

'e-Protocol' AND IC&T: CONSEQUENCES FOR PUBLIC AD- MINISTRATION'S STAFF TRAINING

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Abstract

The current research aims at providing the academic world with a new integrated and cross-disciplinary approach to Protocol and IT&ICT – consequences for administrative staff training. The need to upgrade and update the training programs for public administration's staff according to IC&T requirements matches the prospective expert / professional's framework of competences. A key observation is that the literature in the field of staff training for social and institutional protocol within notorious training centers focuses more on the status-quo of the desirable competences and less on technology. By means of a rather reflexive set of tools, we have tried to offer some support so as to digitize the social and institutional protocol, thus promoting some software packages designed by experts in both fields. Moreover, this software is likely to sustain both training and professional development programs as well as efficient specialized procedures for promotion and simulation.

Keywords: institutional and social protocol, e-diplomatic protocol, public administration, ICT, IC&T, administrative staff, continuing education, lifelong-learning.

1. The state of the arts – protocol and diplomacy and new modern paradigm of social / institutional protocol

The present research deems it fit to pioneer in the mutual univocal relationship between the diplomatic / administrative protocol and IC&T (information and communications technology / technologies), representing a real and modern approach to streamline public institutions and social processes: 'Today, more than ever, good manners mean good business. [...] It also offers up-to-date guidance on important professional skills, including ethics, harassment in the work place, privacy, networking, email, social media dos and don'ts, and knowing how and when to take responsibility for mistakes' (Post *et al.*, 2014, p. 1).

The quest for whether the traditional and conservative protocol may undergo reform and reconsideration (through exploiting the assets of the IC&T paradigm), as provided by this particular discipline, yet insufficiently recognized academically, remains an epistemological problem. The rationale elaborated by means of a reflexive and interpretative set of tools raises a series of questions with an anticipatory and forecasting value. One of the questions posed is whether the institutional / social (diplomatic) digital protocol can answer some current challenges or rather remain a possible collection of norms and procedures likely to guarantee the success of a certain event?

Ambassador Emilian Manciuur, an expert in the field of Protocol and diplomacy, has shown that there are many forms of protocol such as 'the business protocol, developed due to the need of big national and multinational companies, operating beyond national borders, for knowledge and use of specific protocol techniques, for a better promotion of their image and interests among business partners, otherwise more diverse and less known' (Manciuur, 2008, p. 8). Hence, a modern and upgraded protocol opened up to the dynamics of the social life has ensured an extremely powerful perception of IC&T in terms of specific competences and initial and continuous training programs (as a series of action strategies and techniques). Public institutions undergoing continuous development and evolution need various approaches open to a new paradigm of protocol shift to creative developments in the specific approached fields of social and administration areas.

Another important idea related to the paradox of globalization in the field of protocol and international manners has been recognized by Mary Murray Bosrock: 'The world isn't globalizing, it's already global. To many, globalization has meant that old systems and ways of thinking no longer work' (Bosrock, 2007, p. X).

2. IT&ICT – information and communications technology / technologies

2.1. Characteristics of IC&T in correspondence with institutional protocol

IC&T (information and communications technology / technologies) can be roughly defined as

'an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite

systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as video-conferencing and distance learning. ICTs are often spoken of in a particular context, such as ICTs in education, health care, or libraries. The term is somewhat more common outside of the United States' (Janssen, 2012).

In contrast with the above definition, the European rather utilitarian approach of IT&C seems more comprehensive: 'according to the European Commission, the importance of ICTs lies less in the technology itself than in its ability to create greater access to information and communication in underserved populations' (Janssen, 2012). The extensive dimension of the IC&T concept, regardless of the cultural and geographical area it covers, must embrace openness towards communication technologies, including those rather conservative and traditionalist domains belonging to the socio-human and behavioral sciences. The current approach subscribes to this perspective concerning the Institutional protocol within the public space.

Another definition takes into account the extensive and challenging technological aspects of interdisciplinarity:

'Information and communications technology (ICT) refers to all the technology used to handle telecommunications, broadcast media, intelligent building management systems, audiovisual processing and transmission systems, and network-based control and monitoring functions. IC&T has more recently been used to describe the convergence of several technologies and the use of common transmission lines carrying very diverse data and communication types and formats' (Janssen, 2012).

