



Rotary & Rotaract Protocol Guidelines

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I. Introduction: The Essence of Rotary Protocol

In Rotary and Rotaract, **protocol serves as the foundation for respect, order, and the preservation of our organization’s values.** It is a systematic way of ensuring that all members, regardless of position, are treated with the courtesy, dignity, and recognition they deserve.

When properly applied, protocol:

- Honors the contributions and responsibilities of our leaders.
- Establishes clarity in the sequence and flow of events.
- Protects the tradition, image, and integrity of Rotary and Rotaract.

Without protocol, meetings can become disorganized, introductions can become awkward or disrespectful, and events may lose their formal structure. **Protocol is the invisible framework that maintains the prestige of Rotary and Rotaract.**

This guideline aims to be a **comprehensive, in-depth reference for all Rotarians and Rotaractors.** It offers a clear rationale, detailed procedures, and practical applications of Rotary protocols in every possible situation.

II. Purpose and Importance of the Protocol Guidelines

Purpose:

- To provide an **authoritative reference** on Rotary and Rotaract protocols.
- To ensure **uniformity** in practices across clubs and districts.
- To educate all members on the **principles of courtesy, order, and respect.**
- To uphold the Rotary ideal that **leadership is best honored through service and recognition.**

Why Protocol Matters:

- It **shows respect** for leaders and guests.
- It **preserves tradition** and the international identity of Rotary.
- It **promotes discipline** and ensures smooth event flow.
- It **avoids embarrassment** that may arise from improper introductions or seating.
- It **fosters unity and professionalism** among members.

III. Key Concepts

Protocol:

- Protocol is the **set of official rules and guidelines that govern how Rotary and Rotaract members interact in formal settings.** It dictates how people are introduced, where they sit, who speaks first, and how activities are structured.
- **Example:** In a Rotary induction, the District Governor must be introduced first because their position holds the highest rank.

Decorum:

- Decorum refers to the **expected level of polite and respectful behavior** that must always be demonstrated in Rotary and Rotaract events.

- **Example:** Even if a speaker arrives late, they should still be welcomed with grace and patience, not criticized publicly.

Precedence:

- Precedence is the **hierarchical order** that tells us the sequence in which leaders and dignitaries should be:
 - *Introduced*
 - *Recognized*
 - *Seated*
 - *Allowed to speak*
- **Example:** The District Rotaract Representative must always be introduced before a club president.

Charging:

- Charging is a formal part of the induction process. It is a **solemn instruction or reminder of responsibilities given to incoming officers or new members.**
- **Example:** Before new officers take their oath, a charging officer must explain their duties and responsibilities in detail.

Induction:

- Induction is **the official ceremony that formally welcomes officers or members to their new roles or into the organization.** It is a deeply symbolic event that should be handled with seriousness.
- **Example:** During the oath-taking, all members must stand, and the inducting officer must ensure that the oath is recited clearly.

IV. Situations Where Protocol Must Be Observed

Protocol is not limited to grand ceremonies; it is required in all structured Rotary and Rotaract engagements.

Events Requiring Protocol:

1. **Club Meetings (Regular and Special)**
2. **Induction and Turnover Ceremonies**
3. **District Trainings and Conferences**
4. **Leadership Assemblies and Learning Sessions**
5. **Guest Speaker Sessions**
6. **Official Visits by Rotary or Rotaract Dignitaries (e.g. District Governor, DRR)**
7. **Multi-District Events**
8. **Rotary International Conventions**
9. **Fellowship Events with Formal Programs**

V. Detailed Order of Precedence

The **Order of Precedence** is a structured list that dictates who should be acknowledged first and who has the highest recognition priority. Understanding this hierarchy is essential in ensuring the right people are introduced and honored correctly.

A. Rotary & Joint Rotary-Rotaract Events

Order of Introduction:

1. District Governor (DG)
2. Past District Governors (PDG) – in order of seniority
3. Rotary Coordinators (RC), Rotary Public Image Coordinators (RPIC), Regional Rotary Foundation Coordinators (RRFC), and their assistants
4. District Governor-Elect (DGE)
5. District Governor-Nominee (DGN)
6. Assistant Governors (AG)
7. District Secretaries and Treasurers
8. District Committee Chairs and Members
9. Club Presidents
10. Club Presidents-Elect
11. Club Vice Presidents
12. Club Secretaries and Treasurers
13. Club Board Members
14. Past Assistant Governors
15. Visiting Rotarians from other districts or countries
16. Rotary Foundation Alumni
17. Rotarian Families

Key Notes:

- Always introduce people based on **current position first**.
- When people hold multiple positions, **the highest-ranking role must be acknowledged**.

