

# PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT IN THE THAI ENVIRONMENT

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Personnel management may be described simply as the handling of people. A major block to the proper appreciation of the function is that personnel management may be interpreted to mean whatever the user wants these terms to mean. At one extreme, large numbers of officials may claim expertise in personnel management on the grounds that "they know how to deal with people". Among such officials, special preparation or experience are not seen as necessary for acceptable performance as personnel officials. The other polarization is represented by professional personnel such as scholars in institutions like NIDA and other universities in Thailand and by professionally trained personnel officials. They perceive personnel management as comprising a broad range of inter-related categories of policies, methods, skills, and knowledges. In their point of view, personnel management is regarded as a profession.

A general consensus exists that the basic objectives of personnel management are to obtain, develop, and retain qualified personnel to meet organization requirements. What is not usually recognized is that such goals may only be achieved effectively through the judicious application of several fields of technical expertise constituting an organized body of knowledge.

The conceptual design of personnel management advanced by this paper is that personnel management staff should know and use the organized body of professional knowledge underlying personnel management at a high capability level. Personnel management in this setting is viewed therefore as utilizing a substantial array of concepts, methodologies, and techniques oriented to satisfying the diverse needs of human resources. If this thesis is accepted, the proper conclusion is that personnel officials assigned to work in the personnel management field should possess substantive training involving knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes appropriate to the specialized aspects of personnel management.

The first section of this paper deals with the conceptual implications of personnel management to be followed by an operational review of major personnel

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Note : The views expressed in this article are totally those of the author.

management components. Appropriate comments are made concerning relevance to the Thai Civil Service environment. Recognizing the complexity and magnitude of this subject and the constraint imposed by the brevity of this paper, the personal views expressed are intended to encourage further discussion relating to personnel management within the Thai environment.

### **Concept of Personnel Management**

Such terms as "personnel administration" and "personnel management" may be used interchangeably. Differences in connotation exist probably more in the eyes of the beholder. Management may however suggest a more action-oriented activity than administration which, to some, may convey a more conventional and static style.

Personnel management as used in this paper includes both the component systems involving knowledges, skills, and abilities, and also the dynamic process that rotate around the following elements namely :

1. Job
2. Employee
3. Management

### **The Job**

The "job" is the critical starting point within this scheme of explaining personnel management. The "job" embraces a large body of professional knowledge, methods, skills, and abilities basic to achievement of the goals of personnel management. It may be defined as a statement of the particular duties and responsibilities that are expected to be performed by an individual. A second dimension of the job is the evaluation of such duties and responsibilities in comparison to other jobs within the organizational entity. This includes consideration of the different levels of difficulty and other work-related aspects as well as the determination of satisfactory qualification requirements. Several options of job evaluation methodology are possible. Selecting the appropriate option will depend to a great extent on the management objectives established. The key problem is the effective operation of the chosen system of job evaluation. Thirdly, the job also includes differentiated activities relating to occupational groupings, occupational relationships, determination of grade structure, and relationship to the pay system.

The "job" is the foundation of orderly career development. Knowledge of specific job content facilitates such operational personnel management activities as performance appraisal; manpower planning; and manpower development. Career planning as a central function of personnel management depends on the knowledge of special occupations.

Major problems that emerge from the job may be categorized generally under three headings, namely : methodology of job classification; job evaluation techniques; and management uses of job information. Additional information on these subjects will be provided subsequently.

### **Summary**

The "job" has its own dynamics within an organization. It is a key to the planning and control of occupational structure to meet the fixed objectives of the organization. Materials related to the job are useful for many significant management purposes including the basic tools for establishing an equitable pay plan.

### **The Employee**

The second critical element in the execution of the personnel management function is the employee. Description of the range of activities focused on the employee has included designations such as the human factor, human resources, human relations, and man management. The universal objective is how to deal best with human behaviour in the actual work environment. Achieving this depends on a range of knowledges, skills, and abilities associated with the human factor.

The human factor influences practically all organizational activities. The knowledges, skills, abilities, and attitudes for effective human resources administration are tenuous, complex, and extensive. Existing knowledge has been derived from evaluation of successful practices in dealing with the individual in a large variety of work situations; from theory and doctrine found in traditional social science disciplines; and from recent research studies on employee motivation, the group process, the leadership function, learning process among other research studies in operational settings.

