

# Excerpts from Protocol

While good manners are the rules one follows in everyday contacts with other people, protocol is the set of rules prescribing good manners in official life and in ceremonies involving governments and nations and their representatives. It is the recognized system of international courtesy.

*-Page 1, History of Protocol in Washington*

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The person experienced in official life knows that protocol serves as a useful guide on how to behave in official relations with people of different countries and national origins, no matter how diverse their own national customs may be.

*-Page 13, History of Protocol in Washington*

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Any organization or society must, if it is to thrive, operate under certain rules if for no other reason than to prevent chaos. The same applies to relations between governments. It is necessary that contacts between nations be made according to universally accepted rules or customs and some form of planned organization. That is protocol.

*-Page 13, History of Protocol in Washington*

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## *Order of Precedence*

One of the cardinal rules in protocol is the observance of the order of precedence at all functions where officials of a government or its representatives are present.

The same is true in seating officers and guests of a public or private organization at banquets and formal functions sponsored or held by the organization.

Failure to recognize the proper rank and precedence of a guest is equivalent to an insult to his position and the country he represents. The history of diplomacy is interspersed with incidents of strained relations, and sometimes open hostility has arisen because of failure to give proper recognition to the rank or order of precedence of an official of government.

At private parties given by Americans, foreign Ambassadors have been known to threaten to leave when they found they were seated below their rank according to protocol. They stayed only after the host or hostess to whom they complained changed their seat to the proper ranking.

In such cases where the guest of honor ranks below other guests, the host may (1) seat the guests according to precedence even though it places the guest for whom the dinner is given far down the table; (2) make the senior guest (or guest of honor) the co-host if it is a stag function and seat him accordingly; or (3) ask the ranking guest to waive his right of precedence for this occasion in favor of the guest of honor.

To avoid any misunderstanding or embarrassment, however, it would be well for the host or hostess to inform in advance any guests, whether American or foreign, who are not seated according to protocol the reason for this departure from the norm.

A Chief of Mission must be accorded his proper place because, as the person representing the government of his country, there are many rights he cannot personally concede.

There are occasions, however, when an Ambassador yields his position to his Minister of Foreign Affairs or to some other very high ranking official of his government whom he feels deserves the rank.

While the White House and the Department of State follow precedence almost to the letter, adherence is not so rigid at private gatherings, and even at official government functions attended by both foreign and American officials and private citizens, the private citizens should be seated in appropriate places to afford interesting and profitable associations for all concerned. Top corporation officials and men and women of achievement must be recognized despite their non-governmental rank.

The practice of precedence in official life is conducive to smooth relations because it provides simple answers to what might otherwise be difficult questions of rank and formality.

-Pages 15 & 16, *Order of Precedence*

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### *Titles & Forms of Address*

Courteous people, regardless of nationality or rank, are concerned with addressing each other properly. The address forms given on the following pages are based on American and international usage and include those used in formal and informal conversation as well as correspondence by most agencies of government, particularly the State Department, which is regarded as the final authority on such matters in the United States.

For the exact titles of American officials, consult the *Congressional Directory*, the *United States Government Organization Manual* and the Military Service registers.

For the correct titles of foreign Chiefs of State/Heads of Government, members of the nobility, foreign diplomats, and other distinguished of-

officials, see *The Statesman's Year-Book*, *Burke's Peerage*, *Whitaker's Peerage*, *Whitaker's Almanack*, *Debrett Peerage*, and the Diplomatic List (Department of State publication 7894).

### *Courtesy Title Distinctions*

1. The Honorable is the preferred title used in addressing most high-ranking American officials in office or retired. These include some presidential appointees, federal and state elective officials, and mayors. As a general rule, other county and city officials are not so addressed. Examples:

The Honorable (full name) Secretary of Labor	The Honorable (full name) Governor of (state)
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*-Page 33, Titles & Forms of Address*

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### *Table Seating Arrangements*

Table seating for formal official luncheons and dinners is a necessary procedure when entertaining government officials, foreign dignitaries, and other distinguished persons in international social life.

The basic rules of precedence discussed in this volume should be studied carefully in order to acquire an understanding of the specific seating arrangements shown on the following pages. Precedence, based on one's official position or military rank, should be the determining factor of seating arrangements for all official functions.