This second definition fosters various technological extensions in a cross-disciplinary manner, addressing protocol in general and public or private institutional protocol in particular. The initial hypothesis was to test resilience to the use and integration of the new technologies into current activity carried out by personnel specialized in protocol functions and etiquette as well as event management. The points of convergence between social life and IC&T are concerned with the storage, retrieval, manipulation, transmission or receipt of digital data. We highly appreciate this perspective and we subject it to an even more in-depth analysis when associating the integrated concept of IC&T to the rather more specialized Protocol in order to define procedures and monitor processes.

3. Institutional and social protocol – a vast interdisciplinary domain

3.1. Conceptualization

The attempt to conceptualize the term Protocol, often correlated with the traditional interpretation of diplomacy, nevertheless coined in a communicative and social way, becomes the prerequisite of contemporary approaches in the field of public administration.

According to Louis Dussault (1996, pp. 29-30), the Protocol has various meanings such as:

- set of rules and ceremonial practices typical of official events within diplomatic relationships;

- institutional department responsible for the official organization of the protocol, ceremonies, and celebrations, as well as other similar events;
- diplomatic document including agreements and decisions reached upon in an international meeting.

In business, the term refers to a convention or deal agreed upon by business partners after a negotiation. Other authors limit the concept of protocol to the ‘prerequisites that determine the appropriate conduct and approach to officials’ (Dussault, 1996, pp. 29-30).

In accordance with all the hands-on requirements, the Protocol, from the perspective of social approach, can break down into:

- *institutional* (state protocol): set of norms and legal dispositions in force which, along with the customs, traditions and conventions of peoples, manage official visits and events;
- *social protocol*: rules and customs to be observed in social life when organizing private events, typical of interpersonal relationships.

The Protocol can display high impact functions: representation, communication, social harmonization and constraint. Institutions within central or local public administration are in a continuous pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness and address the applications of this discipline to their professional and organizational life: delegate welcome, event / ceremony management, awards and honors, patterns of behavior and institutional conduct, correspondence etiquette and participation order. In this respect, as Dresser has said, ‘my goal is still to demystify the behaviors of people of different cultural backgrounds. [...] Instead, I’d like to increase appreciation for all peoples, that showing respect for differences usually creates respect in return’ (Dresser, 2005, p. 2).

3.2. Cross-disciplinary/Integrated IC&T approach – Institutional and social protocol

In light of the literature in the field, it seems fit to emphasize Margaret Rouse’s first attempt (see also WhatIs.com – TechTarget, 2014) to draw a comparison between the concept of Protocol and IC&T, hence, reaching the following technical conclusion:

‘In information technology, a protocol (from the Greek protocollon, which was a leaf of paper glued to a manuscript volume, describing its contents) is the special set of rules that end points in a telecommunication connection use when they communicate.’ And it following, ‘in information technology, a protocol is the special set of rules that end points in a telecommunication connection use when they communicate. Protocols specify interactions between the communicating entities’ (Rouse, 2014).

Nevertheless, according to the new philosophy of openness and revival by means of post-modern tools, this proves much closer to instrumental hands-on paradigms. In a practical relationship with the possible extension of Protocol, IC&T could be often categorized into two broad types of products: the traditional instruments-tools based technologies, and the more recent and fast-growing range of digital communication

technologies (which allow people and organizations from public administration field to communicate and share information digitally).

In a relatively recent issue concerning the new philosophy above mentioned, PhD Jovan Kurbalija claims that:

'Protocol and immunities are ancient cornerstones of diplomacy. Traditionally, diplomatic immunities protect embassy buildings and diplomats. Should they be extended to our e-mail and files diplomats save, for example, in Google Docs? What is the borderline between official and private communication? How does the Internet affect protocol? Has the Internet changed our view on what is polite and what is not? The breakout session will reflect on practical issues that affect daily reality of diplomats and international officials. The following text may inspire you to prepare your reflections and questions for the breakout session' (Kurbalija, 2013) (see also E-Protocol and Immunities Breakout session, <http://www.diplomacy.edu>).

This statement entices experts in diplomatic and institutional protocol into displaying a greater pro-active attitude towards the new technologies bearing a high social and organizational impact.

Based on a synthesis of interdisciplinary type of integration for both IC&T and institutional or social Protocol, four integrated perspectives have been outlined which, in our opinion, accurately and relevantly depict the similarities between the two. In the end, when drawing upon conclusions, we will be able to notice the ways to improve the training system, on the one hand, and how we can design software to be applied to the protocol domains, on the other hand.