Understanding of the basic concepts underlying human behaviour on the part of management and other officials at all levels is a target goal of effective personnel management. Routine and dynamic personnel management differ radically in their perception and treatment of the individual in the organization. Routine personnel management sees the individual employee as without real identity. The employee is a payroll entry in conjunction with the performance of a specific job. There is small, if any, regard for the context of a career. By contrast, dynamic personnel management emphasizes the differentiation and recognition of individual needs. It tries to reinforce the relationships between the individual's expectations and his actual career development. The personnel doctrine fosters positive action to develop work motivation, group identification and teamwork, and in setting and meeting performance objectives.

A secret of effective personnel management resides in managers knowing how to respond selectively and effectively to highly differentiated individual perceptions, needs, abilities, and desired outputs of their work force. The revelation of this secret is accelerated by acquiring substantive knowledge and by developing insights, skills, and abilities in behavioural matters.

### **Summary**

A modern personnel official to be successful as the helmsman for obtaining, developing, and retaining a productive work force should make full use of the resource of knowledge and training relating to the management of the human factor.

### **Management**

The third critical element in the concept of "personnel management" is the management process. The principles and practices of sound management are essential to effective personnel management. Planning, coordinating, communicating, training, evaluating, and decision-making should be applied just as rigorously to all operational areas of personnel management as to other work areas. It may be observed that operational aspects of personnel management may differ widely in quality and quantity of output among different personnel organizations. A distinguishing factor will most probably be in the relative application of good management practices. Strong evidence will be visible in successful programs of sound personnel planning, coordination or effort, open communications, and efficient controlling methods.

### **Summary**

1. Personnel officials should have a firm grasp of management principles and their implementation. Such officials usually have a training need for acquiring an in depth comprehension of the concepts and techniques of management with respect to their application to personnel management.

2. Proper understanding of the concept and use of the job; knowledge relating to the human factor; and application of basic management principles to major personnel operations are main requisites for effective personnel management.

3. Training programs should be designed with a high priority for personnel officials to transfer knowledges, skills, and abilities as required in practising personnel management.

Within this frame of reference of personnel management, an operational review of major areas of personnel management follows :

### **Introduction of the Merit System in Thailand**

The institutional development of the Civil Service Commission of Thailand is intrinsically related to the introduction of modern personnel administration doctrine and methods supporting the merit system doctrine. April, 1979 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Civil Service Commission of Thailand, the largest central personnel agency in Thailand with jurisdiction over roughly 186,000 persons. The merit based concept for the civil service of Thailand did not emerge from struggles among political parties for patronage as in the U.S.A. The creation of a competitive merit system encouraged the systematic recruitment in government service of Thai graduates of foreign universities and also provided increased availability of job opportunities for government service to Thai citizens throughout the country.

Holding national entrance examinations on an open competitive basis for appointment to government service has continued from 1928 to the present. The character of the examinations as well as the methods of assignment of successful candidates have, of course, undergone substantial transformation.

The first Civil Service Commission was composed of members of the Royal Family who were also the ministers of the Government. The tradition of personal service to the King is a reinforcing characteristic of the Thai civil service. This quality has conferred an ambiance of prestige and status on the Civil Service. Although all members of the present Civil Service Commission are not at the rank of Minister, they are uniformly individuals of national reputation highly respected in the country. The Chairman is the Prime Minister. The conclusion is self evident that King Rama VII and his Ministers in 1928 infused a strong and lasting personal impact to the maintenance of the concept of a merit system which is the object of envy of many countries.

### **Concept of a Career**

Modern personnel management promotes the concept of providing a visible career to employees. Career planning may be defined as structured management support of the employee's perception concerning his advancement to higher levels of responsibilities and status either within a particular occupational area or in a generalized work activity. The Thai civil service system in respect to the concept of a career within this definition is at a transitional stage. In part, this is a residue of the former personnel structure based on rank in the man and not on the job. During the rank in the man period, career progress involved generally an upward mobility from one rank to another without necessary reference to qualifications or occupational training or interest but primarily based on seniority. For example, a bachelor degree holder might foresee his career during a civil service life span as upward mobility at time intervals from entrance to the Government at third class through first class to possible attainment for a few, of promotion to the highest, special class.

