop the low-risk guidelines. Does that sound like a good solution? (High)

*Instructor*: The only safe guideline is not to drink at all if you are going to be driving a car. It's for your own safety and everyone else on the road. (Low)

#### **Evidence of Working With**

Engaging Respectful Playful Empowering Yielding the expert role Using inclusive language

#### **Evidence for low Working With**

Commanding Confrontational
Overly Directive Disrespectful
Talking Over Detached

Delivering by Rote Reading from manual

## "Defusing Dissent" Domain

This domain captures the instructor's skill at managing active resistance within the class.

Instructors high in this domain respond to participant resistance by stepping aside. They do not seem threatened by participant dissent and are likely to acknowledge or deflect it. They may make opportunities to re-visit alternative viewpoints once they have been expressed in class, to head off dissent. These instructors do not try to argue participants into a different viewpoint. They may try to find the grain of truth in what the participant is saying and then move on. They accept that participants must decide for themselves whether they will change and do not hesitate to acknowledge that explicitly. These instructors view participant resistance as normal.

Instructors low in this domain meet participant resistance by pushing back. Their responses to participant dissent convey a sense of being personally offended, threatened, or deeply concerned. They lack the ability to sidestep participant objections and move forward with ease. These instructors do not typically acknowledge the participant's option not to change and, when they do, it may be in a half-hearted manner. They insist on their own worldview when participants challenge them and cannot let the participant "win the fight." They may convey their confrontation as being for the participant's own good. These instructors view participant resistance as an indication of a problem.

## Differentiating Defusing Dissent Domain from Related Concepts

Differentiating Defusing Dissent from Finish Line Focus

Instructors may be very good at managing the resistance of the class but still not have the ability to structure and organize the material in a way that moves it along toward the goal of completing the program. Once the instructor has defused resistance, other skills will be needed to manage the course well.

Differentiating Defusing Dissent from Program Competence

Care should be taken not to confuse adherence to the program, or bypassing of it, with defusing dissent. Instructors may find it necessary to depart from the program in order to defuse dissent skillfully. They may also choose to emphasize or move on to a particular knowledge area in the program to do so.

Differentiating Defusing Dissent from Passive Acceptance

Instructors should not use ignoring of rebellious behavior as their only strategy. While ignoring such behavior may be appropriate at times, in general, the instructor should address the resistance by acknowledging it and offering a nonjudgmental appraisal if possible. Allowing rebellious participants to dominate or bully the class should not be confused with the skill of redirecting resistance.

#### **Examples of Defusing Dissent**

#### Example 1

*Instructor*: I know we've had some discussion about the option of o123 and the pros and cons of it. Let's make a chart with those categories right up here on the board. Paul, I recall that you were pretty clear about the down side of some of the low-risk choices we discussed, so I wonder if you would start us out with a few of the cons? (High)

#### Example 2

Participant: Well, I don't even have a drinking problem. I got a DUI the very first time I drove drunk. So what? Now I'm supposed to be abstinent for life? Forget it.

*Instructor*: It looks like lifelong abstinence isn't a choice you are willing to make, but you mentioned you would consider some changes to avoid future problems. I wonder what seems most important from your list. (High)

*Instructor*: Most people who get arrested for DUI have driven drunk at least eight times before. Even if you didn't know it, you probably did drive drunk at least one other time. (Low)

#### **Evidence for Defusing Dissent**

Responding by reflecting
Not taking resistance personally
Not arguing
Moving on
Seeing resistance as normal

#### **Evidence for low Defusing Dissent**

Arguing
Pushing back
Needing to "win the fight"
Hostile
Confrontational

For each of the domains listed, instructors will be rated on a 5 point scale. The anchor points for the scales are as follows:

1	The instructor does not display any competence in this domain.
2	The instructor shows some competence in this domain, but it is less than needed to perform well. Gaps in the instructor's abilities are common, but there are some good points as well.
3	The instructor shows average competence in this domain. In general, the instructor performs significantly better in this domain than an untrained instructor would do. Some room for improvement is apparent.
4	The instructor exceeds the minimum needed to manage the group well in this domain. Few instances of poor performance were present and several examples of very good performance were apparent.
5	The instructor is exemplary in this domain. This instructor is a stand-out.
N/O Not Observed	No opportunities to observe this component. (For example, the instructor did not have an opportunity to use the workbook.)