3.2.1. Mono-technological approach

Such an approach to enable the study of the relations between IC&T and social and institutional protocol is the algorithmized and technologized dimension of the protocol, as follows:

- Assistance of actions and procedures typical of event management set by institutional protocol by means of high operational devices/media aids. This dimension has fostered the post-modern approach to the way documentation and electronic support can be upgraded and simplified so as to assist in the initial process of an event launch;
- Algorithmization and operational design for specific action assistance likely to outline an event organization project; information technologies for event simulation, in case of a computer-aided simulation, designed to assist in *ex-ante* analysis of the event so as to anticipate possible risks and/or crisis;
- Communication via media during the event (intelligent technology);
- IC&T integrated operational system of protocol mechanisms and functions for the required actions (for instance, a mere on-line invitation to an event is not enough according to protocol requirements, it must also be printed and mailed);
- On-line communication system and diplomatic environment – even if invitations to conferences, scientific events can be sent on-line, the official invitation includ-

ing the handwritten names as a sign of respect and courtesy for the addressee should be sent directly; confirmation can be sent via alternative means of communication such as telephone, fax, mail.

Moreover, the famous training guidebook 'The Protocol School of Washington' states that: 'technology is vital to the operational success and efficiency of the modern day protocol office. A database tracking system is a tool which will help facilitate the overall event planning process and track invitation responses' (The Protocol School of Washington, 2011, p. 147).

3.2.2. Multi-technological (systemic) approach

Institutional and social protocol approach as a complex IC&T based system with feedback represents one of the most modern yet challenging attempts to analyze the duality of this relationship. Imagine a manager in charge of planning and organizing an event, taking into account the theme of the event, its various stages of implementation and an integrated approach to a multi-media presentation by means of a high technical display operated by a device made available by the host / master of ceremonies / entertainer who uses it as a source of information. This approach calls for a real reconsideration of the traditional paradigm of international event management in terms of expectations and requirements.

At the same time, the systemic approach sustains the institutional extension of the protocol in view of organizing and assigning responsibilities for specialized divisions, establishing protocol norms concerning the use of official state symbols and national decorations system. At first sight, all this proves an 'extravagant approach'; nevertheless, these are prerequisites that may distinguish between institutional performance and solidarity, on the one hand, and failure and fragility, on the other hand.

3.2.3. Functional-integrative approach

Design of 'institutional protocol toolbox' for public administrations' institutions as a type of packages through promoting a complex information base – software product to facilitate control of the entire process from the initial moment of the design to the final stage of evaluation and quality assurance.

Provided a real example, specific operations of design, implementation and evaluation of an event in the domain of Protocol are quite simple due to the fact they are structural or algorithmized. The stages of such operations, as mentioned in the training guidebook 'The Protocol School of Washington' can be, in the case of a master program tracking system: 'guest title, guest first name, guest last name, e-mail, working phone, home phone, work address, home address, parking, dinner, dinner seating, table number, meal request, method of payment, ceremony attendance, seating, arrival date, arrival time, method of arrival, departure date, departure time, hotel arrangements, transportation, rental car, escort, escort contact number, and special requirements' (these details can also act as the starting point of a software designed by specialists in IT in order to provide the most appropriate computer-aided information system) (The Protocol School of Washington, p. 147). The prerequisite of any software

design operation is the anticipatory and operational process (to be successful, such an operation requires control of variables and input data without any omissions).

3.2.4. Training approach – professional development perspective

Use of e-learning procedures and strategies for staff training in the field of institutional and social protocol represents one of the most interesting and challenging training methods. In the overall protocol domain, professional training is an extremely long process, covering formal, non-formal and informal training aspects for candidates to a position in the field of diplomatic protocol or for the employees or staff working in the public sector, in the field of protocol applied to public administration.

The suitable IC&T course for the Protocol training program will almost certainly cover the examples of IC&T in action, perhaps focusing on the use of key applications such as spreadsheets, databases, presentation, graphics and web design software, forecasting exercises. It will also consider the following important topics that deal with the way IC&T is used and managed in an organization (Riley, 2012):

- The nature of information (the 'I' in IC&T) – this covers topics such as the meaning and value of information; how information is controlled; the limitations of IC&T; legal considerations connected to the protocol procedures and formal steps;
- Management of information – this covers how data is captured, verified and stored for effective use; the manipulation, processing and distribution of information; keeping information secure; designing networks to share information amongst the members of a Protocol event or project;
- Information systems strategy – this considers how IC&T can be used within an organization which provides Protocol services as part of achieving goals and objectives.