In the past, promotion, in principle, was not necessarily restricted by particular qualifications but was viewed as a management recognition of general suitability for a higher responsibility level of general government activity. Most university graduate entrants to the civil service before the full installation of the job classification system in September, 1975 probably would have had difficulty in anticipating a career based on personnel expectations for utilization of their personnel interests and/or their occupational qualification. Exceptions were those with specialized professional training such as in medicine, engineering, or other technical categories where appointment requirements were based on possession of a specific professional accreditation or certification. Under the rank in person system, the planned use of personnel based on their previously acquired skills and knowledges would have depended more on coincidence than on career planning.

The introduction of the job classification system has generated a new potential for career planning and advancement in many occupational areas. Much remains to be done to develop further this capability for providing increased employee motivation and career satisfactions. A counter-productive factor, among other obstacles, may be that a considerable number of senior officials who progressed well under the former non-job directed system probably still strongly favor that doctrine. Their interest in career planning along the lines of visible occupational career ladders or other facilitating methods for enhancement of individual careers may be minimal. The strengthening of the present job classification system accompanied by understanding and support for its management uses should reinforce career development efforts. Major improvements already discernible are both in the extent of promotion opportunities now existing within many occupational classes and in the expansion of on the job training programs to increase job knowledge and skills. As a result of the job classification system, a government infra-structure of jobs based upon assigned levels of duties and responsibilities has been developed. This infrastructure is a major and essential ingredient for successful career planning. As a consequence, many employees may now work in particular occupation fields for which they are qualified. Further recognition through promotion and other mobility within these and related occupational areas may be substantially implemented.

### Summary

In summary, some positive outputs that may emerge from increased implementation of career planning are :

1. Entrants to the civil service and those already employed should have visible assurance of the future utilization of their skills, abilities, knowledges and accomodation of job interests.
2. Visibility of career advancement will be enhanced through established career planning ladders and other facilitive measures to ensure increased career opportunities over a broader work area.

3. The installation of the position classification system has contributed to the development of needed structure for career planning.

4. Incentives may be offered for employees to undertake their self-development and their participation in training offered to assist employees in qualifying for occupational areas.

5. Qualified individuals will be more attracted to specific career occupational areas.

6. Career planning should be equitable for all occupational groups to prevent dissatisfaction of employees who feel that less consideration is given to their occupations. The concept of the career should be therefore closely integrated with internal parity of career advancement.

### **Centralized Authority**

Modern public personnel management generally encourages to the most practicable degree decentralization of the personnel authority. The precept is that personnel management should be viewed as an integral component of the responsibility of the line manager. Implementation of this concept will signify positive decision making roles for managers in various areas of personnel management such as selection, promotion, staff appraisal, position classification, and personnel policy development. Training in such areas for line managers should then be planned to equip them for their new responsibilities.

In general, the public sector and, in particular, the civil service have greater difficulty with decentralization of personnel authority as compared to the private sector. Government civil service systems are typically highly centralized as a consequence of culture, administrative traditions, and the emphasis on exercise of control and protection of the merit system. These factors are also probably compounded by an active distrust of the integrity of personnel operations which are conducted independently of the authority-vested personnel agency.

A real obstacle to substantial delegation of personnel authority arises from such realities as the lack of prior adequate training and development of sufficient professional capability of personnel officials at departmental and field levels. Another further complication is that decentralization of personnel authority should be compatible with similar delegations of responsibility to be made by those ministries and departments which presently operate under highly centralized authority patterns.

In the foreseeable future, a main objective might be to maintain a balance as to the degree of decentralization of the personnel authority reasonably attainable in the light of such inhibiting factors. In providing the best public service, an acceleration of well conceived and relevant training in various expertise of personnel management for departmental and field personnel officials to whom

increased delegation of authority is possible should be given priority. Such training should emphasize both the conceptual and the technical roles and responsibilities in different areas of personnel management. Such substantive fields as the following should be included in such training: recruiting; examining; classification; training; providing of various consultative services; personnel policy development; and program implementation; management analysis particularly in techniques of job analysis and staffing patterns; staff utilization techniques and human relations principles and practices.