B. Rotaract-Only District Events

Order of Introduction:

1. Guest of Honor / Keynote Speaker
2. District Governor (if present)
3. District Rotaract Representative (DRR)
4. District Rotaract Chair
5. Past DRRs – by seniority
6. DRR-Elect
7. DRR-Nominee
8. District Committee Members
9. Club Presidents
10. Club Officers and Members

C. Rotaract-Only Club Events

Order of Introduction:

1. Guest of Honor / Keynote Speaker
2. Club Presidents
3. Past Presidents – by seniority
4. President-Elect
5. President-Nominee
6. Club Officers
7. Members

Important Reminders:

- Officers should be addressed only ONCE with spouses included at the time of introduction
- The DRR should not be addressed informally during introductions.
- Guests from other countries or districts may be given courtesy priority.
- High ranking non-Rotarians/non-Rotaractors may be given precedence in ranking according to local custom
- Never sit a Woman at the end of the table. This is the only instance we are justified to go against seating protocol.

VI. Event Flow and Meeting Agenda: Thoroughly Explained

A. Standard Club Meeting Agenda

1. **Call to Order:** Marks the official start of the meeting. The bell must be rung **twice**.
 - *As the (state your position) of the Rotaract Club of _____ sponsored by the Rotary Club of _____, Rotary International District _____, I call this (state event / meeting) (to order / adjourned).*
 1. *President calls meeting to order before Host takes over proceedings*
 2. *President adjourns after Host is through with the program.*
 3. *The Gavel is the symbol of authority of the Presiding Officer.*
2. **Invocation:** Brief, inclusive, and respectful of all religions.
3. **National Anthem:** Play/sing the Philippine National Anthem. No applause should follow. Stand facing the flag. As courtesy, the anthem of such visiting representative should precede that of the Philippines.
 - *When the Philippine Flag is displayed on a staff within the portion of a room designated as the speaker's area, it should occupy the position of honor, which is **TO THE RIGHT OF THE SPEAKER**. Other flags should be at the **SPEAKER'S LEFT**.*
 - *The National Flag may be displayed flat, above and behind the speaker. At a horizontal position, the **BLUE SIDE SHOULD BE ON TOP**.*
 - *When hanged vertically, the blue side of the Philippine Flag should be to the **LEFT OF THE AUDIENCE**.*
 - *If there is more than one foreign flag, they should be arranged in alphabetical order to the left of the Philippine Flag.*
 - *The flags should be approximately equal size.*
 - *Never hold the flag while the anthem is being played or sung.*
4. **Introduction of Guests:** Introduce guests based on the Order of Precedence. Verify names and titles beforehand.
5. **Club Singing:** Optional; often used for Rotary songs or club hymns.
6. **Recognition Time:** Celebrate birthdays, achievements, milestones, and visiting Rotarians.
7. **Announcements:** Share updates, events, and important club reminders.
8. **President's Time:** A moment for the president to give final informations, reflections, or motivational messages.
9. **Adjournment:** Close the meeting formally by ringing the bell **once**.

B. Formal Program Flow

- 1. Call to Order
- 2. Invocation
- 3. National Anthem
- 4. Four-Way Test Recitation
- 5. Rotaract Objectives (if applicable)
- 6. Welcome Remarks
- 7. Introduction of Dignitaries and Guests
- 8. Program Proper (Keynote, Induction, Lecture)
- 9. Announcements and Closing Remarks
- 10. Adjournment

Why Follow This Flow?

It ensures the smooth progression of activities, proper acknowledgment of leaders, and orderly event management.

VII. Induction and Turnover Ceremony: Full Process Breakdown

Before the Ceremony:

- Prepare the **bell and gavel**.
- Arrange seating according to the hierarchy.
- Prepare printed programs indicating order of activities.
- Verify the names and positions of all to be introduced.