As you can see, IC&T is a broad and fast-changing subject which may influence new fields of integrated social reality such as the social or institutional Protocol.

4. Public administration's staff training for IC&T use and integration in the field of institutional and social protocol

An in-depth analysis carried out in order to identify some professional experiences in this particular field has revealed the existence of a virtual community for the personnel subject to higher positions within a diplomatic hierarchy, like the global portal for diplomats: <http://www.ediplomat.com/dc/>, and it is meant 'to read the latest news from the worldwide diplomatic community – new ambassador appointments, diplomatic visits, embassy events, and more, to keep in touch with the foreign affairs ministry back home. Review foreign policy statements; consult official staff directories and biographies'. In addition to all these real developments sustained by Kurbalija, 2013, (see also E-Protocol and Immunities Breakout session, <http://www.diplomacy.edu>), more applications can be identified so as to foster hybrid relations for the enrichment of the social and institutional protocol (including its applications for public administration).

4.1. IC&T in staff protocol training

Training specialized personnel for typical activities such as: delegate welcome, event / ceremony management, awards and honors, patterns of behavior and institutional conduct as well as correspondence etiquette and participation order, cannot be interpreted as a mere classical academic structure prone to develop, by means of a bachelor training program, specific competences and issue a degree. Therefore, an employee with such accountabilities must also deal with an institutional extension of the protocol in view of organizing and delegating tasks for the various divisions and setting protocol norms for the use of official state symbols and national decorations system. Moreover, the employee must also cope with less common activities and alternative training (module-based or post-graduation training programs).

Academic training programs for future graduates in related fields of activity (since there is no academic training program in the field of protocol in line with the Bologna Process as applied to European universities) as well as continuous training and professional development curricula for the most representative and active actors on the protocol stage (The Protocol School of Washington for US, and Bruxelles for Europe) lack structure and IC&T content as an interdisciplinary formative support. Specialists in the domain of training programs in consensus with one of the main providers of continuous professional training services, The Protocol School of Washington, have tried to propose several palliative solutions to the curriculum.

4.2. Competence framework for IC&T

With regard to the previous study on the main competence areas required in the field of protocol, we have tried to create an integrated framework of these competences / skills, focusing on their integrative, social, psychological, instrumental and experiential aspects (Lucu and Platis, 2012): dress code, greeting formulas, politeness titles, introductions, gender relations.

- Protocol in administration – organizing specific events: conferences, meetings, and seminars; informal activities protocol: regime of invitations, introducing the guests, ways to welcome guests, conversations during the meal, offering presents;
- Dress code for professionals: protocol customs, accessories;
- Manners in international business contexts: prepare visits abroad, receive foreign delegations, linguistic customs, translations and interpreters, visits abroad.

Unfortunately, ICT competences are not well described and analyzed even in other studies on curricular descriptors. Hence, the literature in this field reveals some necessary skills and norms of conduct applied to the personnel in charge of carrying out protocol services. Ambassador Emilian Manciu highlights the following skills / aptitudes (Manciu, 2008, p. 8):

- sociability, communication, capacity to establish efficient social rapport in various contexts;
- a keen sense of observation, mindful / distributed attention to swiftly notice possible unexpected incidents and react promptly and accordingly;
- knowledge of foreign languages, use of computer and driving license.

Moreover, amongst these aptitudes, we should emphasize the efficient use of the computer, as related to the topic under discussion. This approach mainly addressed a mono-nuclear analysis of competences. Hence, an approach to interdisciplinary competence areas becomes a must. A recent training program launched by Budget Conferences, 2014: Advanced Executive Assistant and PA's including Protocol and Diplomacy, builds upon a strong set of IC&T skills. As a consequence, new skills are required: filling manually and electronically, electronic diary management, venues equipment and visuals, yet insufficient for a correct and exhaustive definition of the competences required by the present digital era. Furthermore, we must also ponder upon significance of digital thinking, in the field of protocol, through special software designed to simulate and test events so as to achieve a digital way of performing in this domain.