### **Summary**

The following was discussed relating to the possible further decentralization of personnel authority :

1. A training and consultative program should be initiated and maintained by the central personnel authority to upgrade the knowledges, skills, and abilities of departmental and field personnel officials.

2. The central personnel authority should also systematically carry out a staff development program for increasing professional capability in such areas as work standards development; audit and program evaluation; management analysis; and in the development of content in management training. Such capabilities will expedite the transfer of needed guidance and training of departmental and field officials and support eventual delegation of authority.

### **Management Analysis**

Personnel officials in addition to their various professional roles should be conscious of public relations especially towards the streamlining of the personnel and other transactions that comprise the personnel machinery. Blocks should be identified to efficient and effective public service as generated by overlapping procedures, inconsistent personnel policies, duplication of forms, unnecessary clearances, and excessive time in review and decision-making.

Management analysis especially those components involving the management process such as planning, coordination, communication, controlling should be regarded a principal tool. A capability should be developed and applied for simplifying forms to eliminate unnecessary paperwork and delays.

### **Summary**

Training on basic management analysis including management principles and practices should be given a high priority as a requirement for personnel officials.



## Recruitment and Examining

Recruitment generally includes policies and techniques for systematic identification of principal sources of supply; for attracting from such sources a fair share of the best qualified for government service; for developing and holding competitive and other examinations; to provide equity of opportunity and consideration of merit for selection for appointment. Positive recruitment in the sense of active search for candidates does not appear to be emphasized within the Thai civil service. Many factors may explain this low profile in active recruitment. Large numbers of competitors are already participating in the scheduled examinations for graduates of secondary schools and universities although the number of vacancies is relatively small. Only a few occupational specialties provide real difficulties in obtaining qualified candidates. However, due to competition from the private sector in some fields such as : computer programming, various scientific and engineering specialties, and qualified technical and professional staff in the health field, the shortages of qualified staff and the difficulty of retention are very pressing.

For such occupations, more dynamic recruitment activities may be carried out going beyond issuance of examination announcements and occasional newspaper advertising. Such positive recruiting would include more systematic liaison with schools, universities and other institutions that are training persons in the occupations in short supply. Students and graduates should be informed of the opportunities in government employment. Preparation of special recruitment brochures might be distributed to principal sources of supply of candidates.

A major deterrent in recruitment of qualified persons in critical shortage occupations is the comparatively low salaries as contrasted to those offered in the private sector. As a countermeasure, significant organizational factors including monetary incentives, better and faster promotion possibilities, and increased recognition should undergo re-appraisal and, adjusted to meet as appropriate the specialized recruitment demands.

In the traditional area of recruitment through national competitive examinations for entrants to the civil service and as tests for promotion, the present development should continue of tests oriented to the actual work to be performed to ascertain a reasonable probability of candidates having possession of the required knowledges, skills, and abilities for acceptable work performance. Considerable progress is evident in Thailand in this complex and difficult area of recruitment and examination. Through the increased capability for using objective tests, job oriented tests development, and other professional assessment techniques, the central personnel agency should be able to centralize current departmental examining programs which very substantially in professional standards and administration.

The present trend in the Thai government which depends on the job classification system is to use more effectively the job analysis method to provide the essential information base for examining. In addition, study should be continuously conducted based on modern personnel measurement principles in the preparation of test items appropriate to the qualifications requirements supported by the job analysis. The major task is developing valid indicators of acceptable ability, aptitude, knowledge and interest using such approaches as : written tests, structured or semi-structured interviews; performance tests; and simulation exercises. Such methodology is firmly rooted in the most advanced and widely accepted principles of effective employee measurement. The recruitment and examining field therefore clearly requires among its practitioners a broad foundation of knowledges and abilities in personnel measurements and in the principles of personnel administration to contribute more to effective personnel management.

