

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

MANUAL

For

The

Belize Public Service

July 2002

CAREER DEVELOPMENT MANUAL

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Chapter 1 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Purpose of Manual

This manual is designed to provide a comprehensive guide on the career development process to be applied to public officers of the Public Service of Belize. The Career Development System in the Public Service shall be administered according to these guidelines for all public officers whose performance and conduct are subject to review by the Public Services Commission.

1.2 Administration of the System

The Career Development System described in this manual shall be administered by the various ministries along with the Ministry of the Public Service and Office of the Public Services Commission.

1.3 Sections of the Manual

- (a) The first chapter of the manual discusses the general purpose of the manual and related matters.
- (b) Chapter two gives the objectives and a general overview of the Career Development Process.
- (c) The third chapter provides definitions and an explanation of terms used in the process.
- (d) Chapter four gives specific guidelines for implementation of the Career Development process and the responsibilities of all participants in the process.

Note:

In this manual, unless the context otherwise requires, a reference to the masculine gender includes a reference to the feminine gender.

Requests for information, assistance and clarification concerning contents or use of this Manual or the Forms provided herewith should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of the Public Service.

Chapter 2 **OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW OF THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

2.1 Overall Purpose

The Public Service exists as an organization for the purpose of implementing the policies and achieving the goals and objectives of the Government in its service to the people of Belize. This organization should be an expert system, which guarantees continuity and high quality of service to the country in its various areas of expertise.

The Public Service endeavours to demand the highest level of performance by individual public officers based on their intrinsic intelligence, academic training and personal skills. These personal attributes are enhanced through continuous development initiatives for performance at advancing levels of service, and to assist in the growth and development of each public officer. Through these means, the Public Service maintains a rational basis for rewarding high levels of performance, discourages mediocre performance and adapts corrective measures for unsatisfactory service.

Operating the system in a fair and efficient manner, managers provide assurance that the overall purpose will be continuously achieved.

The principal and intended beneficiaries of the outputs of the Public Service are the people of Belize, hence service to the people comes first. All efforts toward improving the conditions of service and capabilities of public officers are geared toward improving performance of public officers with increased benefits to the public at large.

2.2 Objectives of the Career Development System

The specific objectives of the Career Development System are to:

- (a) Encourage quality work performance thereby enhancing Departmental productivity.
- (b) Encourage quality work performance through continuous training and development of officers.
- (c) Provide a framework for selection of officers for career development and rewards based on merit, from among the most qualified candidates available.
- (d) Ensure transparency, fairness and equity when considering promotion and rewards.
- (e) Promote understanding between supervisors and co-workers regarding job requirements, work responsibilities and expected performance standards.
- (f) Facilitate management control and effective use of human resources.

2.3 General Description of the Career Development System

The Career Development System establishes minimum Public Service procedures for filling positions from among serving officers. It also provides procedures by which promotions are made and outlines the procedures by which the programme will be administered.

When a vacancy occurs for a permanent or acting position in the technical and professional grades, the Department in which the vacancy exists will make a submission through their Chief Executive Officer to the Director, Office of the Services Commission on the relevant form for the particular appointment.

In the case of vacancies in the Accounting and Administrative Grades, the recommendation for promotion or for acting appointment will originate in the Ministry of the Public Service after consultation with the Administrative and Accounts Posts Panel. Due account will be taken of the specified criteria and officers being considered for advancement will be evaluated accordingly to identify the best candidate.

Officers who desire a change in career path and are qualified for transfer on appointment in another grade will make a submission through their Chief Executive Officer to the Director, Office of the Services Commission. If the transfer requested is to the Accounting and Administrative Grades, the request will be channelled to the Ministry of the Public Service for consultation with the Administrative and Accounts Posts Panel.

The Office of the Services Commission shall consult with the Ministry of the Public Service in every case where transfers on appointment/promotion are to be considered.

In all cases of promotion, whether for an acting appointment or direct promotion, due account will be taken of the specified criteria and officers being considered for advancement will be evaluated accordingly to identify the best candidate.

Whether a recommendation is for an acting appointment or a direct promotion, the relevant Ministry shall complete the appropriate form and submit the application to the Office of the Services Commission for consideration. Any follow-up action required of that particular Ministry will be indicated by the Commission.