4.3. Needs analysis of protocol in public administration's staff training from the perspective of IC&T specific activities

This study is not a research *per se*, based on highly elaborated methodology in accordance with a certain scientific model and it is not likely to innovate the field of social and institutional protocol of the public administration. There were certain limits to a more in-depth ample research. Thus, needs analysis was conducted to solve the problem of the reduced target group made up of a very low number of specialists granted institutional accreditation. Therefore, a relative small number of subjects were selected; still, the target group was relevant for the level of professionalism required by the social and institutional protocol. Our research aimed at underlining the need for training and specialization of such a professional typology, with a high institutional impact on social and institutional protocol. Likewise, it would be a great achievement if we could raise awareness about the need to recruit the best specialists for these career vacancies within public administration in order to enhance its institutional performances. As a consequence, we have opted for a needs analysis based on those competences identified in a previous study concerning institutional protocol within public administration. In this context Jacqueline Whitmore underlines that 'good manners and subtle social graces are not inborn, they are learned. Etiquette and manners must be practiced just as you would practice tennis, golf, painting or playing the piano. When you repeat a behavior often enough, it becomes automatic, feels natural and helps you feel more confident in your abilities. When you exercise your business etiquette skills on a daily basis, you are better able to concentrate on the business at hand without anxiety about doing or saying something in appropriate or embarrassing' (Whitmore, 2005, p. 2).

In view of analyzing the staff's IC&T training needs to assist them in carrying out specific protocol activities, we have launched a national research, targeting 24 employees in charge of protocol operations: protocol service officers. 14 participants worked in the private sector whereas the other 10 were employed in the public sector.

The research covered various aspects relevant to the topic in view without a methodological elaboration of a questionnaire based survey. We opted for an interview addressing qualitative conclusions. The variables researched were as follows:

Frequency of the use of new technologies in daily activity: most of the interviewees admit they use new technologies in their work frequently (frequently, 21 of them, and sometimes, 3); the use of these technologies deals with professional aspects typical of institutional protocol, mainly the management of events and organization of specific related activities.

Devices used most frequently in daily professional activity focused on institutional and social protocol: smart-phone – 14, I-pad – 6, laptop – 3, soft; the question implies a rather anticipated ‘common sense’ type of answer. It identifies the preferred device likely to become a professional support with major systemic consequences not only for individuals, from a personal standpoint, but also for institutions, from an organizational point of view.

Individual use of devices in particular occasions, to sort out a particular professional problem or integrated use: the respondents admit that, most of the time, they use these devices mainly individually and rarely in an integrated way. Unfortunately, no technological integrative algorithm has been identified. Probably, various training programs due to be held in the future, and commissioned by both the institution and individual, should focus on the integration and interoperability among devices and tools as ways to facilitate measures and protocol activities.

Knowledge of specialized software in the field of Protocol: most of the subjects, 22 people, claim they know software in the domain. Nevertheless, they cannot offer examples and, thus, there cannot be identified structures like those mentioned above. By analyzing the answers provided for the previous and current item, we will draw more elaborated conclusions with regard to the integration into a wider Internet space. This is also the case of the tool described in ‘E-tools for Diplomats: What is there? What are the benefits? What to choose? How to use? Engage in the lively debate on our e-diplomacy blog channel, Twitter and Facebook’, that may stand for a possible future model designed by experts in the field of social and institutional protocol within public administration (see also <http://www.ediplomat.com/dc/> for analyzing specific training e-tools).

Increased need for designing specialized software / application via on-line in the field of Protocol (22 of them are very interested in using a specialized application in this area): in this professional field it was established through a very interesting site, E-diplomacy / E-Protocol, a new perspective which could be used as a case study for an integrated approach. They have identified the challenge:

‘The Internet has become central to public and private communication while contemporary tools, including social media, have brought millions into open, peer-to-peer conversation spaces. This provides enormous opportunities and challenges for states and international organizations as they seek to engage with new policy spaces developing around the Internet. E-diplomacy, for states and international organizations, requires a new set of skills, organizational changes, and innovative ways of approaching global policy’ (for more on Diplo’s work in e-diplomacy visit E-diplomacy in focus, <http://www.ediplomat.com/dc/>).

It becomes noteworthy the fact that promoters offer a solution to sustain the idea of e-diplomacy. Obviously, it is not perceived as would have been expected, from a public administration standpoint, rather in the general sense of diplomacy.

'Diplo provides solutions for two main aspects of e-diplomacy. First, Diplo offers complete support for conceptualizing and deploying e-participation in international meetings. This includes strategic planning for remote hubs and workshops, guidelines for meeting organizers, integration of social media tools, and training of moderators. Second, Diplo provides capacity development for the use of social media in diplomatic services and international organizations. It starts with an assessment of the specific organizational and communication needs and requirements of the organization in question. The program includes one-day intensive training in social media, followed by one-month intensive on-line coaching, and around one-year of ongoing assistance for the integration of social media' (for more on Diplo's work in e-diplomacy visit E-diplomacy in focus, <http://www.ediplomat.com/dc/>).

