

Moving For WarD  
For  
Prime Solutions®

(Version I)

Dear Coder,

Welcome to the Prime Coder Team! We are excited for you to learn and practice the Moving ForWarD rating scale for Prime Solutions® (MFWD-PS).

Accurately measuring delivery of Prime Solutions (PS) is an important step to ensuring effective counselor training in and implementation of PS. We developed, in conjunction with Dr. Theresa Moyers, the original Moving ForWarD (MFWD) instrument for use with Prime For Life (PFL). Because of its focus on group dynamics, this instrument is also well-suited for use with PS. However, certain alterations were necessary to make MFWD-S fit the treatment setting. Changes you will notice in this manual include: (a) revised content areas for review; (b) outlines for use in these content reviews and guidance on how to use these outlines; (c) process domain descriptions and examples targeted for treatment settings; (d) a Prime Solutions-specific rating form; and (e) examples of completed feedback forms.

MFWD-PS rates both process and content delivery on a five-point scale ranging from poor to excellent. Process ratings include measures of the counselor's ability to defuse dissent in the group, provide direction and convey empathy. Content ratings, refocused to reflect the content and flexible standardization present in PS, include conveying major concepts and in a manner that is accurate, using video materials comfortably, integrating workbook activities into the session and eliciting client discussion about these, using video scenarios to practice skills and avoiding material not relevant to the session.

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. Additionally, Katie Wilcoxson of Georgia and Curtis Weiler of Montana have also provided valuable coder input to subsequent revisions.

As Dr. Moyers says, "Even the most effective programs for reducing high-risk alcohol and drug use are only as good as the counselors that deliver them. This is especially true when programs are complex and counselors must have excellent interpersonal skills to convey them..." This is as true for PS as it is for PFL. We welcome your partnership with us in this important part of helping clients live the life they wish.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michelle Stephen  
Director of Training and Development



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## Order of Tasks

Your job as a rater will be to observe the counselor of the Prime Solutions session – individual or group - for a 30-minute segment of a Session Topic. The first 15 minutes will be devoted to examining the counselor’s competence with the content of the program, 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 counselor with the program as it is described in the manual. This rating task answers the question: **What material did the counselor deliver?**

Once the content rating portion is complete, you will have 15 minutes to observe the counselor 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 15 minutes observing content or the 15 minutes observing the counselor to assess fidelity to the three process measures. When rating counselors in these global domains, however, you will ignore the counselor’s knowledge of the material being presented. Instead, you will focus on rating the manner the counselor uses to convey the content. Here you will be answering a different question: **How did the counselor facilitate?**

## Content Ratings

Please rate the counselor on the following dimensions as you listen to their recording. Remember you are rating the overall accuracy and comprehensiveness of the program content. Do not confuse these ratings with the counselor's interpersonal skills. Those will be rated in different scales. Here we are only interested in the counselor's **knowledge** of Prime Solutions and **adherence** to the counselor manual.

- A. Counselor **presents key concepts** from Session Topic
- B. Counselor **conveys major concepts** accurately
- C. Counselor **uses images to guide** session.
- D. Counselor **uses participant workbook exercises** and elicits discussion about them.
- E. Counselor **employs video scenarios to practice skills**.
- F. Counselor **avoids material not relevant to this Session Topic**.



**Use the following scale to rate each statement.**

On each of the statements we rate counselors on a 5-point scale. There are two sets of labels for each point on the scale. The first reflect the rating form for research settings. The second are from a form used in coaching and supervision settings. The descriptors are the same. The two forms can be found at the end of this manual.