## **Rate the Group**

This scale asks you to rate the overall difficulty of the group encountered by the instructor. Use your experience with and knowledge of groups to assign a score to the difficulty of this particular group. Use the following scale, keeping in mind that your main job is not to rate the group, but the instructor. The group scale will be used to compute the scores you give to the instructor.

- 1 Impossible
- 2 Harder than average
- 3 Average
- 4 Relatively easy
- 5 Piece of Cake

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Question: What is considered an average score for the instructor?

**Answer**: Instructors are rated on a 5-point scale. Three is considered an average score (not especially good, not especially bad). Raters should BEGIN rating each domain assuming a score of 3 then moving up or down from there based on what they observe.

Question: What is a passing score for the instructor?

**Answer:** There is no passing score. Ratings of instructors take into account many different sources of information and not just the domain scores. If you have a strong opinion about whether the instructor is suitable to continue running Prime For Life groups, simply note that in your ratings sheet and then assign the score for the domain as you normally would. Instructors can be high or low in any one domain and still do well or poorly in the evaluation process, overall.

Question: What if I notice that an instructor is high in one element of a domain, but low in another? Should I balance it out or just assign the higher or lower score?

**Answer:** Your score should be based on the overall (perhaps "average") of the instructor's ability. Low scores on one part of the domain can be balanced by high scores in another. For example, in the Working With domain, instructors low in warmth and playfulness can still be high in giving up the expert role. Since both are part of the Working With domain, that instructor would receive a score that reflects both of those tendencies. Remember that each domain is intended to capture a cluster of behaviors that tend to be related but do not always occur together. It is not necessary to see all of the elements of any domain in any one instructor in any one class, though it is not unlikely. Also, you might notice that instructors high in Working With may not have as much Dissent to Defuse. This speaks to their high Working With skill set.

Question: What if the instructor has a pretty good rating overall, but one or two events are inappropriate?

**Answer:** It could be that a few (or even one) events are so disturbing and violate the spirit of the domain, that the instructor might receive a very low score for that reason alone. This is what the rater must decide: how much does this contaminate the spirit of what I am rating? If the rater feels that the overall score should not be compromised too much because of a single incident but is still troubled by it, the rater should note it in the margin of the rating materials and assign whatever score seems appropriate.

Question: How do I know if I am rating in the same way as others who are observing instructors with the same system? I want to be fair.

Answer: You will be provided with initial training to help you rate in a manner that is consistent and fair. Ongoing meetings in which all raters score one example and then discuss their results will be essential to keep you from "drifting" into your own personal system. You should also be receiving regular feedback about how your scoring fits with others. Nevertheless, with any system of this type, some disagreement between coders is expected. We call these disagreements "error variance" and we strive to reduce it, not eliminate it. We understand that if you are rating accurately according to your own view, you will disagree with fellow raters some of the time. We account for this statistically and you should not allow it to worry you. Simply do your best to follow the rules as they are in the manual and the meetings. Be ready to explain why you assigned the numbers you did. Be ready to improve your scoring as you learn more about the rules in meetings and with the feedback you receive. Perfection is not ever expected.

Question: What if I see something that needs to be rated, but it does not really "fit" in any of the domains?

**Answer**: Many things instructors do will not be captured in your ratings. This is because we are choosing to rate only a few things, but to rate them well and reliably. You can certainly make note of things that seem especially important to you but do not seem to "fit" in this system, especially if they impact the instructor's ability to continue conducting Prime For Life groups. Once noted, disregard and rate the instructor only on the domains provided.

Question: What if I know something fits in one of the domains, but I am not sure which one? What if it could go in two domains? How do I choose?