### **Summary**

The examining function is increasing in its capability for development of job oriented examinations. More active recruitment methods would be desirable for recruitment in shortage occupations. Attention should be continuously given to installation of additional non-monetary incentives to offset the pay disparity with the private sector for attracting qualified staff in shortage categories.

### **Manpower Planning**

Manpower planning is related to the concepts and practices of sound recruitment and examining. It should be regarded as a high priority of attention for contributing to orderly personnel management. It suffers, however, from official inadvertence to the potential offered for manpower management improvement. Inadequate manpower planning capability results from the effect of such factors as : management misconception of its role; reluctance to initiate program based on apprehensions as to the magnitude and difficulty of the tasks involved; non-availability of staff capability in the use of computer or other data processing technology; and probably, most important, by the need for staff capability or availability of training to produce a reasonable level of capability for carrying out manpower planning.

Manpower planning should be perceived as an instrument for providing an increased data base for making better management decisions relating to various aspects of manpower management. When integrated operationally, the improvement or solution of problems relying on appropriate manpower information may be accelerated. Manpower planning is a process for helping to make decisions but is not, in itself, a decision-making activity. Its size and scope may be adjusted to the depth and extent of information needed.

Some inherent difficulties are also present which must be overcome. The manpower area especially in respect to its supply and demand features is affected by rapid external changes and as to the accuracy of the information and related facts concerning people. The impact of unanticipated regional, national, or world events on manpower resources may have a major distortive effect on the validity of the manpower planning process. The collection of manpower data is only useful if the data itself such as job titling, duties involved under the occupational titles and the qualification to be required are sound.

The customary uses of manpower planning are :

1. To indicate demand for manpower.
2. To evaluate the supply of manpower.

Decision making in personnel management may be aided through manpower planning studies designed to show where current personnel policies will lead. The outcome of alternative policies in recruitment, training, and other personnel activities may also be normal outputs. In manpower demand studies, recognizing the effect of unexpected future events ; techniques including questionnaires, sampling studies, and monitoring of manpower trends within the organization under study are major factors to be considered.

### **Position Classification**

Manpower planning could not have been validly introduced prior to the installation of a position classification program. This pre-requisite equally applies to other major areas of personnel administration where the focus is necessarily on work performance based on particular knowledges, skills, and abilities. The job information acquired through job analysis establishes the necessary information base for employment, training, manpower planning and other personnel procedures.

The first step in job analysis is to collect and record all pertinent information about the duties of the job or job class. This may be accomplished by any one or a combination of such methods as :

- a. individual and supervisory interviews
- b. group interviews
- c. direct observation
- d. employee diary
- e. questionnaires

Required knowledges, skills, and abilities may be thus derived from an analysis of the information assembled. These findings usually require confirmation by job knowledge experts intimately familiar with the kind of duties involved. The verification of job analysis or classification data should also result in understanding what the job involves as well as in determining the accuracy and completeness of the job information. The following model worksheet for recording job data may contribute to a clearer understanding of the use of the job analysis technique.

**MODEL WORKSHEET FOR RECORDING JOB DATA**

Job or Class Title-  
Classification Level-

i. Major Duties Tasks of the Class	ii. Importance	iii. KSA's * Required	iv. Level of Proficiency of KSA's	v. How KSA's are Acquired	vi. Minimum Qualification Requirement	vii. Recommended Appraisal Method
		*Knowledges Skills Abilities				

Effective job data collection and evaluation methods are prime requisites for establishing and maintaining a well conceived and implementable position classification program. However, additional requirements must also be met before success in administration of a position classification program may be achieved. In brief, some major targets for good implementation of a position classification program are :

- a) establishment of knowledges, skills, and abilities for jobs and/or job classes.
- b) allocation of jobs to classes of jobs where similar knowledges, skills and abilities are involved including further separation into occupational series based upon the degree and quality of skills, knowledges, and abilities required.
- c) job evaluation methods.
- d) maintenance of the currency and validity of the job information.
- e) management and employee support for program objectives.

