

A book by Europe's leading protocol experts

Protocol to Manage Relationships Today

Modern Relationship Management
Based Upon Traditional Values

*By Jean Paul Wijers, Isabel Amaral,
William Hanson, Bengt-Arne Hulleman, Diana Mather*

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The cover shows some of the (former) ushers of Protocolbureau and was taken at the office of Hammerstein Advocaten at the Herengracht, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The ushers represent 25 years of our history.

From left to right (back cover): Julian Kanhai, Anuschka Diderich-Rijnsburger, Rutger Bremer, Sebastian Groothuis, Stan van Boxtel, Madelief Schwirtz, Cédéric Schoneveld, Thomas van den Hul, Isabelle Swinkels and Stijn Bottema.

From left to right (front cover): Kim Jongbloed, Rik van der Woerd, Bengt-Arne Hulleman, Roel Brinkhorst, Joep Hoogerwerf, Jeroen Koks, Jean Paul Wijers, Sarah van den Hul, Raph Dahan, Humita Kanhai and Marjon Bloemkolk.

Coronavirus posed some extra challenges to compose this photo however it actually helped us realise events are still possible while keeping everyone safe. Thank you to the photographers Ilya van Marle and Monique Smets, and also to Oscar Hammerstein and Joep Hoogerwerf for the beautiful location.

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By
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Contribution by Protocolbureau's former ushers
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Tijmen Struijk
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Interviews with
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Maik de Boer, fashion and lifestyle expert

Alastair Bruce of Crionaich, historian, royal and ceremonial commentator for Sky News and Governor of Edinburgh Castle

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Lieutenant Colonel Hans van Reenen, protocol and ceremonials specialist

Ana Retallack, Founder and Director of The Standard Companion

Kees van Rooij, Mayor of Meierijstad

Peer Swinkels, CEO of Royal Swinkels Family Brewers

CONTENTS

Foreword by Ella Robertson, Managing Director, One Young World	6
Introduction	9
How to read this book	13
Chapter 1: Understanding why protocol is crucial in building strong, authentic networks of reciprocal relationships	17
1.1 The nature of relationships and networks	18
<i>The crisis as a litmus test for your relationship management: interview with Jean Paul Wijers and Bengt-Arne Hulleman, by Carla van Elst</i>	23
1.2 Understanding protocol	26
1.3 The rules of protocol: creating community	30
1.4 The symbolic side of protocol: the story	40
1.5 Balancing between modernity and tradition	46
1.6 Protocol in the twenty-first century	62
1.7 Breaking the rules	72
Chapter 2: Developing a strategic framework for successful application of protocol	79
2.1 Formulating relational goals as a starting point of a strategic framework for successful application of protocol	81
2.1.1 Networking vision	84
2.1.2 Relationship management goal	86
2.2 Which stakeholders and which networks to focus on?	92
2.2.1 Mapping stakeholders to obtain an overview	93
2.2.2 An analysis: who are our most valued stakeholders?	98
2.2.3 Developing a networking events calendar: which stakeholders and networks will be seen at what occasion	101
<i>Highly detailed client profiles are the basis of meaningful client journeys to create strong brand ambassadors, by former Protocolbureau usher Stan van Boxtel</i>	104
2.3 How the protocol department supports the organisation's relationship management and networking activities	106
2.3.1 The role of a protocol department to coordinate the relationship management	106
2.3.2 Developing a networking toolkit: supporting the networkers	111
<i>Build relationships online or offline?, by Rutger Bremer</i>	117
<i>Relationship management in the age of big data and artificial intelligence: CRM transformation, from database to virtual assistant, by former Protocolbureau usher Rik van der Woerd</i>	119