At mixed official luncheons and dinners, according to American custom, the place of honor for male guests is to the right of the hostess. If the guest of honor is to be given the place of honor at the table, the host should avoid inviting persons of higher rank. However, when a ranking

guest is invited, the host may choose (1) to make the senior guest (higher-ranking guest) the cohost, if it is a stag function; (2) to ask the higher-ranking guest to waive his right in favor of the guest of honor; (3) to seat the guests according to precedence even though it places the guest for whom the dinner is given far down the table; (4) to divide the seating between two or more tables if there is a delicate situation regarding ranking and if the number of guests warrant it.

The man next in rank sits on the left of the hostess; the next lady, on the left of the host. The host and hostess may sit either at opposite ends of the table (head and foot—the traditional seating) or across from each other at the middle of the table (this is a seating frequently used where the host and hostess are closer to a greater number of their guests).

Women are seated at dinner according to the rank of their husbands, unless they hold official position themselves, in which case they are placed where their official position dictates. An exception is when a woman of higher rank displaces the wife of the highest-ranking man.

*-Page 177, Table Seating Arrangements*

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### *Invitations and Replies*

The type of invitation issued indicates whether the entertaining is to be formal or informal. However, all invitations should include the nature of the occasion, day, date, hour, place, and if necessary, the mode of dress.

#### *Formal Invitations*

Formal invitations to official luncheons, receptions, dinners, etc., may be completely engraved, semi-engraved, or handwritten, but are always worded in the third person. Many people abroad prefer to use locally printed invitations in English and/or the language of the country. Formal invitations may also be extended by telephone or telegraph.

The invitations to official functions are always engraved with black ink on a plain white card measuring approximately  $5\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$  or, depending on text,  $7\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ . The preferred style in lettering today is script, although some people prefer the shaded antique roman. Invitations to formal dances and wedding receptions are engraved on the first page of fine-quality plain folded sheets.

If the host is the Vice President, the Chief Justice, a Cabinet member, a United States Ambassador, or other senior officer of a department or agency, invitations may bear the seal of the office, or that department, at the center top. In the United States the gold seal on State Department invitations is reserved for state occasions and formal dinners and the blank embossed seal for general luncheons and receptions. Members of Congress may use the Great Seal. In the military, a replica of a flag officer's personal flag may be used and centered at the top of his invitation. Other officers use the gold officer's crest.

-Page 193, *Invitations and Replies*

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### *Official Entertaining & Private Parties*

The basic purpose of official entertaining is to help achieve United States policy objectives, domestic and foreign, and to further United States interest at home and abroad. Entertainment is an indispensable tool for developing satisfactory relationships with the Diplomatic and Consular Corps and the cultural, political, economic, and social communities. A friendly conversation at a dinner party may do more to resolve differences of viewpoints between nations and officials than weeks at a conference table.

While the general trend in the United States is toward informal entertaining, there is still the obligation for high-ranking officials of this country and foreign nations to entertain and be entertained in a formal manner.

Entertaining in Washington, D.C., is somewhat different from the rest of the country because Washington is a city of government. Washington is composed of numerous groups bound together by their relationships to the Government of the United States. People from many fields are represented in the executive and administrative offices, the judiciary, Diplomatic Corps, the Congress, residential society, and the communities of business, labor, culture, and the press.

Personal contacts and friendly exchanges are very important because they cut across problems of communication. Entertaining is the method used for making and fostering these contacts.

The role of the spouse of an official is exceedingly important, who may assist in creating a relaxed, friendly atmosphere where ideas are initiated and fostered.

### *Official Luncheons & Dinners*

Official luncheons and dinners are given in honor of a Chief of State/Head of Government, other distinguished foreign visitors, Chiefs of Mission, top-ranking government and military officials, etc.

Although it is desirable to avoid cold formality when entertaining officially, certain rules should be followed to avoid tension and chaos. When a state luncheon or dinner is reported in the press, few people realize the amount of planning and long hours of work that are needed to make such a function a success. A dinner for a hundred guests involves a minimum expenditure of 250 man-hours by the Office of the Chief of Protocol alone.

Careful planning is the secret of successful entertaining whether the party be large or small, formal or informal. One comforting fact is that the more a couple or group entertains, the easier it becomes.