1	Poor/ Needs Focused Attention	The counselor does not display any competence in this domain.
2	Below Average/ Needs Work	The counselor shows some competence in this domain, but it is less than needed to perform well. Gaps in the counselor’s abilities are common, but there are some good points as well.
3	Average/ Meets Standards	The counselor shows average competence in this domain. In general, the counselor performs significantly better in this domain than an untrained counselor would do. Some room for improvement is apparent.
4	Above Average/ Exceeds Standards	The counselor 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	Excellent/ Excellent	The counselor is exemplary in this domain. This counselor is a stand-out.
	Not Observed	No opportunities to observe this component. (For example, the counselor did not have an opportunity to use an exercise or video.)

# Process Ratings

When rating each of the domains, keep in mind your task is to get a “big picture” or “gestalt” view of the counselor. While particular things might cause you to raise or lower a score, your final evaluation should be based on your impression of everything you observed 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 counselor.

## 1. Finish Line Focus Domain

*This domain measures counselors abilities to provide the direction and structure necessary to complete the Session Topic and bring clients with them “to the finish line.”*

### PRIME Traditions Consistent with Finish Line Focus

- Maintaining the consistent theme of the Session Topic
- Using images and outlines to structure session rather than reading from the on-line manual
- Understanding of major concepts in course program
- Using session elements such as Checking In and Take Away

Evidence of Finish Line Focus	Evidence of low Finish Line Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organized</li><li>• Goal oriented</li><li>• Recognizing diversions and avoiding drift</li><li>• Weaving client comments and make connections</li><li>• Linking concepts together for flow of the material</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allowing the group to drift off topic</li><li>• Chatting</li><li>• Missing the big picture</li><li>• Dwelling on detail</li><li>• Getting off track</li></ul>

## 2. Working With Domain

*This domain captures the counselor’s skill at forming a respectful collaboration with clients.*

### PRIME Traditions Consistent with Working With in Solutions

- Eye contact (and with all clients, if in a group)
- Greeting clients at beginning of sessions
- Using words and integrating examples from clients’ lives to tailor the session to the clients
- Asking questions to engage clients in discussion and adjusting approach as needed
- Avoiding lecturing, instead encouraging clients to supply meaning to concepts
- Limiting self disclosure
- Using reflective listening as a key skill

Evidence of Working With		Evidence of low Working With	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging</li> <li>• Genuine</li> <li>• Playful</li> <li>• Yielding the expert role</li> <li>• Eliciting client knowledge or views</li> <li>• Using inclusive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm</li> <li>• Respectful</li> <li>• Empowering</li> <li>• Using reflective listening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commanding</li> <li>• Overly directive</li> <li>• Talking over</li> <li>• Lecturing</li> <li>• Drawing conclusions for client</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confrontational</li> <li>• Disrespectful</li> <li>• Detached</li> <li>• Cold</li> </ul>

### 3. Defusing Dissent Domain

*This domain captures the counselor’s skill at managing active resistance within the session.*

#### PRIME Traditions Consistent with Defusing Dissent

- Normalizing difficulty of change process
- Hearing grievances without eliciting more complaints
- Listening with empathy
- Being non-judgmental
- Moving into present and future focus

Evidence for Defusing Dissent	Evidence of low Defusing Dissent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding by reflecting to dissent</li> <li>• Not taking resistance personally</li> <li>• Not arguing</li> <li>• Shifting focus</li> <li>• Emphasizing personal choice</li> <li>• Seeing dissent as normal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arguing</li> <li>• Pushing back</li> <li>• Needing to “win the fight”</li> <li>• Hostile</li> <li>• Confrontational</li> </ul>

## **“Finish Line Focus” Domain**

*This domain measures the counselor’s ability to provide the direction and structure necessary to present the Session Topic and bring the class “across the finish line” by the end of the session.*

Counselors high in Finish Line Focus have the goal of using the program material clearly in mind at all times. They are organized and goal-oriented without being rigid. They can integrate client material and new considerations, while bringing these into the session topic focus. They recognize that a rich Session Topic may need to be spread over more than one session. However, they also identify diversions and disconnect from them graciously so that the larger goals of the session can be met and so topics are not extended simply by a lack of focus. They can weave client comments and questions into the current session topic or one that has been discussed previously. Because they have the “big picture” they can draw connections between sessions and clients. These counselors give the impression that the session structure is a worthwhile and vital part of the session.

