

# Professional Presence: The Power of Business Protocol

*By Judith Bowman*



Judith Bowman is the founder of Protocol Consultants International and is a leading authority on corporate

etiquette, international protocol, behavioral styles, and presentation skills. She is the author of *Don't Take the Last Donut: New Rules of Business Etiquette*.

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Business Protocol is a dynamic industry which emphasizes personal development and professional growth to ultimately distinguish oneself and compete. In this rapidly changing global market, nuances in business and interpersonal relationships are the difference between brief introductions and long-term associations.

Awareness of “doing things right” has resonated and created new opportunities in protocol consulting. Simultaneously, we recognize now, more than ever, the need for certification. Uncertified practitioners severely compromise the integrity of the Protocol Industry and will ultimately realize limited business growth. In today’s competitive business environment, certification is as basic and necessary as a B.A. Certification ensures credibility and assures clients they are getting correct protocol information.

Expanding training and development initiatives to include protocol training is an ideal complement to any corporate training program. Protocol Certification adds a layer and level of professionalism and credibility to your firm. Who would benefit from protocol certification?

- ◆ Business professionals looking to upgrade training skills and add another dimension to core product offerings and expand income
- ◆ Those interested in transitioning into or entering the Protocol Industry as a career
- ◆ Companies interested in training individuals internally to train their professionals in matters of Professional Presence/First Impressions

The Corporate Perspective suggests a significant shift in the business climate and is evidenced by increased merger and acquisition activity and related staff consolidations/downsizing and outsourcing, leaving a select few to manage and maintain key vendor, customer, and government relationships. It is critical to acknowledge the key role of current professionals who should be the strength of your organization. People skills matter now more than ever. The message is clear and compelling: invest in your professionals now, so your firm can continue to effectively compete. Companies understand that management and staff at all levels must be a positive reflection.

The Individual Perspective suggests Protocol is a thriving Industry. Companies realize the importance of the soft skills, “people skills” regardless of discipline. Strong contacts in your field of expertise are your base and will help build a successful business.

## What Should you Look for in a Certification Program?

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A comprehensive protocol certification program should include background information and credentials of the firm offering certification. Are they established? Are they published? Are they sought by media as a resource? Do they provide a recommended reading list, on-going coaching, offer marketing and support materials such as DVD’s, etc.

A credible Protocol Certification program should be customized to you and your current level of protocol expertise. Individuals should be tested. Oral and written ability should be examined as well as networking, marketing ability, presentation skills, follow-up and attention to detail. One should expect personalized training and all support materials required to succeed.

The Protocol University program, for example, includes an on-site dining experience, as well as one-one-one personalized training. All participants also receive proven program material used with individuals, politicians, Royalty, entrepreneurs and, blue-chip firms, for over fifteen years.

# Linkage

Linkage is a global organizational development company that specializes in leadership development. We provide clients around the globe with integrated solutions that include strategic consulting services, customized leadership development and training experiences, tailored assessment services, and benchmark research. Linkage's mission is to connect high-performing leaders and organizations to the futures they want to create.

With a relentless commitment to learning, Linkage also offers conferences, institutes, summits, open-enrollment workshops, and distance learning programs on leading-edge topics in leadership, management, human resources, and organizational development. More than 200,000 leaders and managers have attended Linkage programs since 1988.

**Linkage**  
**Burlington, MA**  
781.402.5555  
info@linkageinc.com