Chapter 3: The practical implementation of protocol: staging effective high-level networking meetings and events	131
3.1 The method of protocol	133
3.1.1 Step 1: understanding the context	136
3.1.2 Step 2: determining the rank of the stakeholders	138
3.1.3 Step 3: developing your own tailor-made protocol	141
3.2 Precedence	142
3.2.1 National lists of precedence	142
3.2.2 Other rules to determine the rank or precedence of officials	143
3.2.3 Rules to determine the rank or precedence among equals	145
3.2.4 Rules to determine the rank or precedence at international and multilateral organisations	146
3.2.5 Rules to determine the rank outside government organisations	148
3.2.6 Exceptions	149
3.2.7 How to use the rules of precedence to determine the rank or precedence at your meeting or event	149
<i>Is society slowly reopening? Can we carefully organise events again?: interview with Jean Paul Wijers and Bengt-Arne Hulleman, by Carla van Elst</i>	154
3.3 The application of protocol: the rules of protocol	156
3.3.1 Guest list: who to invite?	159
3.3.2 Invitations: how can you make sure they will attend?	162
<i>Event software: friend or foe?, by Rutger Bremer</i>	166
3.3.3 Design of the programme: how to make sure the event allows for the ‘right’ meetings to take place?	169
3.3.4 Networkers’ support: how to support the networkers?	170
3.3.5 Staging encounters: how to make sure the ‘right’ people will actually meet?	171
3.3.6 Measuring results: how to determine if our goals have been reached?	180
3.3.7 Example of the application of the rules of protocol: working with echelons	180
3.4 The application of protocol: the symbolic value of protocol	184
<i>String of pearls, by Meike Ziegler</i>	184
<i>Distancing, ceremonies, deconfinement ... and protocol, by François Brunagel</i>	201
3.5 Managing complex seating	206

Chapter 4: The execution of protocol by professional protocol officers	213
4.1 To tell the story of Protocolbureau is to tell the story of our ushers: our own protocol officers	214
4.2 Making sure the right people meet: protocol officers in charge of supporting the networking function of events	217
<i>Nelson Mandela at the Four Freedoms Awards ceremony in 2002, by former Protocolbureau usher Alexandre Kanji</i>	220
4.2.1 Arranging introductions and coordinating greeting procedures	222
<i>'Directed spontaneity' is the key!, by former Protocolbureau usher Egmont Philips</i>	228
4.2.2 Welcoming your most important stakeholder as a VIP	230
<i>Protocol ensures that everyone present feels comfortable and is treated with respect, by former Protocolbureau usher Isabelle Swinkels</i>	235
4.2.3 Escorting a high-level delegation	237
4.2.4 Coordinating the arrival, seating and departure of the guests	240
4.2.5 Providing assistance at a conference	249
<i>Protocol sets the framework for social relationships, by former Protocolbureau usher Tijmen Struijk</i>	251
4.3 Making sure people can meet in the right atmosphere: the soft skills of the protocol officer	253
4.3.1 The soft skills specifically needed in the work as protocol officer	256
4.3.2 The protocol officer: a skilled networker	260
4.3.3 Dress	268
<i>Help I Sexted My Boss</i>	274
4.3.4 Non-verbal communication/deportment	274
<i>Protocol is a valuable medium to accomplish the networking goals of an event, by former Protocolbureau usher Sarah van den Hul</i>	282
4.3.5 At the dining table	283
<i>Protocol has taught me that life is fluid and not to accept things as a given, by former Protocolbureau usher Jeroen Koks</i>	292
4.3.6 Online etiquette	294
Biographies of the authors	300
Biographies of the contributors	303
Index	306
Glossary	309
Protocolbureau	311
The English Manner	312
Institute of Strategic Relationship Management	313
Leading Protocol & Etiquette Schools of the World	314
Protocol training	316
Thank you	318



Ella Robertson, Managing Director of One Young World (*photo by Arch Hades*)

Foreword

In our modern and open society, we are more connected than ever before – far beyond our own communities, countries or companies. Many of us are dealing with the complexity of maintaining a large variety of dynamic relationships with a great number of people and organisations.

For many centuries, monarchs, heads of state, heads of government, mayors and other dignitaries have recognised this need; ensuring they are in contact with those who are needed for the achievement of their goals. Throughout history protocol has played a crucial role in strengthening the network of the institution and the official, making sure connections are maintained or made, with individuals in all corners of society.