Counselors low in Finish Line Focus are missing the big picture of the session topic. 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 clients so that session topic material is neglected. These counselors fail to provide direction to clients. They do not provide transition statements from one topic to another. They have difficulty remembering and relating content from previous sessions and/or anticipating material to come. These counselors do not appear to be actively planning and working toward the goal of completing the session topic by end of the allotted time or they rush and do not bring the group over the finish line. They fail to allot adequate time for the Take Away activity or devote too much time to Checking In. These counselors give the impression that the course structure is an unnecessary burden to completing the session.

### **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 Solutions program. It is true that counselors with a very poor grasp of the Prime Solutions program are unlikely to score well in the FLF domain. Nevertheless, counselors who have significant knowledge gaps may still show excellent skills in organizing their groups or client and moving them forward efficiently. Conversely, counselors with excellent program knowledge may lack the ability to direct the groups or client so the content is covered as intended.

#### *Differentiating Finish Line Focus from Rigidity*

Finish Line Focus does not mean relying on a lecture format to insure delivery of concepts. Concepts should be tailored to the particular group or individual at hand with opportunity for client discussion and reflection on the concepts. Finish Line Focus is like having a compass so that the counselor knows the destination for the group, but can still use flexible means to arrive at that end.

## Examples of Finish Line Focus

### Example 1

*Client1:* I don't really miss it. I'm just kind of a go with the flow sort of guy. That's what got me in trouble. Those beer ads don't bug me.

*Client2:* Oh, man. Those Super Bowl ads kill me. Women, beer – dang!

*Client3:* Did you see that Doritos ad? That kid cracked me up.

*Counselor:* The ads certainly do affect us differently and for some of us they can be really powerful. When they do affect you, what do you notice? (High)

*Counselor:* That was pretty funny. I also liked the car one. That really tickled me. (Low)

### Example 2

*Counselor:* So craving can sneak up on us and influence our drinking choices.

*Client1:* 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.

*Client2:* Easy for a woman to say that.

*Counselor:* (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? How have you noticed craving sneaking up on you? (High)

*Counselor:* It sounds like the source may influence how you think about the message – whether or not you think it's true. (Low)

## PRIME Traditions Consistent with Finish Line Focus

- Maintaining the consistent theme of the Session Topic
- Using images and outlines to structure session rather than reading from the on-line manual
- Understanding of major concepts in course program
- Using session elements such as Checking In and Take Away

Evidence of Finish Line Focus	Evidence of low Finish Line Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organized</li> <li>• Goal oriented</li> <li>• Recognizing diversions and avoiding drift</li> <li>• Weaving client comments and make connections</li> <li>• Linking concepts together for flow of the material</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing the group to drift off topic</li> <li>• Chatting</li> <li>• Missing the big picture</li> <li>• Dwelling on detail</li> <li>• Getting off track</li> </ul>

## **“Working With” Domain**

*This domain captures the counselor’s skill at forming a respectful collaboration with clients.*

Counselors high in the Working With domain convey a sense of genuineness and egalitarianism in their interactions with clients. They yield the expert role frequently during the group. They actively encourage clients to think of themselves as experts in their own situations. They are respectful, engaged and lively, even when using structured session content. They actively encourage client involvement and incorporate examples and stories from clients in the session topic material. Counselors high in this domain seem warm and even playful. They convey a sense that their job is to explore important information with clients and the way it may or may not apply to their lives.