**Answer:** This often tells us our system and manual need to be improved. This is expected and your feedback will be essential to help that along. As with all examples of confusion in using this system, write your examples down and give feedback to your coding manager. For the rating at hand: if you can, make a decision and document how and why you did it. If you cannot, leave the rating blank and call the coding manager.

Question: What happens if I have to score an instructor lower in one domain but he/she is good in another? I don't want to penalize him/her.

**Answer:** The domains are designed so that instructors can do well in all of them with the average group. Nevertheless, an instructor might have to sacrifice quality in one domain (for example Working With) in order to maintain it in another (for example, Finish Line Focus). It is the instructor's job to worry about how they will accomplish that. Your job is not to explain why the instructor could not achieve a better rating, but simply to rate what you see.

Question: What if the instructor has a difficult group? Should the ratings reflect how well the instructor is coping with a tough crowd?

**Answer:** Yes, your ratings may give some consideration to an especially difficult group. Nevertheless, we expect PRI instructors to handle tough groups as a matter of course. Even very tough groups should not cause instructors to abandon competence in the domains selected for rating. Alternatively, relatively easy groups should give instructors a chance to shine. Be cautious not to give instructors too much leeway just because groups are difficult. Remember, you have a chance to rate the difficulty of each group with your domain ratings and this is taken into consideration in evaluating an instructor's overall performance.

Question: What if I am stuck between two numbers and I cannot make a decision. It is truly a coin toss.

**Answer:** Most of the time, you will be able to rate what you hear using one of the numbers on the scale. Occasionally, and this should not be often, you will encounter situations where you are stuck "on the fence" and you feel as if either answer would be equally right. In the case where you cannot decide between one number and another, you should give the higher rating.

Question: I want to rate an instructor a 4.5. Can I do that?

**Answer:** It is necessary to code a solid number. In general, you should assign the higher number if both numbers seem equally "right".

Question: If an instructor is a very fast talker, do I score them down in Finish Line Focus?

**Answer:** This can be confusing. A fast rate of speaking can be a sign of high Finish Line Focus. If it is too fast and you observe anxiety in the audience, no time for questions, or an overall feeling of being rushed, code down for Working With. A fast talking instructor may score high in Finish Line Focus because they will finish the program content by the end of the time allotted. They will likely score lower in Working With because they are talking so fast that they are missing connections with the group.

Question: What if I do not have any evidence for a process or content domain such as Defusing Dissent? What if nothing happens to give me clues? Or, what if the segment does not have a workbook activity? How do I code that?

**Answer:** We cannot code what we do not have evidence for. If nothing happens to give you evidence for or against something, you can code N/O- Not Observed.

Question: What does "uses time well" in the FLF domain mean?

**Answer:** If the instructor is taking more time than typical in a segment they should be using their time purposefully and productively. For "typical" times see program syllabus time allotments.

Question: Why can't I rate N/O for FLF and WW?

**Answer:** If FLF or WW is "not observed" that is evidence for movement from 3 lower on the rating scale.

## **PRI Quality Assurance Rating Sheet**

Date:			Rater:		
Instructor:			Location:		
Content Ratings					
	_	 			

A. Instructor **conveys understanding of major concepts** without confusion.

Low				High
1	2	3	4	5

B. Instructor **follows manual** in proper order and does not overlook relevant segments.

Low				High
1	2	3	4	5

C. Instructor **uses video materials** at the correct time and is able to transition between video and lecture comfortably.

Low				High	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

D. Instructor **uses participant workbook exercises** as indicated and pauses to solicit feedback about them.

Low				High	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

E. Instructor is able to complete lectures and exercises without relying excessively on the manual.

Low				High
1	2	3	4	5

F. Instructor avoids material not included in the manual.

Low				High
1	2	3	4	5

## **Process Ratings**

#### A. "Finish Line Focus" Domain

Low				High
1	2	3	4	5

## B. "Working With" Domain

Low				High
1	2	3	4	5

## C. "Defusing Dissent" Domain

Low				High	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

## Rate the Group

Impossible	Harder than Average	Average	Relatively Easy	Piece of Cake
1	2	3	4	5

#### **Rater Notes and Observations**