### *Selection of the Date, the Place, and the Time*

The first step in arranging an official function is selection of the date. The guest of honor is usually given a choice of several dates. Before offering this choice, the prospective host should make sure that the event will not conflict with one already scheduled or one likely to be scheduled because of the significance of a special date—a National Day, for example. A check with the newspapers is helpful in most cities.

Official dinners are usually held at 8:00 p.m., and luncheons at 12:30p.m.  
-Page 253 & 254, *Official Entertaining & Private Parties*

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### *Thank You Notes*

It is courteous for guests to write and thank the hostess after a dinner or luncheon. Such a note should be written within three or four days.  
-Page 263, *Official Entertaining & Private Parties*

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The scope of Protocol's activities has increased enormously. In addition to the ceremonial functions of protocol, there have been many recent additions to the responsibilities of the Office of the Chief of Protocol in such important areas as assistance to foreign diplomatic representatives in matters of diplomatic privileges and immunities and questions of local legal jurisdiction.

-Page 311, *The Diplomatic Corps*

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### *Flag Etiquette*

Our flag as we know it today, with its fifty stars and thirteen stripes, has evolved from several earlier versions.

The Grand Union flag, sometimes called the First Navy Ensign, the Cambridge Flag, or the Congress Colors, was the immediate



predecessor of the Stars and Stripes. It consisted of thirteen stripes alternatively red and white, representing the thirteen colonies, with a blue field in the upper right hand corner bearing the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, signifying the Union with England.

The Grand Union flag was first flown by ships of the Colonial fleet in the Delaware River in December 1775 and became the standard of the Continental Army in January 1776. Although some Americans believe Betsy Ross made the first flag, historians dispute this and also the story that the first flag displayed against an armed enemy was at Fort Schuyler, in August 1777. This was probably the Grand Union flag.

The most probable story of the origin of the Stars and Stripes is that Commander-in-Chief George Washington's personal flag, which was a blue field with thirteen white stars, was substituted for the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew in the Grand Union flag.

The Continental Congress passed a resolution which established the Stars and Stripes on June 14, 1777. They stated that the stars should form a new constellation but did not say how the stars were to be arranged on the blue field. Therefore some flags had stars in a circle, some in rows, and some scattered without design. The Commander-in-Chief's personal flag had the stars arranged in vertical rows of 3-2-3-2-3.

On October 9, 1778, Benjamin Franklin and John Adams wrote to the Neapolitan Ambassador, It is with pleasure that we acquaint your excellency that the flag of the United States of America consists of thirteen stripes, Alternately Red, White and Blue; a small square in the upper angle, next to the flagstaff, is a field of blue with thirteen white stars denoting a new constellation. (Francis Wharton, Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence, Vol. 2, p. 759.)

The establishment of a national flag was necessary because, up

to this time, colonial vessels flew the flags of the colony to which they belonged. When they were at sea hampering enemy communications and preying on British commerce, without a national flag, England considered ships to be pirate vessels and hanged their crews when they captured them.

After Kentucky and Vermont joined the Union, a resolution was adopted making the flag fifteen stars and fifteen stripes.

A Navy Captain, Samuel S. Reid, realized that the flag would become unwieldy if a stripe was added for each new state and suggested to Congress that the stripes remain at thirteen to represent the thirteen colonies and a star be added to the blue field for each new state. On April 4, 1818, a law was passed requiring that a star be added for each new state on July 4 after its admission, but that the thirteen stripes remain unchanged.

The stars represent the states collectively, not individually, and no star may be designated as representative of any state.

A flag that has flown over the Capitol is much prized and citizens often ask their Congressman for such a flag. One of the most memorable of these flags was the one that flew over the Capitol on December 7, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was attacked. This same flag was raised again when, on December 8, war was declared on Japan and three days later when war was declared on Germany. President Roosevelt carried it to the Casablanca Conference and it flew from the mast of the U.S.S. Missouri during the Japanese surrender on September 2, 1945.

Because of the great significance of the flag, a special set of rules for its correct use have been enacted in The Flag Code. 4451 et seq. A primer of rules and regulations is set forth below. Samples of State requirements follow guidance as to flag display and related matters.