In cases where the acting appointment or promotion involves officers/positions on pay scales 1 to 8, the Chief Executive Officer of the relevant Ministry shall approve these performance rewards in accordance with the principles established herein.

Separate forms are provided for each type of recommendation.

Chapter 3

DEFINITION OF TERMS

3.1 Terms used in the Career Development Process

This chapter provides a listing and detailed explanation of words and expressions used in the manual. All participants in the process need to be familiar with these definitions and explanations.

3.1.1. Officer or Public Officer

A person holding or acting in any public office and the word “officer” shall be construed in accordance with Services Commissions Regulations, 2001.

3.1.2 Promotion

The advancement of an officer to a position at a higher level within the same grade.

3.1.3 Transfer on Appointment

The change of an officer to a position at the same level in a different grade.

3.1.4 Transfer on Promotion

The advancement of an officer to a position at a higher level in a different grade.

3.1.5 Acting Appointment

The change of an officer on a temporary basis, for a limited period of time, to a position usually reserved for a promotion. Such an appointment becomes necessary because the substantive holder of the post has temporarily vacated the post for various reasons (e.g. fulltime training, leave of absence, acting appointment, or secondment) or the substantive holder has permanently vacated the post and there is a need to evaluate the acting officer for promotability.

3.1.6 Criteria for Promotion

Factors by which an officer is evaluated for promotion or an acting appointment to a higher grade. An absolute criterion for promotion is academic qualification. In addition to the absolute criterion, the following factors are considered in descending order of importance:

- Performance/Merit
- Integrity/Professionalism
- Experience/Employment History

3.1.7 Performance/Merit

An officer's fulfilment of assigned duties and responsibilities; his achievement of agreed goals, execution of assigned projects or accomplishment of specific tasks. This criterion will be determined by a statistical average of the Overall Performance Rating on the most recent four Performance Appraisal Reports of the officer.

3.1.8 Integrity/Professionalism

An officer's soundness, uprightness and honesty with respect to performance of his official duties. His integrity is determined by his disciplinary record. Discipline by his Department is less serious than discipline by the Public Services Commission.

3.1.9 Experience/Employment History

Experience relates to the variety and scope of activities successfully performed. It is not simply years of work. Experience should be measured in terms of how much time has been spent on tasks and duties specifically related to the new post; and how well these tasks and duties have been performed. Managers are encouraged to ensure that staff are rotated between and within sections so that they may gain experience in the various aspects of the Ministry's functions.

Note: In the case of clerical staff it will be expected that they will obtain experience in both records management and general accounting.

3.2 Overall Performance Rating

The rating assigned to an officer, based on the officer's achievement on total job performance. The rating is based on a statistical average of the product of the performance ratings of Activity Elements and weighting of each element according to the criteria established for the particular post.

The overall performance rating may be one of the following:

- Outstanding
- Superior
- Successful
- Marginal
- Not quite adequate
- Unsatisfactory

3.3 Career Development System

For the purpose of this programme, the Career Development System is taken to include the following processes:

- Promotion
- Acting Appointment
- Transfer on Appointment
- Transfer on Promotion

3.4 Performance Rewards

For convenience the expression “Performance Rewards” is used in this manual to refer collectively to all the processes included in Section 3.3 under the Career Development System.

Chapter 4 THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

4.1 *The Responsibilities of Participants in the Process*

For the successful operation of the Career Development Programme, conscientious application by the various participants is essential. The involvement of all levels of management in the various Ministries as well as all public officers and the management of the Ministry of the Public Service is required. The responsibilities of all participants in the system are as follows:

- (1) Responsibility of management in the Ministry at which the public officer is employed:
 - (a) Make a conscientious assessment of the needs of the Ministry for filling a vacancy and the qualifications and capability of officers recommended for consideration by the Public Services Commission. Complete submissions should be provided to the Public Services Commission in relation to all recommendations for promotion and acting appointment including the qualifications, skills and experience required for the position.
 - (b) Keep abreast of the performance of officers within their Department/Ministry to identify and recommend those who qualify for promotion.
 - (c) Identify situations which require a recommendation for an acting appointment sufficiently in advance of the requirement; and make the necessary recommendation to the Office of the Services Commission so that the Public Services Commission can signify their approval or otherwise before the officer performs in the post for which the acting appointment is sought.
 - (d) Ensure that a Performance Appraisal is done for each officer in the Department/Ministry, bi-annually; i.e. six (6) months after the date of appointment/promotion and at the date preceding the officer's incremental date.
 - (e) Ensure that everyone making submissions in relation to the programme are cognisant of the process and procedures; and are aware of the relevant form for each function so that clarity of the system can be maintained.

Note: In each part of the programme of the Career Development System, some assessment of performance is required to satisfy the promotion criteria established by management. The relevant Ministry will perform this in every case.

- (2) Responsibility of Chief Executive Officers:
 - (a) Prepare and submit to the Director, Office of the Services Commission, recommendations in respect of senior personnel under their immediate direction; and
 - (b) Forward completed recommendations to the Director, Officer of the Services Commission in respect of submissions that originate from senior officers in their Departments for their concurrence, or otherwise;
 - (c) Consider and approve promotions for officers under their jurisdiction who have been so identified and recommended;
 - (d) Encourage and facilitate continuous training and development of personnel under their direction.
- (3) Responsibility of Heads of Department:
 - (a) Prepare and submit recommendations in respect of personnel under their immediate direction to their respective Chief Executive Officers for their concurrence.
 - (b) Encourage and facilitate continuous training and development of personnel under their direction.
- (4) Responsibility of all Public Officers:
 - (a) Have full knowledge of the Public Service Regulations, Services Commissions Regulations, Operational Manuals, and their duties and responsibilities under their terms of employment.
 - (b) Be aware of the criteria under which promotional and other awards are assessed and actively participate in the processes for achieving such awards.
- (5) Responsibility of the Ministry of the Public Service:
 - (a) Keep an up-to-date Staff List by which the statistics and personal data of all officers are recorded to guarantee correct information to the Administrative and Accounts Posts Panel and the Public Services Commission.

- (b) Consult, as early as possible with the Administrative and Accounts Posts Panel for the filling of vacancies in the Administrative and Accounting Grades providing the necessary assessments according to the established criteria.
 - (c) Encourage and facilitate continuous training and development of public officers at the various levels of the Public Service.
- (6) Role of the Office of the Services Commission
- (a) The Office of the Services Commission in this system is responsible primarily for receiving submissions from Departments and transmitting instructions and/or decisions to them.

The forms to be used in the programme have been designed to elicit all the information required from Departments and for the relevant Ministry to provide all the information regarding performance.

4.2 Preparation for the Implementation of the Career Development Process

The recommended programme requires no major change from the current promotion practices. The provision of this manual and the implementation of the process are aimed at streamlining the system for the purpose of uniformity and clarity. The forms provided in the annexes are intended to structure the system and reduce subjectivity in the application of the process.

4.3 Method of Implementation of the Career Development System

The implementation of the System consists of describing in greater detail the processes connected with each item of the programme. As was stated in the definitions, this manual deals with the following processes:

- Promotion
- Acting Appointment
- Transfer on Appointment
- Transfer on Promotion

Selection of officers for career advancement under this programme will be made without regard to political, religious, or union affiliation or non-affiliation, marital status, race, colour, sex, non-disqualifying disability or age.

This programme does not guarantee career advancement but rather ensures that all qualified candidates receive fair and equitable consideration. Subject to the Public Service Regulations and Services Commissions Regulations, selection of an individual for performance rewards is the decision of management, which requires the approval of the Public Services Commission where applicable.

4.3.1 Promotion

The process of promotion as described in this sub-section applies to officers who are on permanent appointment. There are four procedures herein described depending on the grades to which they apply:

When a vacancy occurs the Ministries will consult the STAFF LIST or the Personnel Records to determine the most eligible officers in the lower grade who may be considered for promotion. Officers who do not possess the minimum academic qualification shall not be considered.