As shown, this integrated solution consists of a training program, highly relevant professionally, providing an active and dynamic multi-media support through Internet.

Domains of institutional and social protocol regarded as highly compatible in designing software – specialists interviewed have elaborated a hierarchy of the professional profile: event organization – 14, training support – 8, other domains – 2. According to the previous source (<http://www.ediplomat.com/dc/>), a lot of activities have been organized using the new technologies in the field of protocol.

'At the Internet Governance Forum in Vilnius, Lithuania, in September 2010, participants at the venue were joined by 33 local hubs (local meetings held worldwide in parallel), with hundreds more contributing worldwide through the smart integration of social media. For the first time, virtual participation approached the interactive status of those present in person, creating a unique policy space and vastly extending the forum's reach. In September 2011, at the Internet Governance Forum in Nairobi, Kenya, the number of remote hubs increased to 42'.

Initial training for IC&T in the field of Protocol: the subjects claimed that their initial training did not prepare them to use IC/T technologies in the domain of Protocol, knowledge was inconsistent and discontinuous. Very few of them benefited from solid training. The same source, dedicated to covering the professional interest in the field of protocol, lists a series of integrated activities prone to tackle a complex set of skills in the aforementioned field.

'In 2011, Diplo ran a capacity development program for the Department of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa in public and e-diplomacy. This comprehensive program involved junior diplomats (online training), mid-ranking officials (face-to-face training), and high officials and parliamentarians (intensive executive training). Following the success of the pilot program, a second capacity development program for South Africa will be delivered in 2012' (for more info on Diplo's work in e-diplomacy visit E-diplomacy in focus).

The majority were of the opinion that *the Protocol Officer Staff training program must match the training for IC/T use* (22 of the respondents). A key observation is that, in the future, digital techniques will not be able to replace the protocol officer's activities and the ones he/she considers most appropriate. The current research has not intended to investigate this particular professional domain; rather, it has aimed at analyzing the most debatable issues. The results can lead to future curriculum designs for staff training by means of new IT/C technologies as well as to raise awareness of the need to design new software likely to streamline protocol activities in the near future.

The previous needs analysis, broadened by means of an in-depth documentation on both multi-media and electronic devices, has highlighted the various assessment standpoints and mainly the quantitative aspects of the measures proposed by the interviewees for the development of the field and IC&T tools mainly designed for their implementation. At the same time, the cross-disciplinary approach of the study undertaken, addressing public and private protocol, aims at testing resilience to the use and integration of the new technologies into current activity carried out by personnel specialized in protocol functions and etiquette as well as event management.

5. Conclusions

It becomes worth mentioning the conservatory attitude to the present day reality in the field of protocol, as proved by the training curricula, and the new IC&T technologies trigger functional alterations and changes in public / participants' expectations. Regarding the motivation of training program providers to promote formative services in line with current social and professional expectations and with the present tendency of 'post-modern protocol', a new approach to competences is required. As a consequence, there is a growing need for digital-protocol competences as well as for an extension of the virtual training space, for simulations carried out through advanced software designed by interdisciplinary teams and used as a training support.

As aforementioned, institutions belonging to central public or local administration are subject to the continuous pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness, to the applications of this discipline to their professional and organizational life: delegate welcome, event / ceremony management, awards and honors, patterns of behavior and institutional conduct and correspondence etiquette and participation order. All these variables will bring about the elaboration of the most profitable training programs in the field of social and institutional protocol. Despite the fact that these programs are typical of diplomatic protocol with online extensions and based on developed multi-media techniques and fair IC&T, there is a need for specialized training and personnel in the domain of public administration.

Our endeavor to bring forth a more dynamic and permanently upgraded approach in accordance with real social evolution (for instance IC&T), which may influence the general diplomatic protocol, could offer support for those professional organizations (with less personnel but high institutional impact) interested in development and re-definition.

The research, with due respect for a long durable domain of study with '(...) a history as history itself', pleads for an approach to protocol in accordance with information technology and communication, for a digitized institutional and social Protocol regarded as a privileged repository of efficiency, performance and refinement: 'As time change, so do the manners of the people and protocol must keep pace with developing life. There have been and there will continue to be changes in customs and protocol (...)' (McCaffree, Innis and Sand, 2002, p. iii). And would these distinctive landmarks characterize an institution within central or local public administration?!

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