Counselors low in the Working With domain lack a sense of excitement about and engagement in the material they are delivering and the sessions they’re conducting. They show little interest in clients as persons and tend to overemphasize their role as an expert. They do not integrate the responses of clients when presenting material and they do not adjust their examples to meet the unique vocabulary and stories of each session. Counselors low in the Working With domain appear to be “talking at” clients, rather than engaging the clients in exploration of the material. While they may seem rote, disrespectful, cold, or detached, they may also be warm and provide lots of advice and tell people how to understand the connection between their choices and alcohol or drug use problems. These counselors 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. A counselor may receive high scores in the WW domain even when competence with the session topic is sub-par. Conversely, a counselor may follow the session topic carefully, but deliver it in a style that is low in WW.

#### *Differentiating Working With from Warmth*

Warmth is a component of the Working With domain, but should not weigh excessively in the rating. Warmth varies across individuals, and particularly across genders. Individuals may be excessively friendly and even gushy, without exhibiting the true partnership called for in the WW domain. Conversely individuals may be a bit reserved yet still show the collaboration and egalitarianism needed for a high WW score. Be careful not to penalize male counselors for being less warm than female counselors.

#### *Differentiating Working With from Permissiveness*

Working With should not be confused with permissiveness. Counselors who collaborate with clients do not simply give up the direction and structure necessary to move through the session topic. They facilitate in a style that conveys that they are collaborating with clients, but not in a spirit of “anything

goes.” Counselors high in Working With guide the direction of discussions and gently lead the group or individual to the relevant materials at hand. Being detached, permissive, or uncommitted to the session objectives does not indicate the presence of Working With.

## Examples of Working With

### Example 1

*Client:* I’m just not very good with using imagery, so I have a hard time seeing how using an image of a tiger or a sunny beach is going to help me when I’m confronted with someone offering me a beer.

*Counselor:* You – and perhaps some other folks in the group – are having some trouble wrapping your head around how this tool might be useful. At the same time, you had mentioned earlier how you picture yourself in a different life. Tell me about how that picturing works for you. (High)

*Counselor:* Well, I think the problem is you don’t have a clear enough image. Let’s work on that and my guess is this will work much better for you. It’s been my experience that when people are clear the tool works. (Low)

### Example 2

*Client:* Well, spirituality has never been a part of my life. I can see that it works for some people and I’m not opposed to it. I’ve just never had much use for organized religion. It seems like a lot of bad stuff has been perpetrated in the name of religion.

*Counselor:* You’re not against it. You just need to see how it might fit for you. How about for the rest of you? (High)

*Counselor:* I think you might be focusing a little too much on the organized religion element. There are other ways people express spirituality. (Low)

### Example 3

*Counselor:* Research indicates having three people who support our new choices about drinking or drug use is really critical to our being able to sustain those decisions. What’s your sense about why that may be the case? How could you see this fitting into your situation? (High)

*Counselor:* Research indicates having three people who support our new choices about drinking or drug use is really critical to our being able to sustain those decisions. Let’s go around the room and hear what your new choice is, the names of three people who will support you in that choice and specific information about how they will support you and what you will ask them to do. Let’s start with you, Javier. What’s your new choice about alcohol and what three people will support you? (Low)



## PRIME Traditions Consistent with Working With in Solutions

- Eye contact (and with all clients if in a group)
- Greeting clients at beginning of sessions
- Using words and integrating examples from clients' lives to tailor the session to the clients
- Asking questions to engage clients in discussion and adjusting approach as needed
- Avoiding lecturing, instead encouraging clients to supply meaning to concepts
- Limiting self disclosure
- Using reflective listening as a key skill

Evidence of Working With		Evidence of low Working With	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging</li> <li>• Genuine</li> <li>• Playful</li> <li>• Yielding the expert role</li> <li>• Eliciting client knowledge or views</li> <li>• Using inclusive language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm</li> <li>• Respectful</li> <li>• Empowering</li> <li>• Using reflective listening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commanding</li> <li>• Overly directive</li> <li>• Talking over</li> <li>• Lecturing</li> <li>• Drawing conclusions for client</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confrontational</li> <li>• Disrespectful</li> <li>• Detached</li> <li>• Cold</li> </ul>

## **“Defusing Dissent” Domain**

*This domain captures the counselor’s skill at managing discord within clients.*

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

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

### **Differentiating Defusing Dissent Domain from Related Concepts**

#### *Differentiating Defusing Dissent from Finish Line Focus*

Counselors may be very good at managing the dissent of the group or individual 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 session topic. Once the counselor has defused dissent, 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 session topic, or bypassing of it, with defusing dissent. Counselors 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 Session Topic program or in other topics to do so.