The first step in the process is to determine the most suitable officer for the promotion. The issue of qualification does not arise for comparison purposes, since all eligible officers with the minimum qualification should be considered and assessed. The promotion criteria determined by management in descending order of importance are as follows:

- Performance/Merit
- Integrity/Professionalism
- Experience/Employment History

This assessment is performed and recorded on an ASSESSMENT OF PROMOTABILITY FORM for each officer (see Annex I). The overall assessment is intended to indicate a percentage suitability for promotion of each officer so that the respective worth of each can be determined. The actual figures are not to be considered as an absolute measure; but they do give an approximate measure of worth and more importantly a comparison of worth between competing officers. As such they can offer some assistance to the Public Services Commission/Chief Executive Officers in their deliberations. The minimum standard should be 60 percent.

(i) Performance/Merit

The basis for a determination of merit under this criterion already exists in the Performance Appraisal Reports. This therefore provides the starting point for an assessment.

The number of officers to be assessed will be determined based on the number of vacancies. The four most recent bi-annual Performance Appraisal Reports for each officer are consulted; and the assessment performed according to the Overall Appraisal on each report. Any officer with an Overall Appraisal below Category 3 on any of the four reports is to be eliminated. A numerical assessment for promotability is to be done by this criterion as shown on the “Assessment of Promotability Form”. (See annex I).

(ii) Integrity/Professionalism

This criterion is next assessed in the manner indicated on the assessment form. The assessment is not to be based on unsubstantiated allegations or rumours but on each officer’s disciplinary record. The Ministry should investigate this record over the previous four years and the assessment should be based on the information gathered. If an officer has had serious disciplinary action taken against him by the Public Services Commission prior to the four years under consideration, this should be disregarded in the assessment unless the Public Services Commission specified a time period for this record to be held against him. Such a record will not automatically disqualify the officer but the assessment will include that record as well.

(iii) Experience/Employment History

Experience in this context will not mean the number of years an officer has been employed. It will mean the officer’s employment record for the past four years and its relevance to the post for which the officer is being considered for promotion. Thus it is in the best interest of officers to accept more complex and challenging duties/tasks or transfers which would broaden their experience; and generally to seek avenues for personal growth and self-development which would equip them to effectively function at higher levels.

(iv) Selection and Recommendation Process

After selection of the most suitable candidate(s) for promotion by the above procedure, recommendation should be made to the Public Services Commission/Chief Executive Officer inclusive of the following completed forms. The names and ratings of all eligible officers who were duly considered should be included:

- The Recommendation Form for promotion provided at Annex II of this manual.
- The “Assessment of Promotability Form” provided at Annex I.
- Their Performance Appraisal Reports.

No officer should be recommended for promotion nor be promoted without the minimum qualification.

(a) Accounting and Administrative Grades

The administration of the process of promotion to these grades is usually by the Ministry of the Public Service. For posts within the Accounts and Administrative Grades consultation is held with the Administrative and Accounts Posts Panel. The minimum qualifications for promotion within these grades are established and monitored by the Public Service Ministry.

(b) Technical and Professional Grades

These grades, containing specialized positions being related to specific Departments are monitored and partially administered by the respective Departments. When a vacancy occurs in these grades the respective Department makes a recommendation for filling the vacancy on the Recommendation Form for promotion shown at Annex II of this manual. The filling of the vacancy can be done in several ways, one of which is the promotion of a serving officer in a lower category with the necessary qualification.

When an officer is to be promoted, an assessment of promotability is done in exactly the same manner as described in Sub-section (a) (iv) above. If there is more than one officer to be considered, the best candidate is selected. If there is only one candidate, the assessment must show the candidate meets the minimum standard as described above.

(c) Clerical Grade

Note: The Ministry of the Public Service will continue to administer the promotion process for officers within this grade.

To be eligible for promotion to the position of First Class Clerk, an officer shall:

- (i) Have been successful in the Clerical and Clerical Promotional Examinations;
- (ii) Have served at least four (4) years as a Second Class Clerk; and
- (iii) Fulfil the general promotion criteria of Performance/Merit and Integrity/Professionalism as set out at Section 3.1.6.

All officers, on meeting the full eligibility requirements for promotion to positions of First Class Clerk, will be recommended for promotion within a period of not more than six (6) years.