Now also CEOs of large corporations, artists, celebrities and other professionals recognise the need to carefully construct their networks and portray a positive image of themselves or the organisation they represent. This valuable book

Protocol to Manage Relationships Today describes protocol as a tool to build strong relationships not only for government organisations but for anyone.

Initially, the concept of protocol may be one that invites nerves or increases formality. Truly, protocol allows engagements to take place more fluidly and confidently; with all participants able to feel comfortable that they have played their part correctly. In my role at One Young World, I have been responsible for connecting young change-makers with world leaders: from presidents to princesses, from Olympians to oligarchs. I have learned that strong protocol enables people to make the most of special meetings: time is used wisely and interactions as smooth and warm as possible.

Protocol manages the challenge of time restrictions when building a strong network and the fact that meeting the 'right' people does not happen by coincidence. Protocol guarantees a successful presence of the organisation's representatives at a conference, a celebration, an official opening, a foreign visit, or at other crucial moments.

This book also explains the value of staging meaningful meetings that are not only transactional. The protocol described in this book focusses on what we have in common, rather than what sets us apart. By building symbolic relationships rather than systemic relationships it becomes easier to create mutual understanding and by doing so build strong long-term relationships necessary to take strides in our interconnected global society.

Protocol to Manage Relationships Today provides valuable insight as to how protocol serves as a tool of inclusivity rather than exclusivity. Originally, protocol might have been invented with the purpose of exclusivity, but successful networking also means being in contact with a diverse network in all corners of society.

The significant challenges we will face this century will be global ones. This means we will all need to work together, across borders and cultures in order to make the world a fairer and safer place. Working in a different culture can be the most rewarding and enlightening aspect of any career and an understanding of protocol is an essential means to fostering strong international relationships.

Rather than increasing rigidity or “stuffiness”, thoughtful and clear protocol always makes events even more dazzling: knowing that formalities have been observed gives everyone the confidence to form closer connections. In our modern world, protocol is always evolving: I’ve seen a formal flag exchange morph into a group selfie with the President and a state dinner develop into a lively dance. This book helps navigate the modern twists that are constantly being absorbed into new protocol, empowering everyone to strike the correct balance between courtesy and conviviality.

Protocol, in its modern form, is an essential expertise in our society for every modern organisation, both in the private as well as in the public domain. This book is a valuable tool to survive in our modern jungle of complex networks and relationships.

Ella Robertson

Managing Director of One Young World,

co-author of *How To Make A Difference:*

The Definitive Guide from the World’s Most Effective Activists

Introduction

In 1995, I was part of a group of Hotelschool The Hague university students who wanted to make some extra money by working in catering at events. One of these events was the Royal Brunch organised by the creative PR expert Frans Joseph Schulte. The Royal Brunch was an annual high-level networking event organised in front of the Royal Palace in The Hague, The Netherlands, on Queen's Day on 30 April, the day the Dutch celebrated the birthday of the then head of state Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands.

The brunch was always attended by many ambassadors, senior civil servants, members of parliament and other dignitaries and celebrities. The brunch offered a unique and inspiring programme. The logistical preparation, however, was given less attention: often we were forced to improvise. We had to do much more than just serve food and drinks and to make sure the guests were treated with the proper respect. We also had to welcome, greet, escort and seat the guests. The lack of logistical preparation may not have been a good thing, but it offered us the unique possibility to learn and grow.

This was noticed by the director of the Roosevelt Stichting (foundation), the fondly remembered Ahrend de Ru, who was one of the guests at the brunch. Since 1982 the foundation had organised the Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Awards and he wanted to professionalise the logistics of this ceremony: how to welcome, escort and seat over 500 guests and dignitaries at the prestigious award ceremony? Ahrend de Ru asked us to assist him at his Four Freedoms Awards and in May 1996 we made our first steps in the world of protocol.

