

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark blue blazer with a floral patterned collar, is shown in profile from the chest up. She is looking out over a city skyline across a body of water. The skyline includes several tall buildings, with one prominent dark skyscraper on the left. The background is slightly blurred, emphasizing the woman and the text.

THE PROTOCOL ADVANTAGE

CONSIDERATIONS FOR
GLOBAL ENGAGEMENTS

Agenda

Understand the Environment

Anticipate Challenges and Opportunities

Develop a Strategy

Relationship Management

May 15, 2025, 7:28am

Dear Jennifer,

We want to host a high-level 500-person business forum in Japan attended by cabinet level officials from both US, Japan and the region. It should include an invite only reception, one day forum, and opportunities for bi-lats. Currently seeking sponsorship. Co-organizers TBD.

Need to this done sometime before July 1.

Thanks!

Joe (State Department)

May 15, 2025, 8:04am

Dear Jennifer,

The Ambassador is available on Tuesday to meet with your members.

Please confirm time.

Jean (Embassy)

May 15, 2025, 8:017am

Dear Jennifer,

The Deputy Minister of Finance for Vietnam will lead the delegation on Friday. What honorific do we use for the materials and what is the proper form of address when introducing him?

Thanks!

Jeff (Colleague)

UNDERSTAND THE ENVIRONMENT



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Do Your Research



WHO?



WHY?



WHERE?



WHAT?



WHEN?

Cultural Considerations



GREETINGS



WORK PATTERNS



COMMUNICATION AND MEETING STYLES



FORMALITY



NUMBERS AND COLORS



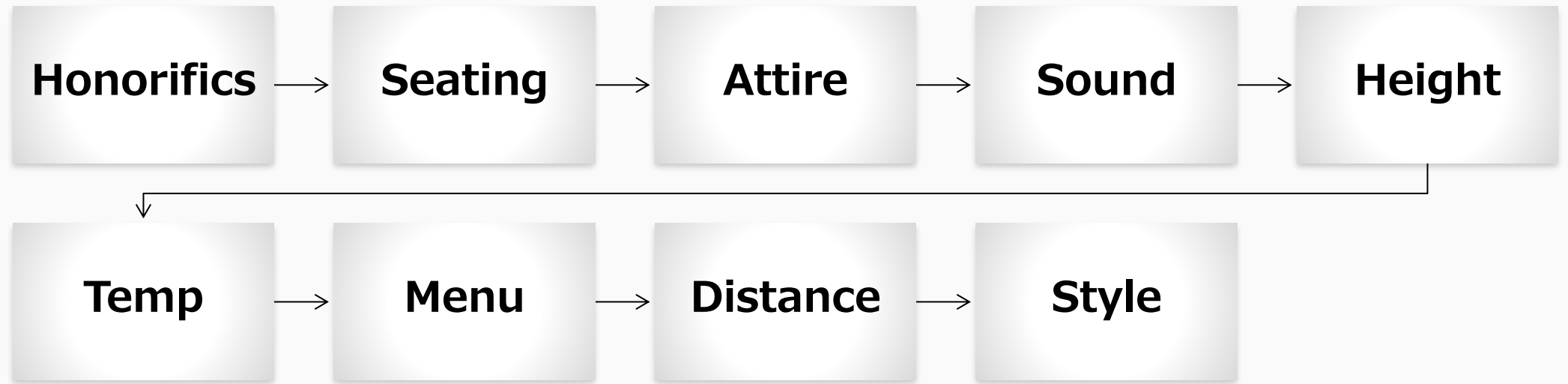
PRO TIP: GREETINGS

A greeting is a first impression.
Avoid an awkward interaction.
Before you go, make sure you know.





CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES



Think it Through



PRO TIP: SEATING

Seating could enhance or ruin a dinner or event. Draft a seating plan, be ready to adjust the plan.





DEVELOP A STRATEGY

Make a Plan

Outline the Plan

Check Protocols

Research Cultural Etiquette

Conduct Outreach

Coordinate Resources

Confirm the Agenda

Be Flexible

PRO TIP: SENIOR OFFICIALS

When hosting a senior official, don't make assumptions. Coordinate with their staff to customize the engagement.

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RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Be Intentional



BUSINESS CARDS



ATTENTION



THANK YOU NOTES



PRO TIP: BUSINESS CARDS

In some cultures, it is important to be intentional while exchanging business cards. Use two hands.



Ambassador Shigeo Yamada

Real Ambassador w/Example Profile



Title/Organization: Japanese Ambassador to the United States, Embassy of Japan, Washington D.C.

Honorific: His Excellency

Forms of Address: Your Excellency or Mr. Ambassador

Country: Japan

Culture: Highly structured and traditional society. Great importance is placed on loyalty, politeness, personal responsibility

Greeting Style: Handshake or Bow – Handshake is limp with little eye contact. Slight bow is respectful and appreciated

Body Language: Nodding, Avoid touching, prolonged eye contact is rude, Never point w/4 fingers spread out and thumb folded in

Corporate Culture: Punctuality, Exchange business cards before handshake or bow, Include Rank on BC, Saving Face (avoid saying NO)

Dining: Restaurant entertaining is crucial to business. An empty glass or plate indicates you want more.

Attire: Modern and conservative. Subtle colors and conservative styles are best for business.

Gifts: The ritual of gift giving is more important than the value of the gift. Give a gift and receive a gift with both hands and a slight bow.

Colors: Red and white are prominent traditional colors that represent happiness and joy.

Numbers to Avoid: Avoid using the number "four" if possible. It has connotations of death to the Japanese.

[Ambassador of Japan to the United States of America](#)
[| Embassy of Japan in the United States of America](#)

Point of Contact:
Name, email@address, Phone Number

[Japan - Cultural Etiquette - e Diplomat](#)

Expanded & Updated Third Edition

Honor & Respect

The Official Guide to Names,
Titles & Forms of Address

Robert Hickey

Foreword by Pamela Eyring

Recap

Understand the Environment – Do Your Research

Anticipate Challenges and Opportunities – Think it Through

Develop a Strategy – Make a Plan

Relationship Management – Be Intentional



THANK YOU!

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