



Points of Protocol For Agencies Working With Tribes

Developed by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and its Tamastslikt Cultural Institute

1. **Listen. Be Patient.** Sometimes your enthusiasm, your needs and your commitment to your ideas prevents you from hearing or being an active listener.
2. **Learn that each community or tribe has its own timeline for getting things done.** It may not be the same as your timeline. Adjust. Start earlier. Keep going back. Do follow-up. Share your target dates and be willing to change them.
3. **Each community or tribe has its own definition of success.** It may differ from yours. We are rebuilding nations. Your priorities may not be ours, but they may intersect on a mutually beneficial project.
4. **Respect -- earn it every day.** Do your homework; learn about your potential partner. Usually the burden of educating new partners about us is left to us. Remember fundamental human courtesies and be aware that Native people have been de-humanized (in museums, literature, movies, and policies) for centuries.
5. **Relationships are built on points of agreement.** Make lists; document what you agree to/on. Live up to agreements, every day. Formally seek permission to record, photograph, edit or use the name of the person or tribe in a proposal. If collaborating, offer review, edit and approval well before the product deadline.
6. **Be direct, be straight, and tell the truth.** Most Tribes have had at least 200 years of someone trying to sell us goods we don't want. Know what you are seeking and recognize that whatever "it" is, is subject to negotiation.
7. **Solve problems together.** Define a way to do it together. Accept that we all arrive with biases and they may not help solve problems. Do not make assumptions.
8. **You are a guest in the community or tribe.** We have been here a long time against terrible odds and we are not going away. Many people with good intentions have come and gone. You may become very familiar but remember you are a guest.
9. **Serve elders. They are the heart of the community/tribe.** And, they back you up when times get rough. If you see that someone needs help, offer and do it. Get chairs, water, coffee... Don't make elders stand or serve you. Take care of them.
10. **Understand turnover.** Cultures that had stability for thousands of years are recovering from a couple hundred years of cleric and federally subsidized attacks, secular and non-secular, on that stability. Recovery does not occur overnight in any life, community or culture.
11. **Have a sense of humor.** It has helped us survive and endure unbearable times. Be respectful when appropriate but be willing to laugh at yourself and joke with others, too.
12. **Thank people and organizations.** Some cultures believe that you should give thanks seven times. Doing so helps focus on the good repeatedly.