During the Ceremony:

- 1. Outgoing President **calls the meeting to order**.
- 2. Present club accomplishments to honor the outgoing team.
- 3. Outgoing President delivers **Valedictory Address**.
- 4. **Formal Turnover of Bell and Gavel:**
 - Outgoing President delivers a handover spiel.
 - Incoming President responds formally, accepting the role.
- 5. **Charging of Incoming Officers:**
 - Administered by a respected officer or dignitary.
 - Emphasizes leadership responsibilities.
- 6. **Oath of Office:** Incoming officers pledge to serve faithfully.
- 7. **Oath of Membership:** For new members, if applicable.
- 8. **Acceptance Speech:** New Club President presents plans and vision.
- 9. **Guest Speaker’s Keynote Address:** Reinforces leadership values.
- 10. **Presentation of Token of Appreciation:** All members stand.
- 11. Incoming President **formally adjourns** the meeting.

VIII. Seating Arrangements: Detailed Layout and Application

Head Table with Odd Seats

- Seat 1 (Center) is reserved for the highest-ranking dignitary.

Head Table with Even Seats

- Highest-ranking dignitary sits to the **right of center**.

Round Table Banquet

- Dignitaries’ tables should be **prominently placed near the stage, on the right side facing the audience**.
- Highest seat is closest to the aisle.
- Ushers must personally guide dignitaries to their seats.

Best Practices:

- Seat guests according to the established Order of Precedence.
- Ensure table labels clearly indicate reserved seats.
- Always prepare a seating chart to avoid confusion.

IX. Proper Address and Introduction: Full Format

For Rotarians:

- Club Name
 - Classification
 - Position
 - Full Name
- Example:*
 "From the Rotary Club of Cebu, a healthcare professional, serving as the Assistant Governor, let us welcome Mr. Juan Dela Cruz." (Lead applause)

For Non-Rotarians:

- Inviting Member
 - Profession or Affiliation
 - Full Name
- Example:*
 "A guest of Rotarian Maria Santos, a community volunteer and youth advocate, let us welcome Ms. Ana Lopez." (Lead applause)

Golden Rule:

Never abbreviate titles when introducing dignitaries.

X. Guest Speaker Protocol: Full Engagement Process

Before the Event:

- Send **formal invitation** with complete details.
- Confirm date, time, venue, topic, and speaking duration.
- Discuss dietary preferences or logistical needs.

During the Event:

- Welcome the speaker personally upon arrival.
- Do not leave the speaker unattended.
- Prepare a brief, respectful, and accurate introduction.
- All members must stand when presenting the token of appreciation.
- Escort the speaker respectfully upon exit.

XI. DRR Official Visit: Detailed Club Responsibilities

- Announce the DRR’s visit **at least one month in advance**.
- Ensure significant member turnout.
- Arrange transportation and accommodations if necessary.
- Discuss dietary and health preferences.
- The DRR **should never be charged** for meals or event fees.
- Coordinate closely with the ADRR and Club President for the visit’s program.
- Present a simple yet meaningful token.

XII. Dress Code and Identification: Strict Enforcement

Event Type	Recommended Attire
Formal Events	Coat & Tie, Long Gown, Barong, Filipiniana
Informal Events	Business Attire, Club or District Shirt
Casual Events	Club/District Shirt, Service Project Attire

Additional Notes:

- Induction Ceremonies always require **formal attire**.
- Slippers, shorts, and overly casual clothes are **never acceptable**.
- Rotary pins must always be worn on the **left lapel or collar**.
- IDs or name tags must always be worn on the **right side**.

XIII. Unspoken Etiquette and Best Practices

- **Punctuality:** Always arrive before the event starts.
- **Cellphone Usage:** Set phones to silent and avoid using them during programs.
- **Conflict Management:** Address disagreements privately, never during the event.
- **Respectful Humor:** Avoid jokes that may be offensive, divisive, or embarrassing.
- **Mindful Service:** Think of the comfort and dignity of others at all times.

Rotary protocol is not just a system, it is a **way of life that embodies leadership, respect, and service**. By faithfully applying these guidelines, we preserve the dignity, discipline, and excellence that define Rotary and Rotaract worldwide. Through proper decorum and protocol, we communicate one clear message: **We value people, we honor tradition, and we lead with integrity.**