



What are you looking at? Intentional observational strategies for evaluation

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Evaluations can be improved if we add
intentional observation...

to everyday evaluation moments.



Direct Observation

webinars

meetings

Pre- and post-meeting
conversations

Observational moments

conference calls

program planning meetings

side conversations

chance encounters



Seeing

VS



Observing





Engagement - you became curious and wanted to participate

Motivation – few probably wanted to be the only one to not find three vehicles

Focus/Attention - your mind had a goal, something specific to search for



Pre-observation



During observation



Post-observation



Things to do:

- ☐ find a purpose
→ 2pm deadline
- ☐ find meaning
- ☐ clean desk



Observation Sheet for Meeting

I. Overview

Location:

Date:

Individuals present at the meeting? (seating arrangement)

Individuals, on the project, who are not at the meeting?

II. Goals of observation

1. Collect baseline data on current procedures (stated and unstated)
3. Record what language is used to describe the program (formal and informal)

III. Observational focal points

Focal point	Notes
A. <u>Language/talk</u> How do they talk about the project? What do they say about clients? What shorthand do they use to discuss the program?	
B. <u>Boundaries of Activities</u> Are there discussions about activities outside the organization? What do they consider under and outside of their control?	
Focal points C, D, E, etc.	

IV. Other comments/thoughts

What was missing? What new questions were raised?

general
information

observation
goals

key focal
points with
notes

other
comments
or thoughts



⇒ How are success + progress talked about?

Who?

What?

How often?

Surprising?

Missing?



During observation



Focus your
attention



What's missing?



Vary your stance





Vary your stance





Maximize your observational muscle

Observe in short spurts

Jot down memory triggers

Try single tasking (especially important with webinars)