#### *Differentiating Defusing Dissent from Passive Acceptance*

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

## Examples of Defusing Dissent

### Example 1

*Client:* I just am not convinced that I need to be here. I know the court believes I need to be here and my wife does as well, but that doesn't mean I do.

*Counselor:* You're still trying to sort out what you think and you're very clear that you want to make up your own mind. (High)

*Counselor:* Well, you've got a problem then because this treatment is for people who want to make changes in their alcohol and drug use. (Low)

*Counselor:* Maybe you haven't hit bottom yet. (Low)

### Example 2

*Client:* 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.

*Counselor:* You're really struggling with these ideas and you're clear that you want to be in control of your choices. (High)

*Counselor:* 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)

## PRIME Traditions Consistent with Defusing Dissent

- Normalizing difficulty of change process
- Hearing grievances without eliciting more complaints
- Listening with empathy
- Being non-judgmental
- Moving into present and future focus

Evidence for Defusing Dissent	Evidence of low Defusing Dissent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding by reflecting to dissent</li> <li>• Not taking resistance personally</li> <li>• Not arguing</li> <li>• Shifting focus</li> <li>• Emphasizing personal choice</li> <li>• Seeing dissent as normal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arguing</li> <li>• Pushing back</li> <li>• Needing to "win the fight"</li> <li>• Hostile</li> <li>• Confrontational</li> </ul>

**Use the following scale to rate each domain.**

For each of the domains listed, we rate counselors on a 5-point scale. There are two sets of labels for each point on the scale. The first reflect the rating form for research settings. The second are from a form used in coaching and supervision settings. The descriptors are the same. The two forms can be found at the end of this manual.

1	Poor/ Needs Focused Attention	The counselor does not display any competence in this domain.
2	Below Average/ Needs Work	The counselor shows some competence in this domain, but it is less than needed to perform well. Gaps in the counselor’s abilities are common, but there are some good points as well.
3	Average/ Meets Standards	The counselor shows average competence in this domain. In general, the counselor performs significantly better in this domain than an untrained counselor would do. Some room for improvement is apparent.
4	Above Average/ Exceeds Standards	The counselor 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	Excellent	The counselor is exemplary in this domain. This counselor is a stand-out.
	Not Observed	No opportunities to observe this component. (For example, there was no dissent in evidence.)

## Rate the Group or Individual

In this area you will indicate whether this was a group or individual session. Place a check mark next to the appropriate category on the form.

This scale asks you to rate the overall difficulty of the group or individual encountered by the counselor. Use your experience with and knowledge of mandated clients/treatment 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 or client, but the counselor. The group scale will be used to compute the scores you give to the counselor.

- 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 counselor?*

**Answer:** Counselors 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 counselor?*

**Answer:** Counselors must receive a score of three or higher on each domain to reach the standard set for Solutions. Ratings of counselors take into account many different sources of information and not just the domain scores. If you have a strong opinion about whether the counselor is suitable to continue running Prime Solutions sessions, simply note that in your ratings sheet and then assign the score for the domain as you normally would. Counselors can be high or low in any one domain and overall, still do well or poorly in an evaluation process.