*1. Is it considered permissible to display the flag at night?*

The Code states: It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstuffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours of the day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness. As indicated above there is no legal prohibition against the flag being flown twenty-four hours of the day. In fact, this practice has been employed for many years by individuals, civic organizations, and local government officials for a variety of patriotic reasons. This is considered permissible and in accordance with the provisions of the Code. The flag should never be displayed day and night merely as a convenience.

*-Page 355 - 357, Flag Etiquette*

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Similarly, any host or coordinator must see that mandated security measures are appreciated and implemented. One should expect, for instance, that the presence of dignitaries will likely require the advance presentation by all guests of birth dates and social security numbers. Metal detectors and scanners may be necessary. Intrusive barriers, parking relocation and access restriction may also be required.

*-Page 403, Security*

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*Netiquette 2012 – Balancing Evolution with Tradition*  
*By Peter E. SAND, J.D. CIPP/US/G/IT*

Modern information technology prioritizes the speed and volume of communication – characteristics which are qualitatively different from formality and propriety. Given this difference, is there a role for technology in the most formal communication? If the defining element of formal communications is the form of that communication – the handwritten note on rich card stock, the choice to personally deliver a letter or leave a business card – then technology may be antithetical and this chapter could end here, stating simply: do not use technology.

However, "technology" can also be viewed as a measure of expectations – what would the receiver want to receive? From that perspective, it may be that grace dictates meeting guests' expectations. If the information or announcement is the beginning of a relationship, then adding the appropriate amount of technology could use information to enhance and extend that relationship further than a paper card. This writer recommends using the traditional methods of formal communication, supported by the strategic use of technology to offer modern convenience to both guests and new acquaintances.

*Responding to expectations for technology*

A fundamental element of grace and elegance is accommodating guests – meeting them wherever they are and welcoming them to the party or to the formal social circle. Information technology is ubiquitous. The Internet makes all information available to anyone; it is on our desks and in our pockets. As a direct result, many individuals – across all socio-economics levels and age groups, look first to the electronic world. Modern communication technologies provide more information, operate faster, and are more convenient to use than paper-based methods. A formal handwritten card may stand in great relief to the digital background just as any thoughtful personal effort demonstrates high regard. This challenge is to merge the capabilities and information available through modern electronic communications to the classic correspondence to meet expectations and offer the highest level of convenience and support through today's technology. Thankfully, electronic communications have advanced sufficiently to enable an elegant point of connection between the traditional and modern.

*-Page 407 & 408, Netiquette 2012, Balancing Evolution with Tradition*

*Diversity*. What is it? If you Google “diversity” you will get over 170 million results. *Diversity* has various meanings in biology, ethnology, sociology, demographics, business, marketing and politics, even in the field of electromagnetic frequency communications. Why does it belong in the field of Protocol? Because. **Protocol is about people, and people are infinitely diverse.**

Cognizance of *Diversity* and an appreciation of how differences can be accommodated in protocol and event planning improves outcomes. We all bring a variety of perspectives, based upon our different backgrounds and experiences, to Protocol panning. Increasingly, people attend the events we plan from various countries, cultures, and religious, education and vocational backgrounds. It is important to continuously evaluate your planning assumptions and processes to accommodate the changing dynamics of those you may host or support.

-Page 439, *Diversity*

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### *Giftng*

There is likely no more complex area in the arena of business and government than that of “giftng”. What may be an innocent and heartfelt gesture of friendship or appreciation can result in the most dire consequences. What is thought to be a sound business practice of entertaining a prospective customer can lead to criminal prosecution.

It is because the giving and receiving of a gift may have the intention or result of influencing action, that there are now layer upon layer of regulations throughout the world of commerce and in every level of government.

The following is to alert the reader of the possible problems, educate as to the spectrum of responsibilities, and suggest protective action. Because all laws are subject to modification by amendment or the interpretation of case law, these materials should be seen as a general guideline only. All those acting in the sphere of business and government

should therefore consult a professional for advisory opinions before action. Below are sample sets of regulations for the reader's general edification.

In the City of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Code §20-604 (Gifts, loans and favors to City Personnel) prohibits a City employee from accepting or soliciting "any gift, loan, gratuity, favor, or service of substantial economic value, that might reasonably be expected to influence one in his position in the discharge of his official duties." Likewise, no one, be they an individual, business or organization, may give or offer such a gift.

*-Page 445, Gifting*