The Four Freedoms Awards* is an annual award presented to those whose achievements have demonstrated a commitment to those principles which President Franklin Delano Roosevelt proclaimed in his historic speech to Congress on 6 January 1941, as essential to democracy: freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, freedom from fear. The award is handed out in alternate years in New York City by the Roosevelt Institute and in Middelburg, The Netherlands, by the Roosevelt Stichting. The Roosevelt family is originally from the province of Zeeland, of which Middelburg is the capital.

* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Freedoms_Awards

The King of Spain: our first steps in protocol

The Four Freedoms Awards is always attended by the Dutch royal family and in 1996 was also attended by Spanish royalty: His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain who was one of the Laureates. The presence of royalty created the need for some knowledge about protocol and Frans Joseph Schulte contacted the Dutch Royal Palace and asked the then Master of Ceremonies of Her Majesty Queen Beatrix, Gilbert Monod de Froideville, to lecture us in protocol. In April 1996, we were lucky to welcome the Master of Ceremonies for an inspiring session at our university. It proved to be the perfect preparation for our support at the Four Freedoms Awards.

The success of our work at the Four Freedoms Awards resulted in many other assignments, such as The Queen's Gala Dinner, the Red Cross Gala, several haute couture fashion shows and many high-level networking events for the corporate world. Protocolbureau was born: a company providing support at a wide range of high-level events.

At the turn of the twenty-first century Protocolbureau was called in to help assist the Royal Household with the organisation of three Royal Weddings and three State Funerals. Our responsibilities included seating over a thousand guests (per event), a unique experience that helped to establish us as a leading protocol expert organisation.

From the very beginning, however, it was clear that Protocolbureau could not exist solely by working at royal events – a broader approach was needed. This was found in the contemporary application of protocol as described in this book. We translated the royal protocol into a method that could be used at informal events as well. Fashion designers ask us for our assistance: how can we make sure only (potential) clients are seated in the front row? In the corporate world, we use modern protocol to increase the number of meaningful encounters at networking events to guarantee that account managers talk to the guests and not to each other. Cultural organisations ask us to support them in achieving their sponsorship goals: how can we give the right amount of attention to the people who are important to us?

This new approach meant seeing protocol as a method that requires a flexible and adaptable approach to unique situations. This was very uncommon at that time and initially our vision was not widely accepted. On the one hand, there was (and still is) resistance from traditional protocol experts; on the

other hand, there is the larger public who generally regard all protocol and etiquette to be something of the former era: a battle on two sides.

First support for our vision came unexpectedly: His Majesty King Willem-Alexander of The Netherlands declared in an interview shortly before his inauguration as King in 2013 that he was not going to be ‘a protocol fetishist’. In the years after he has turned out to be a King who has indeed modernised royal protocol, following an approach that has given his monarchy a modern look and feel.

In recent years we have broadened our services by advising organisations on how to build strong networks, by providing extensive training programmes and, now, by producing this book. It is all designed to further spread our vision that protocol is crucial in professional relationship management and strong networks of authentic relationships are viable for every successful organisation.

This book is an initiative of Protocolbureau and is written by the teachers of our successful ‘Three-day Masterclass in Modern Protocol’ in Brussels, Belgium, which began in 2016 and runs twice a year.

- The foremost Portuguese expert in corporate image and protocol, **Isabel Amaral**.
- Former BBC newsreader and presentation skills expert, **Diana Mather**.
- The UK’s number one etiquette expert and the Executive Director of The English Manner, **William Hanson**.
- The former Head of the Protocol, Visits and Events Unit of the International Criminal Court and former Policy Assistant to the Grand Master and to the Master of Ceremonies of Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands, **Bengt-Arne Hulleman**, now Executive Director of Protocolbureau.
- And the Founder and other Executive Director of Protocolbureau, **Jean Paul Wijers**.

We are pleased to welcome contributions from the co-Founder and CEO of Momice, **Rutger Bremer**; the former Head of Protocol of the European Parliament, **François Brunagel**; the Founder and Designer of Creatuals, **Meike Ziegler**; as well as our (former) ushers: **Stan van Boxtel**, **Sarah van den Hul**, **Alexandre Kanji**, **Jeroen Koks**, **Egmont Philips**, **Tijmen Struijk**, **Isabelle Swinkels** and **Rik van der Woerd**.