A brief commentary follows on each of the above activities :

**Establishment of knowledges, skills, and abilities**

Recommended for establishment of the needed knowledges, skills and abilities for acceptable job performance is the job analysis process. A major goal is to refine the job analysis process sufficiently in order to produce current individual job descriptions with specified knowledges, skills, and abilities as compared with the development of broad class specification providing generalized knowledges, skills, and abilities. The ideal goal for a fully implemented position classification system is that each employee should know and perform the content of his individual job description.

### **Establishment of class specifications**

Research is necessary to group rationally and systematically related jobs involving comparable knowledges, skills, and abilities, into job families. The resulting class specifications should include relevant qualification requirements. They may be used as a basis for job classification in the absence of individual job descriptions. A class specification typically has the following format :

- a) class title
- b) duties and responsibilities
- c) typical tasks
- d) minimum qualifications
- e) knowledges and ability required for acceptable performance

A note of caution in respect to the use of class specifications must be sounded. Class specifications must have a high degree of accuracy and currency; otherwise, their use will be greatly constrained for obtaining a high standard of position classification. Without accuracy and currency, class specifications may generate personnel problems.

### **Job appraisal methods**

The Office of the Civil Service Commission presently uses the classification method of job evaluation which is also used abroad. This process comprises analytical comparisons among jobs within the context of predetermined evaluation factors and job models for specific levels.

Another method which has now been introduced by the United States Federal Civil Service for non-supervising positions below the top management level is called the Factor Evaluation System. This System uses a point rating system addressed to previously identified job factors present in the job to be evaluated. These factors are given point scores based on their comparison to accepted standards of factor comparison known as benchmarks. Research on this method is underway on possible adaptations of some aspects of this approach.

### **Maintenance of job information**

Duties and responsibilities assigned to employees in the course of time undergo changes in some respects. Such changes may affect the valid classification of the position. Consequently, a systematic post-audit review program contributes to maintaining the desirable currency and grade validity of the system. The audit may be carried out through a cyclical survey of entire organizational units or for implementation on a planned time basis. Maintenance may also be improved of the classification system by the use of questionnaires or sampling techniques. The

objective is to determine if the actual duties performed compare properly with the job information on record. If substantial changes have occurred, a re-classification should be considered.

### **Management and Employee Support**

Whatever a modern job classification has been installed, obtaining the full support of both line management and employee covered by the system has been a major undertaking. The emotional values of individuals affected by the operation of the classification system frequently become distorted and disruptive of effective cooperation. A strong positive emphasis on the public relations aspects of program acceptance is therefore a prerequisite for organizational harmony. Determinants of these inter-personal tensions are identifiable. For example, the classification process as the basis for the pay plan controls the pay received therefore affecting employee living standards and expectations. Another cause may be attributable to the highly subjective character of the official decision-making process on grade or level determination. This process is frequently aggravated by non-constructive or authoritarian attitudes by the job classifiers. An urgent need may exist for training in human and public relations among such personnel technicians. The installation of a job classification system may also generate inherent conflict with the traditional authority, structure, and leadership style of political and senior government officials. It limits their personal prerogatives for hiring, assigning, promoting, and paying staff. Such decisions under a job classification system rest with other officials.

### **Summary**

Ensuring better understanding and improved interpersonal relations in administration of a position classification system is critical to personnel management. Numerous factors closely related to self interest that motivate strong disagreements with the concepts and application of position classification may be difficult to change. Increasing the understanding of the program may not eliminate chronic disagreements however increased acceptance may be developed by training job classifiers in human relations sensitivity principles and practices. The methodology and implementation of the total personnel system should be constantly appraised for identification of possible improvements. This is especially relevant to the position classification component. Identifying and implementing further integration of job classification with other personnel functions such as test development, training, performance appraisal, and career development is also a key goal.

### **Training and Development**

In recent years, training and development have acquired international visibility. This phenomenon reflects the world-wide knowledge explosion generated by the thirst for development expertise to meet rising expectations of national societies. The terms, training and development, are used in a complementary relationship in this section.

Training comprises all planned formal instructional activity offered generally in a structured setting such as a class room. Development connotes individually generated efforts for self-growth and improved perspectives not necessarily in structured environment. Development should be a logical sequence of most training activity. Training should be able to meet such objective criteria as :

- a) clear relevance to the improvement of solution of identified or anticipated needs for knowledges, skills, and abilities.
- b) conformity to a high standard of quality of preparation of the subject matter to be transferred to the training participants.
- c) use of an effective delivery system utilizing modern training technology and instructional methods.