(d) Secretarial Grade

Note: The Ministry of the Public Service will continue to administer the promotion process for officers within this grade.

To be eligible for promotion in the secretarial grade, an officer shall:

- (i) Be in possession of the requisite qualifications for the higher position;
- (ii) Be recommended for promotion immediately on having acquired the qualifications for the higher position, providing the criterion regarding years of service in the present position has been met; and
- (iii) Fulfil the general promotion criteria of Performance/Merit and Integrity/Professionalism as set out at Section 3.1.6.

4.3.2 Transfer on Promotion

The process of promotion as described in this sub-section applies to officers who are on permanent appointment in one grade and are recommended for promotion to a higher position in another grade:

- (i) When an officer is recommended for transfer on promotion to a higher position in another grade, an assessment of promotability is done in exactly the same manner as described in sub-section (a) (iv) above (Section 4.3.1.).
- (ii) The officer will initially be required to act in the new position for a period of at least six (6) months during which his performance will be appraised.
- (iii) At the end of the six (6) months period, a recommendation will be made to the Public Services Commission for or against the officer's transfer on promotion to the position.

4.3.3. Transfer on Appointment

The process for transfer on appointment as described in this sub-section applies to officers who are on permanent appointment in one grade and are recommended for appointment to a position at the same level in another grade.

To be eligible for transfer on appointment to another grade, an officer shall be:

- (i) In possession of the minimum required qualification for the position.

- (ii) Assessed in line with the following criteria determined by management in descending order of importance as follows:
- Performance/Merit
 - Integrity/Professionalism
 - Experience/Employment History
- (iii) Required, initially, to act in the new position for a period of at least six (6) months during which his performance will be appraised.
- (iv) At the end of the six (6) months period, a recommendation will be made to the Public Services Commission for or against the officer's transfer on appointment to the position.

4.3.4 Acting Appointment

The procedures for recommending acting appointments shall be similar to those for promotion with the following special proviso. A recommendation for an acting appointment shall determine and specify as near as possible the duration of the acting appointment.

(a) Acting Appointment for Two Months or Less

Where an acting appointment becomes necessary in a Ministry for a short duration of two months or less, the names of the most eligible officers **within the Ministry** should be submitted to the Public Services Commission for consideration. The process of assessment of promotability shall be conducted in exactly the same manner as for promotion described above, except that the assessment shall be done for eligible officers within the Ministry where the vacancy occurs. The best candidate determined by the procedure shall be recommended using the appropriate form for acting appointment given at Annex III of the manual.

If no officer within the Ministry meets the criteria, then an officer from outside the Ministry will be selected or the Ministry will make arrangements for the duties to be shared by officers within the Ministry. Under no circumstances should an acting appointment be recommended for any officer performing the duties of such a vacancy if the officer fails to fulfil the performance criteria required for acting appointment.

(b) Acting Appointment of Duration Longer than Two Months

For acting appointments longer than two months the relevant Ministry shall initiate the procedures where the vacancy occurs in the technical and professional grades by:

- Informing the Office of the Services Commission of the vacancy; and
- Recommending an officer for an acting appointment.

(b) (i) In the case of the Secretarial, Accounting or Administrative Grades, the relevant Ministry shall advise the Ministry of the Public Service of the vacancy and where possible make recommendation for acting appointments. In cases where no suitable officer can be identified within the Department/Ministry, the Ministry of the Public Service shall select an officer from the list of eligible officers.

Assessments for acting appointments shall be conducted in exactly the same way as for promotion. The time period of the acting appointment shall be specified for any duration not longer than one year.

(b) (ii) Where the vacancy, for which the acting appointment was required will exceed one year. The following shall apply:

- A new appointment will be required for another period of time not to exceed one year.
- The performance of the serving officer in the acting appointment shall be assessed against other eligible officers in exactly the same manner as if the new appointment was the first.
- If the assessment shows the serving officer to be the best candidate still, then a recommendation shall be made for a renewal of acting appointment.
- If the new assessment shows another officer to be better suited, the other officer shall be recommended for an acting appointment and the serving officer shall be reverted at the end of the current acting appointment.

