

MACEDONIAN SCIENCE SOCIETY – BITOLA  
REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

**THE EDUCATION AT THE CROSSROADS –  
CONDITIONS, CHALLENGES,  
SOLUTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES**



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УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ У БЕОГРАДУ  
УЧИТЕЉСКИ ФАКУЛТЕТ



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## **LEADERSHIP AND PROTOCOL – STUDY REGARDING CASE “REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA”**

### **Abstract**

Topic of discussion of this paper is leadership and protocol – study regarding case “Republic of Macedonia,” and its implementation. Main thesis of this paper is leadership and protocol - study regarding case “Republic of Macedonia.”

Key arguments supporting this thesis go towards plainly explaining what are the fundamental character qualities which must be essential part of the personality of each individual involved in protocol activities, and in this case protocol leader.

Method used for dissolving the topic of this paper is practical analysis of terms protocol and leadership.

Key conclusion of this paper is that protocol is not something anyone can deal with. This is especially not a task for the type of leader who thinks he can do everything on his own. Successful protocol leader always relies on the team effort and early planning, on his professional qualities, and the always welcomed luck. In order to “survive” a good leader in the field of protocol must poses certain characteristics some of which are: good organization and communications skills, flexibility, readiness to accept fault in case of mistake, proper personal looks, and other fine qualities. Lack of any of these qualities leads to lack of efficiency, and failure in meeting the required goals.

*Key words: Leadership, protocol, Protocol Leadership qualities, Republic of Macedonia.*

### **Introduction**

This paper dissolves two basic subjects – current positions of protocol within state institutions, and creation of an image of how protocol should look like in the future. At the same time attention is place on the link connecting these two topics – organizational changes which will lead all individual protocol units from several organizations to unite into a fully operational single state protocol. The paper also takes into consideration possible resistance that may occur during organizational changes as it is often the case during these types of changes.

#### **1. Protocol throughout Macedonian history**

The Macedonian state protocol has very strong roots dating to its earliest history. Oldest data of Macedonian state protocol activities can be found in the works of ancient authors who observed the activities of rulers of the Argead Dynasty that formed the first Macedonian state in the 7th century BC. This is the dynasty out of which emerged the most famous rulers of Macedonia, Philip II and Alexander III of Macedonia. Historical records do not elaborate state protocol activities in details. Book like the first "History" written by the father of history, Herodotus in the 5th century BC, and works of Roman historian Quintus Curtius Rufus such as "Histories of Alexander the Great", and "The Campaigns of Alexander the Great" by Arrian, all describe certain interesting activities about the state protocol in Macedonia. Data about protocol activities is provided through the descriptions of receptions of high-level delegations from foreign countries, military protocol activities before heading to battle, daily protocol activities of the state and military apparatus, as well as protocols for funeral ceremonies of dignitaries.

One of the more important periods for the state protocol in Macedonia was that during the medieval period when the Macedonian state was led by Tsar Samuel from Prespa and Ohrid.

#### **2. Leadership and protocol**

##### **Attributes of leaders - protocol managers**

Protocol is a very specific occupation which carried a lot of responsibilities. Anything can mess its order up, and unfortunately this happens quiet often. This is why in charge protocol



official must at all times be prepared to respond to unforeseen and unpleasant situations, meaning to improvise.

Nowadays, according to the latest analysis of the strategic marketing, people who deal with protocol are allowed to improvise, as long as it is done flawlessly. Unfortunately, protocol success often goes on unnoticed. On the other hand, any mistakes during public events are by default always blamed on the protocol, regardless of whether it had a share in it or not. It must be noted that not everyone is cut out for the profession of protocol. This profession especially does not work for the kind of leaders who think he can do everything by himself. A successful leader in protocol management always relies on the team and the pre-planned course of action, on his professional qualifications and on always welcomed luck. A good protocol leader - manager, must possess certain attributes in order to "survive" in this profession.

More specifically, some of these attributes are:

– **Communication skills.** Open and on-time communication is a precondition for successful and apt completion of protocol operations. Most of the problems arise due to untimely and poor communication. When it comes to protocol, nothing should be considered as assumed in advance. All protocol participants must have clear guidelines in terms of what, when, how, and with whom, they should carry out their responsibilities.

– **Organizational skills.** Good coordination of activities is the key to a successful organization of any protocol event, regardless whether it is related to a visit from a foreign statesman, a major international conference, or a reception celebrating some anniversary.

Protocol requires engineering into connecting dozens of different activities and services. The most important thing of all is to have "checklist" of all the work that needs to be carried out before, during, and after holding a public event. This is a must.

– **Cooperativeness.** Protocol is a team work where number of people needs to cooperate in order to foresee, plan, coordinate, organize, execute and control a great number of tasks and responsibilities. Protocol leader – manager always needs to have direct and concrete contacts as well as close cooperation with all the people within the chain of organizing during execution of a concrete task. Protocol leader – manager must always be calm, humble, polite, and with a smile on his face, no matter what happens on stage or behind it.

– **Flexibility.** Protocol leader – manager must have a constant overview of the activities and the general situation, no matter how fast things developed. He needs to always react on time and professionally to any unplanned and unexpected development. Of course, not everything needs to be as predicted by the protocol manual or the preplanned scenario for a specific occasion. Protocol can sometimes be also a good improvisation, as long as you manage to give the impression that this was how things were planned to be. Thus, the participants in this event will be led to believe that the protocol is in full control over the situation.