Such standards may appear to be elementary and easily amenable to normal implementation. In fact, they are frequently by-passed in the implementation of training programs.

Common deficiencies in training administration may be identified as :

- a) Non-existent or superficial efforts to identify in dimensions the precise training needs which should be the basis for the planned and/or executed training.
- b) Inadequate research and development of the proper training content both in terms of substantive coverage, relevance to the behavioural objectives, relationship to training needs; and the depth of treatment of the knowledges involved.
- c) Instructional methods are narrowly conceived relying on the lecture instructor-centred teaching method. This kind of training delivery is particularly dominant in those countries where the educational system through university level commonly utilizes the lecture and repetitive learning as the major instructional media.
- d) A training technology comprising various and reinforcing audio-visual aids to stimulate learning is inadequately provided or supported. Creating a strong participant identification with the course materials and behavioural objectives is greatly reduced.
- e) Training materials used for class exercises are drawn almost wholly from foreign environments thereby negating the authenticity and meaningfulness of the exercise.
- f) Course support logistics in such components as (1) selection of trainees (2) location of training (3) availability of trained instructors (4) and evaluation procedures are not well planned or executed.

Such weaknesses may exist only in part in some training programs. Major degree of difference may be found among training programs among different sponsors within the same country.

Several favorable influences are counteractive to the problems described such as :

a) The field of training is generally supported by management and employees in view of its non-threatening character in respect to status, salary, or employee recognition.

b) Recognition exists among line management of many gaps in public service expertise especially in the inter-personal and managerial relations aspects as well as in different kinds of administrative technical specialties.

c) Employees generally perceive training as an aid to their self-development through its contribution to their potential for career advancement.

d) Acceptable courses on training of trainers in effective instructional and curriculum development methods are now being offered officials entering or active in the field of training.

Training and development in management and public administration are gaining increased recognition within the Thai Government. Training is no longer conceived as a device to meet internal promotion requirements or as an apprenticeship stage for progress to a journey man level. The current view is for providing training in various aspects of public administration to improve skills, knowledges, abilities, and attitudes. Significant future acceleration of management and other administrative training at different levels in Thailand may be anticipated as a result of two major national directives; namely; a) the Civil Service Act of 1975 which assigns explicitly and legally the responsibility for training and development of civil servants to the Office of the Civil Service Commission and b) the strong statements in support of the role of the Civil Service Commission in fostering career training and development activities as set forth in the Fourth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1977-1981)

The Civil Service Commission is expecting continued assistance from the United Nations Development Programme and new support from the World Bank to establish a National Civil Service Training Center to serve as an operational focus for management training and development of employees in the Thai civil service. The proposed objectives of the Center will be :

- a) To create a central institution of a high competence devoted to the development of managerial skills of senior, middle, and lower level officials in Government;
- b) To provide systematic management training programmes to foster creative managerial and leadership behaviour;
- c) To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and the improvement of delivery of public services through better planning and understanding of national policy objective;
- d) To prepare senior and other officials for assuming a wider range of managerial responsibility during their careers;



- e) To carry out administrative research programmes to understand better the problems of Thai administration and to propose appropriate solutions as a consultative service. Enrichment of the training functions with direct and relevant case and other training materials should also result from the research activities.

The Center should also provide assistance and coordination to the departments which do not have their own training units to organize and conduct training programmes, particularly for administrative skill-development.

The Center should, therefore, be a major instrument for carrying out the strategy of the Civil Service Commission in developing the human resources in public service. This strategy is two pronged : (a) develop training vertically by strengthening the departmental training centers in providing programmes in functional and technical areas; (b) develop programs horizontally for all government departments to strengthen and up-date management skills and knowledge.

The disciplinary foundation for training should not be disregarded. Training draws many of its principles and techniques from such social sciences as : psychology, anthropology and sociology. Social science research methods are applicable to research on essential tasks in the training process, such as identification of training needs; preparation of the training content; and evaluation of the effectiveness of the training.