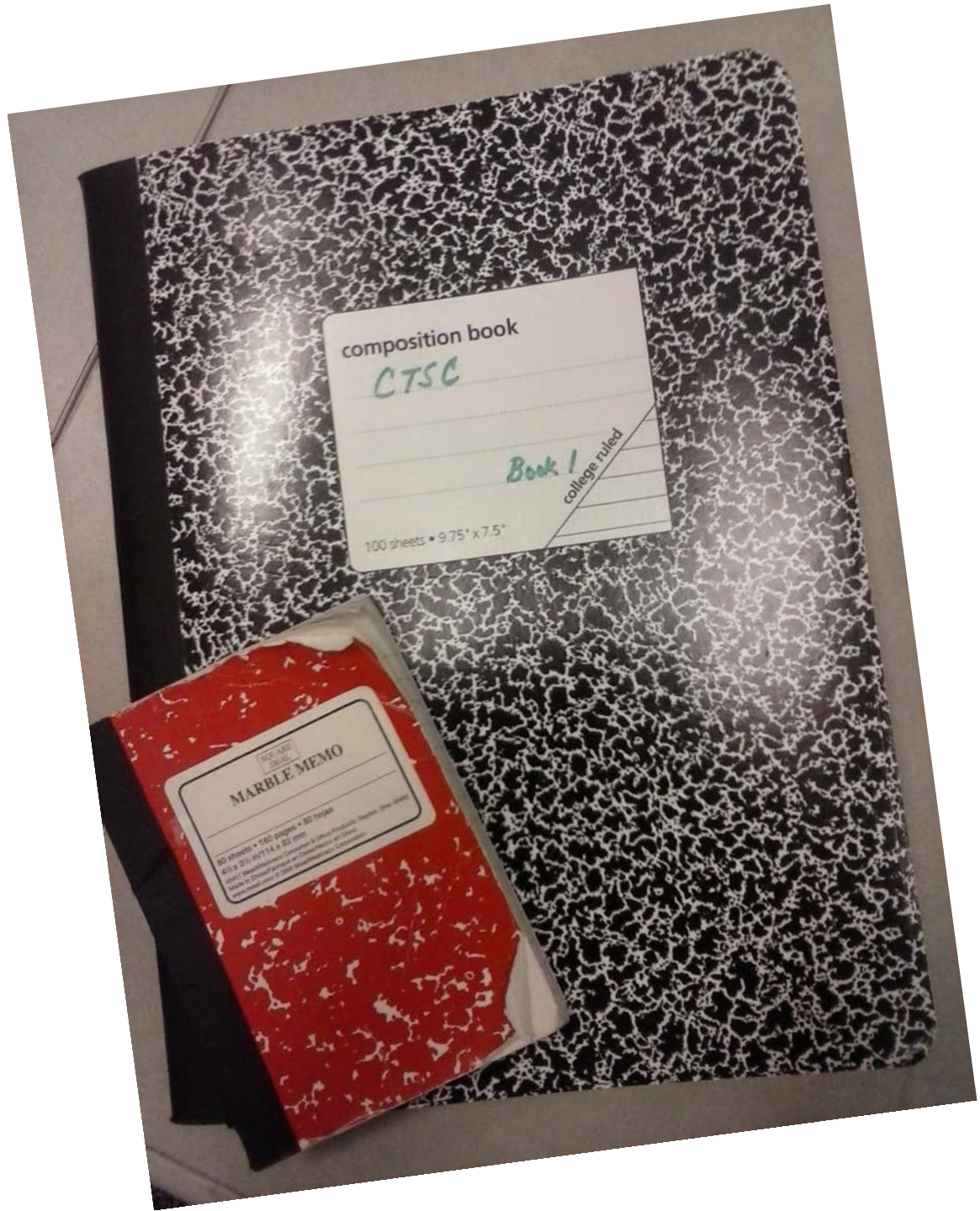
Be patient



Record what
happened

Reflect on what
happened

Plan for future
observations





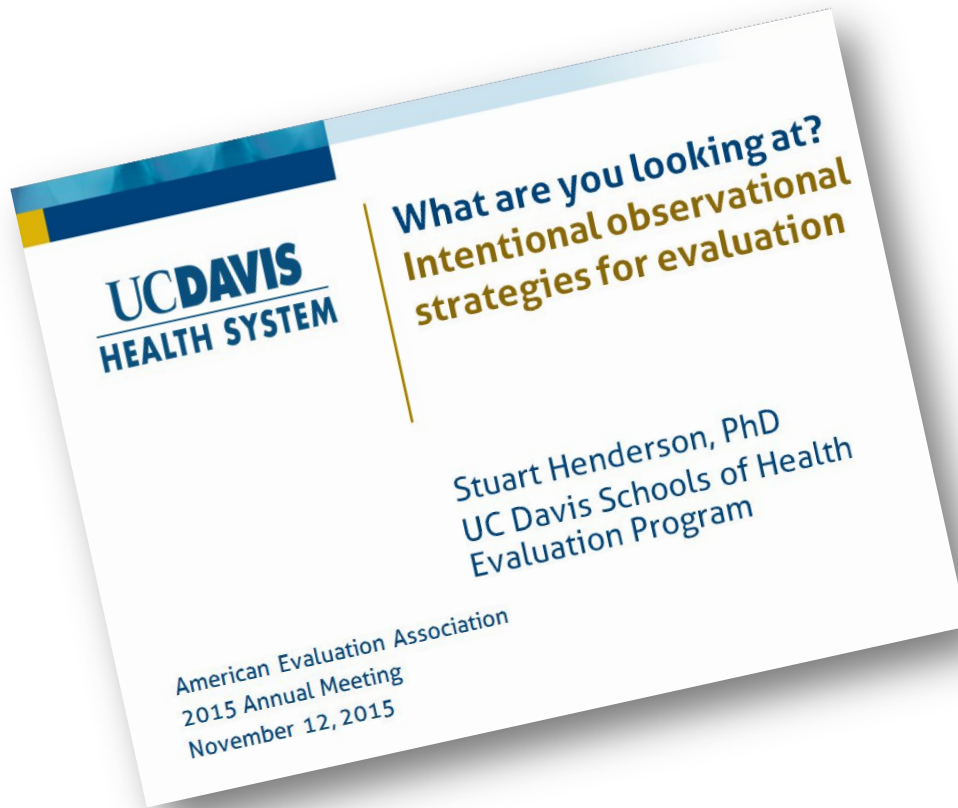
Final thoughts

A vertical bar on the left side of the slide, divided into three horizontal segments. The top segment is light blue, the middle segment is a slightly darker blue, and the bottom segment is light gray.

Engagement – ask questions about everything; be curious

Motivation – [don't wait for motivation]
Make observation a regular practice

Focus/Attention – use a systematic approach



Slide deck is
available in the
AEA public
elibrary

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References

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