ANNEXES

- ANNEX I - PUBLIC SERVICE OF BELIZE
Assessment of Promotability Form
- ANNEX II - PUBLIC SERVICE OF BELIZE
Recommendation Form for the Promotion/Transfer on
Promotion/Transfer on Appointment of officers
- ANNEX III - PUBLIC SERVICE OF BELIZE
Recommendation Form for Acting Appointment of Officers

Annex I

PUBLIC SERVICE OF BELIZE
Assessment of Promotability Form

In addition to the prescribed academic qualification, promotion for an officer will be determined according to the following promotion criteria.

(1) Performance/Merit (maximum 50 points)

The assessment by this criterion should be determined by the Overall Appraisal of the most recent four Performance Appraisal Reports on the officer. Rating should be as follows:

- Category 1: OUTSTANDING - 50 points
- Category 2: SUPERIOR - 40 points
- Category 3: SUCCESSFUL - 30 points

No consideration for promotion should be given to an officer with any of the four reports below Category 3. Weightings should be given to the four reports as follows:

- The most recent - weight of 4
- The second most recent - weight of 3
- The third most recent - weight of 2
- The fourth most recent - weight of 1

The final assessment in this category should be the product of the points gained (as shown above) for each report and the weight of that report divided by 10.

Most recent	[]	points x weight [4] = []
Second	[]	points x weight [3] = []
Third	[]	points x weight [2] = []
Fourth	[]	points x weight [1] = []

Total points =				=====

Assessment = Total points/10 =

(2) Integrity/Professionalism (maximum 30 points)

This criterion will be based on the officer's disciplinary record during the past two years. An officer with a clean record will receive the full 30 points. A letter of reprimand by the officer's Department will lose him 5 points. An instance of reprimand from the Public Services Commission will lose him 10 points. A more severe form of discipline will lose the officer the entire 30 points.

(3) Experience/Employment History (maximum 20 points)

This criterion will assess the experience of the officer related to the post of which the promotion is to be made. Each year of relevant experience (during the most recent four years) with performance at an acceptable level will earn the officer 5 points.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT AS PERCENTAGE FITNESS FOR PROMOTION

1.	Performance/Merit	[]
2.	Integrity/Professionalism	[]
3.	Experience/Employment History	[]
		<hr/>	
	Fitness for Promotion %	<hr/> <hr/>	

ASSESSMENT OFFICER
Ministry of

Annex II

PUBLIC SERVICE OF BELIZE

**Recommendation Form for the Promotion/Transfer on
Promotion/Transfer on Appointment of Officers**

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR THE PROMOTION/TRANSFER ON
PROMOTION/TRANSFER ON APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS**

Date: _____

HEAD: _____ ITEM: _____

POST: _____

Salary Scale: _____

Date and Cause of Vacancy: _____

Recommended Date of Filling: _____

2. I recommend that this vacancy should be filled by:-

(a) the promotion of the following officer of my department:-

NAME: _____

POST: _____

SALARY: _____

(b) the promotion/transfer on promotion/transfer on appointment of the following officer as a result of a limited competitive selection:

Chief Executive Officer
Ministry of

Note:

1. If a promotion recommended under paragraph 2 (a) above involves the supersession of other officers in the Department/Ministry, their names, posts and salaries should be stated on the back of the form with brief reasons to justify their supersession.

Annex III

PUBLIC SERVICE OF BELIZE

Recommendation Form for Acting Appointment of Officers

Date: _____

1. VACANCY: _____

CAUSE OF VACANCY: _____

HEAD: _____ ITEM: _____

SALARY SCALE: _____

EFFECTIVE DATE: _____

PERIOD REQUIRED FOR ACTING APPOINTMENT: _____

2. I recommend that the vacancy be temporarily filled by the following officer:

NAME: _____

SUBSTANTIVE POST: _____

PRESENT SALARY: _____

3. The qualifications of the officer for the post are as follows:

Chief Executive Officer/Head of Department
Ministry of

4. The rating of the officer according to the established promotion criteria is _____ percent. The rating form for the officer is attached. The following officers who will be superseded and their ratings are given below. Their rating forms are also attached.

Chief Executive Officer
Ministry of