

“Protocol as the Key to Successful Delegation Visits” – Ten Important Points

Points to consider in planning successful Sister City Delegation Visits:

Inbound Delegations:

1. What are the **customs and courtesies** of visiting delegations including dietary issues?
2. What are the airport and/or city **arrival/departure plans** and who will participate?
3. Who is the **point person** through which advance planning will take place (who is copied on these advance plans?)
4. What **transportation** are we providing and where should the guest of honor sit?
5. What **gifts** should be presented, to whom, by whom and where, including Mayor’s Greeting Letter?
6. Who is preparing/updating the **moment-by-moment itinerary** and who is copied on this itinerary?
7. **Flags:** resource, on tables, city hall, venues – placement is crucial.
8. Use of **interpreters** – who, how and where? Are they bringing or are we furnishing?
9. **Names, titles and biographies** obtained of any visiting officials. Names, titles and biographies furnished in advance of US/city officials whom they will meet.
10. **Seating and Receiving:** Will there be a receiving line and if so where? (Must be rank ordered in advance. Place cards and name tags important to seat guests properly.)

Outbound Delegations:

1. What are the **customs and courtesies** of the hosting country that must be observed?
2. Who is preparing/updating the moment-by-moment **itinerary** and who receives itinerary?
3. What **gifts** should be presented, to whom, by whom and where (discussed in advance with receiving point person. Hostess gifts. Arranging Mayoral proclamation/greeting letter.
4. Taking an **elected official** to lead the delegation (pros and cons)
5. Informing US sister city travelers in advance regarding proper **attire and behavior**.
6. **Preparing delegation** in advance regarding where to sit, when to begin eating, proper business card exchange, conversational do’s and don’ts, time and space variations.
7. Writing **thank you notes** – decide who will send and in what format.
8. **Photography** – suggest one person appointed as group photographer – mail photos in paper or pretty frame with thank you letter.
9. Use of **interpreters** – who, how and where? Are they providing or we bring if needed?
10. Know how to make proper **introductions** and use of proper **titles**. Creating two sided business cards for presentation in some cultures can be effective.