**Question:** *What if I notice that a counselor 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 counselor’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 counselors 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 counselor 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 counselor in any one session, though it is not unlikely. Also, you might notice that counselors 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 counselor has a pretty good rating overall, but one or two events are inappropriate?*

**Answer:** It could be that a few events (or even one) are so disturbing and violate the spirit of the domain, that the counselor 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 counselors 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 you’re 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 counselors 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 a note of things that seem especially important to you but do not seem to “fit” in this system, especially if they impact the counselor’s ability to continue conducting Prime Solutions sessions. Once noted, disregard and rate the counselor 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, documenting 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 a counselor 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 counselors can do well in all of them *with the average group or client*. Nevertheless, a counselor 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 counselor’s job to worry about how they will accomplish that. Your job is not to explain why the counselor could or could not achieve a better rating, but simply to rate what you hear.

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

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

**Question:** *What if I am stuck in the middle of 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 a counselor 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 a counselor 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 the group may not participate (i.e., discussion, comments or questions) or have an overall feeling of being rushed, code down for Working With. A fast talking counselor may score high in Finish Line Focus because they will finish the session topic 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/client.

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

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





**Question:** *I'm not sure which rating form I should use. I am doing this for research purposes, but counselors will also receive feedback. How do I decide?*

**Answer:** We recommend using the Coaching Form any time you anticipate feedback may be given to counselors about their work. If you're unsure, then we suggest defaulting to the coaching form. They use the same descriptors and decision rules, but the labels on the Coaching Form are much more counselor friendly.

# Moving ForWard Rating Sheet - Prime Solutions (MFWD-PS)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Rater: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Session Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

## Content Ratings

A. Counselor **presents key concepts** from Session Topic.

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

B. Counselor **conveys major concepts** accurately

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

C. Counselor **uses images to guide** session.

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

D. Counselor **uses participant workbook exercises** and elicits discussion about them.

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

E. Counselor **employs video scenarios to practice skills**.

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

F. Counselor **avoids material not relevant to this Session Topic**.

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

## Process Ratings

### A. "Finish Line Focus" Domain

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Provide comments that support your FLF rating..

### B. "Working With" Domain

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Provide comments that support your WW rating.

### C. "Defusing Dissent" Domain

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Provide comments that support your WW rating.

Rate the Group (\_\_\_\_) or Individual (\_\_\_\_) (Check one)

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

## Rater Notes and Observations

# Moving ForWard Rating Sheet - Prime Solutions (MFWD-PS) - Coaching

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Rater: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Session Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

## Content Ratings

A. Counselor **presents key concepts** from Session Topic.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

B. Counselor **conveys major concepts** accurately

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

C. Counselor **uses images to guide** session.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

D. Counselor **uses participant workbook exercises** and elicits discussion about them.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

E. Counselor **employs video scenarios to practice skills**.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

F. Counselor **avoids material not relevant to this Session Topic**.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

NO = Not Observed

## Process Ratings

### A. "Finish Line Focus" Domain

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

### B. "Working With" Domain

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

### C. "Defusing Dissent" Domain

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Rate the Group (\_\_\_\_) or Individual (\_\_\_\_) (Check one)

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

## Rater Notes and Observations



**Under Rater Notes and Observations we suggest using the following format to provide overall feedback and suggestions for continued work by the counselor.**

## Moving ForWarD Rating Sheet - Prime Solutions (MFWD-PS)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Rater: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Session Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

### Content Ratings

A. Counselor **presents key concepts** from Session Topic.

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

B. Counselor **conveys major concepts** accurately

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

C. Counselor **uses images to guide** session.

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

D. Counselor **uses participant workbook exercises** and elicits discussion about them.

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

E. Counselor **employs video scenarios to practice skills**.

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

F. Counselor **avoids material not relevant to this Session Topic**.

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Insert notes if needed to explain rating

## Process Ratings

### A. "Finish Line Focus" Domain

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Provide comments that support your FLF rating..

### B. "Working With" Domain

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Provide comments that support your WW rating.

### C. "Defusing Dissent" Domain

Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Provide comments that support your WW rating.