– **Ability to admit a mistake.** People are not machines; hence in protocol, just like in any other occupation, mistakes do happen. However, what is most important is that the mistake needs to be realized in timely manner, and steps need to be taken to reduce the "damage" to a minimum. Also measures need to be undertaken so that same mistakes are not repeated. It is of crucial importance that there is no panicking once a mistake is detected, i.e. it is necessary to focus the energy and concentration on activities for eradicating the mistake. Participants always need to be dealt with politeness and offered apologies, whereas the senior staff must not be provided with fake excuses, but rather be presented with the real reason for the omission or mistake.

Protocol leader – manager has to receive critiques and disagreement in a peaceful and calm manner without any discussion and comments. In case the critique is not called for or just, one needs to wait for an appropriate time to convey the reasons and offer explanations as to why protocol acted the way it did.

– **Personal appearance.** Protocol leader – manager and everyone working in protocol must always look meticulous and have appropriately adjusted presentation. Professionalism and seriousness should always be on the forefront. Neat hairstyle, appropriate suit or dress, discreet



makeup, and of course the obligatory smile, are a must. Everything else is routine, experience, and virtue.

– **Other traits.** Protocol leader – manager has to be prepared to take all necessary actions to complete the task successfully. A protocol servant who considers it as „pitiful“ for him to open a car door, hold the umbrella for a guest, take a hold of paperwork, or deal with small awkward situations like picking up a dropped mobile phone, paperwork, or a watch, is a person who is not adequate for work in the protocol sector. A person working in protocol must always be at state of readiness, as well as possess professional ethics and loyalty in service of the institution or the person whom he works for. Protocol is a delicate occupation and therefore the protocol servant needs to pay attention of his personal, professional and institutional integrity, as well as that of the people he works for. If he/she has been delegated a certain task, he/she should meet the expectations of the superiors.

A very important part of successful completion of protocol activities is mutual trust, which is being built through everyday experience and practice.

Protocol service should not burden the supervisor too much with the protocol scenario and its responsibilities long before the activity. However, at the right moment he/she must be prepared to execute his/her highly important task. This applies to information such as where he will sit in the car, or at a table during lunch. The protocol needs to be master for “direct guidance” of a superior during the very conduct of the protocol event.

### **Identifying the problems and weaknesses of protocol operations in Republic of Macedonia**

A number of problems can be identified in protocol operations within the organs of state administration of Republic of Macedonia. We will only focus on part of them:

1. **Unstable communication systems** – There are serious problems with the operation of internet and communications within state administration institutions, hence the employees are handicapped in terms of timely reception and transmission of fresh information of vital importance for efficient execution of tasks. Inconstant replacement of toner cartridges, in adequate printers, insufficient material-technical means and computer equipment which is constantly outdated and not up to tasks, presents a major problem faced by the employees in the state administration.

2. **Insufficient human resources for the pre-defined duties and responsibilities.** One of the problems that protocol faces is also the lack of human resources, their insufficient education in the field of protocol, as well as general problems in context of motivating the employees for their everyday duties. Poor working conditions, in terms of office arrangements in all administrative institutions, is only an additional element that has a discouraging influence on the protocol employees.

3. **Bureaucracy Procedures.** One of the most serious difficulties in the work of protocol in state administration institutions is the bureaucratic procedures for purchasing gifts, (ex. gifts that the minister gives to our soldiers who serve in peacekeeping operations in foreign countries). Although annual procurement plans for purchasing protocol gifts have been adopted early in the year, it always happens that these gifts are being purchased somewhere in the middle of the year.

Screening of the present situation gave us feedback which points out that the situation is the same in all of the institutions involved with protocol activities. Lack of personnel is evident everywhere. In spite of existence of slots for protocol employees, they remain empty or are temporarily filled in by inadequate personnel. In addition coordination among institutions is at a very low level. Work efficiency is also affected by proper relaying of information. This leads to improvisation as a form of work, which is a recipe for disaster.

### **Conclusion**

In everyday life we need to treat people the same way we want to be treated by other people. We need to show people around us courtesy, and give them attention. Arrogance is not going to get you anywhere. When faced with a situation where it is hard to make up your mind we need to let reason guide us, because this is the best way for addressing this kind of situations. When



communicating with others we need to be pleasant and polite. Love and respect your work and bare this in mind about other people and their professions. If you do not understand certain task that does not mean that this task is not important. If you do not understand something do not feel awkward about asking for an advice. Years of experience makes people better, so learn from more experienced then you, while those with a lot experience need to be always open for learning something new. Let every new day be a challenge and a stimulus for searching for better solutions for the problems you face.

Protocol managers have the main role in the organization of the protocol. Recognizing the attributes of a protocol manager is an element which has to be seriously considered if one wants to establish an entity which will be catalyst for the work process. Communication, organization and cooperation skills together with the ability to be flexible are only a part of the attributes that must be an integral part of protocol employees. Lacking these attributes would surely lead to inefficiency, and most importantly ineffectiveness, during activities in the field of protocol.

The need for flawlessness is necessary at any time and any place when dealing with protocol. International contacts that determine the course of international political relations are largely influenced by the performance of protocol.

Protocol is inseparable part of operations of any organization or institution, and as such it determines the level of functionality and efficiency in execution of everyday tasks and responsibilities. One must understand that through time this exact science of good behavior transformed into an assembly of rules which are of key importance for meticulous function of any institution.

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