For this book we delighted to interview **Lars Boering**, former Managing Director of World Press Photo Foundation; **Maik de Boer**, fashion and lifestyle expert; **Alastair Bruce of Crionaich**, historian, royal and ceremonial commentator for Sky News and Governor of Edinburgh Castle; **Francesco A. Campagna**, Protocol Officer for the President of UEFA; **Alex van Gastel**, former CEO of the Hotel Pulitzer in Amsterdam; **Jan van Kooten**, Director of the National Committee for 4 and 5 May; **Marcel Loot**, Senior Representative to the board of ABN AMRO Bank; **Jan Meddens**, former Managing Director of World Press Photo Foundation; **Nienke Majoor**, Head of the Commemoration and Celebration Department of the National Committee for 4 and 5 May; **Alexandra Messervy**, Founder and Chief Executive of The Culture Concierge; **Lieutenant Colonel Hans van Reenen**, protocol and ceremonials specialist; **Ana Retallack**, Founder and Director of The Standard Companion; **Kees van Rooij**, Mayor of Meierijstad; and **Peer Swinkels**, CEO of Royal Swinkels Family Brewers.

We hope you enjoy understanding our approach to protocol and how it can help (and not hinder) any organisation in today's ever-changing, multicultural world.

Jean Paul Wijers
Founder of Protocolbureau

How to read this book

Many organisations are currently undergoing the transition to a more flexible network organisation aimed at improving collaboration, both internally and externally. A solid and profitable network is one of the key prerequisites for (business) success, but the development of professional relationship management is new and complex.

Protocol is the basis of a modern and professional relationship management, however, most people still associate protocol with royalty or formal society. Originally, protocol was developed by the European monarchies to manage their networks. The king and queen would like to maintain a strong relationship with many stakeholders, but time is limited. Protocol was developed as a tool to manage their personal attention in the best possible way.

Protocol to Manage Relationships Today explains the contemporary value of protocol, not only for monarchies or diplomatic institutes, but for any non-profit or for-profit organisation. This book presents modern protocol as a tool to build strong, authentic networks of reciprocal relationships.

When used effectively protocol can:

- Increase the effect of the networking activities of an organisation. Protocol gives a professional structure to relationship management, to achieve access to the 'right' networks and a reciprocal relationship with the most valued stakeholders.
- Deepen relationships. In our world there is so much focus on pragmatism in building relationships - protocol focuses on the common ground to gain value.
- Be used as a valuable tool in a post COVID-19 era, where the need for space and time to build real and authentic relationships is well understood.

The book defines how tested values perfectly fit in today's society, where modern organisations want to build effective relationships and communities.

This book is focused on developing an increasingly vital expertise for professionals who deal with complex relationship management issues on a strategic and tactical operational level. They come from different fields, such as government institutions, non-profit organisations and commercial environments.

This book is also meant for protocol officers in search of a contemporary approach towards the application of protocol. The book explains protocol as a flexible method to handle every unique situation. It is not meant as a complete guide of all the exciting protocol rules, but it describes how to translate the context into a tailor-made protocol.

Protocol is presented on four levels: the ‘why’ of protocol; the strategic and tactical level; the practical implementation; and the execution of protocol.

Chapter 1 Understanding why protocol is crucial in building strong, authentic networks of reciprocal relationships	Chapter 2 Developing a strategic framework for successful protocol	Chapter 3 The practical implementation of protocol: staging effective high-level networking meetings and events	Chapter 4 The execution of protocol by professional protocol officers
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It is best to read this book from start to finish, but each of the four chapters can be read separately:

- Chapter 1 describes the context of protocol today and its value to build strong relationships.
- Chapter 2 discusses how to develop a strategic context for successfully using protocol, and building and growing your professional relationship management.
- Chapter 3 focuses on the implementation of protocol in the development of effective meetings and events.
- Chapter 4 is about the protocol officer, the execution of protocol today and the soft skills needed for the role.

Sources are referenced by number and are listed at the end of each chapter.