Rate the Group (\_\_\_\_) or Individual (\_\_\_\_) (Check one)

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

## Rater Notes and Observations

## **Examples of Completed Rated Sheets for Coaching Purposes**

There are two examples of completed rating forms. These forms represent the format used for coaching and feedback. These are not meant to reflect the type of input that would be included for rating the form. However, when it comes to scoring recordings for certification, this type of format will be helpful in guiding counselor improvement.

# Moving ForWard Rating Sheet for Prime Solutions – Coaching

Date: 5/28/2013

Rater: David Rosengren

Counselor: Ethel Merman

Session Topic: This is Who I Am

## Content Ratings

A. Counselor **presents key concepts** from Session Topic.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

You're on target here. As you get even more comfortable with the content the nuances will emerge.

B. Counselor **conveys major concepts** accurately

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

You do a nice job of making these conversational

C. Counselor **uses images to guide** session.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

D. Counselor **uses participant workbook exercises** and elicits discussion about them.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Great job of making these a starting point for a conversation and inserting your personality

E. Counselor **employs video scenarios to practice skills**.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

F. Counselor **avoids material not relevant to this Session Topic**.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

## Process Ratings

### A. "Finish Line Focus" Domain

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Clearly using structure of session. Checking-in tied to prior session. The transitions between segments could build a little more on prior content, but this was a minor observation. Checking-in moved out of the room (i.e., focused on others) for a time and while this can be helpful to get people talking, it would be nice to keep it focused on this groups/client experience with Stages of Change. Overall, content followed flow of session and the group felt comfortable with the task and discussion.

### B. "Working With" Domain

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

The session began with a little more leader-centric focus. You were working hard and providing many of the take homes rather than encouraging the group to identify the learning nuggets. However, as the session continued you shifted. There was some excellent reflective listening on display and this encouraged the group to do the work. The result was a more member-centric group and participants were clearly engaged and making connections. In the second half of the group, you and the group were both shining bright!

### C. "Defusing Dissent" Domain

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

You had a very interesting response from a group member about being irritated. Your deeper reflections really helped this person move in a direction he hadn't anticipated. It defused what could have become a roadblock to the group and him. This was excellent. At the end, you asked the question, "What does this teach you?" This is an open question that appears to be member centric, but there is a demand characteristic hidden within that makes it more leader-centric. I think you would've gotten further by doing another deeper reflection that took a guess at the learning or a question like, "What's your takeaway from all of that?"

**Rate the Group (X) or Individual ( ) (Check one)**

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

## Rater Notes and Observations

Ethel –

This was a very nice session. Thanks for sharing it. There are many things you did really well:

- Deeper reflections, especially to some contrary comments
- Sense of playfulness in doing the exercise
- Communicated a sense of curiosity about the participants and liking for them
- Appeared comfortable with the session content

Here are a couple of areas to keep in mind as you move forward:

- Your expertise in addictions is a strength and can move you away from a member-centric stance. You and your group are both at your best when you're focused on them!
- It's okay to use material from outside the room and if you can tie it back into how the members might use this information. You made efforts to do this and I think being a little quicker to do this might help you out.

A couple of content specific thoughts:

- Bill Miller taught me to do the Important versus Not Important categories first and then sorting the five or so Very Important from that Important list. It seems to sharpen the focus of folks. I tend to prefer that approach. You might give it a try and see how that works for you.
- One area that you might consider giving a little more emphasis to is how, through our choices, we can start moving away from our values without even being aware that it is happening. This is a subtle and important point that is often missed in this session. You might make sure it gets emphasized. This would a good point for a question, "How have all of us noticed that happening in our lives?" You could then offer an example of how you noticed it happen for you to start the process if needed.

Overall, this is great work. You're meeting the standards of three or higher on the scores, which is just we're looking for. The aim now will be to build on your strengths, which will make your sessions even stronger.

David

# Moving ForWard Rating Sheet for Prime Solutions - Coaching

Date: 5/28/13

Rater: David Rosengren

Counselor: Wiley Coyote

Session Topic: Beyond Myself: Honesty, Humility and Faith

## Content Ratings

A. Counselor **presents key concepts** from Session Topic.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Missed some key concepts from this Session Topic

B. Counselor **conveys major concepts** accurately

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Did a nice job with concepts that were reviewed.

C. Counselor **uses images to guide** session.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Did not use images.

D. Counselor **uses participant workbook exercises** and elicits discussion about them.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Used workbook to guide session

E. Counselor **employs video scenarios to practice skills**.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

No video scenarios used in this portion of tape.

F. Counselor **avoids material not relevant to this Session Topic**.

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Nice job of staying focused. No irrelevant information evident.



## Process Ratings

### A. "Finish Line Focus" Domain

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

Well-organized and goal oriented, you helped the group stay on topic and used comments to lead into the next ideas. Lots of great concepts elicited and integrated into the discussion.

### B. "Working With" Domain

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

This is an area that is bimodal. You had excellent engagement with your group. You asked great questions and the communicated warmth and interest in people's response. You also tended to draw the conclusions rather than using reflections to help group members come to their conclusions. You might try the latter and see what happens. There was also a lot of change talk; highlight that and this group would really take flight!

### C. "Defusing Dissent" Domain

Needs Focused Attention	Needs Work	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	5	

There was some status quo talk evident, but no active dissent. However, you tended to take a subtle persuasion approach. The group responded fine to this and when you did reflections, you got an even stronger response. Just say yes to the reflection!

**Rate the Group (   X   ) or Individual (        ) (Check one)**

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

## Rater Notes and Observations

Wiley -

You've got a really nice presence in your groups and this was an intriguing session to listen to. Thanks for sharing it. There are many things you did really well:

- You asked some engaging questions and showed great patience in allowing yourself room to think through the next question
- You had some really nice reflections
- You have a laid back attitude, which creates a safe and comfortable environment, while maintaining a clear focus
- You used the workbook to help focus your session.
- You're an insightful and talented therapist. You picked up on subtle themes and were able to weave them into the session in ways that elicited more talk.

Here are a couple of areas to keep in mind as you move forward:

- You make some really nice reflections and I'd like to see you do much more of these.
- Related to this, it is much more powerful if the clients come up with the meaning and then supplies the change talk. Then shape it with your reflections rather than offering interpretations.
- On a related noted, our strengths can also challenge us at times. In this case, your insight as a therapist can lead you to want to make interpretations. Remember you'll go further faster with reflections and those good open questions.
- Finally, reinforce change talk and commitment when you hear it. You did a great job of creating the circumstance where it emerged and when folks make strong statements in favor of change you want to hold that "mirror" up so they can see where they are and what their intentions are.

A couple of content specific thoughts:

- You handle the workbook content masterfully and there is additional content in the on-line manual for each of these sessions. I'd encourage you to review the manual and to use the outline and images to prompt you to cover this additional information. It will create the foundation for your discussion and help to deepen it significantly.
- I didn't hear a Checking in so I'm assuming that happened prior to this segment. You did assign a Takeaway, though I encourage you to leave enough time to really walk people through what you would like. It felt a little rushed and you don't want this to be an afterthought, but rather an integrated part of what you're doing in the session. This process is a tangible way people take what happens in the therapy room and transports it back to their life. You might help folks see that by the weight you give it.

Overall, this is really nice work. There are some areas to tweak to get you up to the standards of three or higher on all the scores, but this is primarily a matter of bringing in the rest of the material. What is there already is a very strong foundation and with a renewed focus I see no problems for you meeting and exceeding those standards. I encourage you to consider doing another recording so we can mark the progress in these areas. Again, you've got an excellent start here and really nice skills to build on.

David