In training administration, a judicious use of research methods helps to ensure more meaningful training results. For example, in identification of training needs, the essential objective is to identify accurately the actual work problems rather than those suggested by rumors or general impressions. In making a proper collection of data, the actual training requirements will become known. The design of the training to meet these requirements may then be developed. Similarly, in preparing a training design or plan, the specific training components may be tested in terms of their authentic relationship to the real training needs being confronted.

Training should be visualized operationally as transfer of knowledge to increase skills, abilities, positive attitudes. The common objective of any administrative training is to enhance performance capability in a work or organizational setting. To attain this objective requires a) desire to learn by participants; b) identification of subject matter with work activities of the employees; c) instructional techniques that will held attention of trainees; d) reinforcement of training materials by diverse methods to ensure understanding; e) recognition of individual progress and f) a permissive environment.

The presentation of a course resembles the top of an iceberg, that is, four fifths of its supporting structure are not visible. The success of a training course is controlled by the amount of attention to each key component of training administration. The training process is not an end in itself but a tool available for

reaching a programme task objective. Management must identify first the behavioural training goal.

One of the most important activities in which a training staff may be engaged is in the planning and implementation of the identification of needs. A wasteful practice among some training activities that should be avoided is to offer courses without examination of the nature, impact, and seriousness of the problems constituting the training need which the proposed training course is to improve or eliminate. If the participants in such courses can not identify the content of the course with their actual performance problems, they will consider the training to be useless.

Determination of training needs must rely, therefore, on a reasonably accurate identification of the actual problems that constitute the training need. It is therefore generally accepted that by using proven research techniques similar to those adopted by social scientists in their research, the probability of obtaining more valid identification of training needs will be greatly increased.

After agreement on the actual training needs to be satisfied by a training course, the machinery for preparation of the course may be set in motion. The first step is to provide for the staffing of the training course. Explicit responsibility for preparation and conduct of the course should be delegated to the course director. The trainers and other staff who are assigned to work under his direction should also be identified. The course director should determine at this stage what additional professional resource personnel may be needed both in the preparation of individual sessions and/or in the conduct of the course. Such details as the location of the course, duration, sources and selection of trainees, promotional materials such as announcements of the course should be determined at an early time.

The second major step is to develop the actual course design culminating in a syllabus showing the basic context of each session and their sequence from the first to the last session. The preparation of this course design will require preliminary investigations into the substantive knowledge available that will have full relevance to the training needs. This may involve interviews with officials or other resource personnel highly informed in the field of knowledge concerned; review of available documentation including other courses that may have some relevance. After sufficient information as to knowledge and other requirements has been collected, the course director within the frame of reference of the identified training needs should set forth explicitly the specific overall training objectives of the course.

A broad course design should include overall training objectives; specific training objectives for each session; and the identification of the topics to be presented in each session. With this broad course design, the actual preparation of the content for each session may commence. The course director should assign the specific responsibilities for research and other methods to be used for development

of each session. In general, there will be two parallel lines of activity; namely, one, is the collection of course content through review by trainers of literature and other documentation related to the specific session training objectives, by interviews with informed persons, and by drawing upon such information that was collected in the process of the needs identification. The other approach is to be used when a specialized body of knowledge is involved. This process involves identifying resource personnel knowledgeable in the substantive area of the training and requiring their preparation of the main elements of the broad course design. The trainer during this process will have an advisory role on such matters as the development of proper training objectives; recommendations on the use of institutional methods and other training materials, and guidance on the presentation and evaluation of each session in its relationship to training needs. The technical resource person would be responsible for the training content that the various instructional methods will communicate to the trainees. Emphasis must be placed on drawing fully in preparation of training materials and content on the problems faced by trainees in their current or future work situation. Thus, case studies, role playing, and other training materials should possess a high degree of authenticity.

The choice of proper methods and materials for the delivery of training content is essential. A training technique effective for achieving one objective may not be appropriate for another goal. The key is to select the method best suited for the particular training objective to be achieved. Among the instruction methods that may be used are :

- Lecture
- Division into small groups with the number of persons from six to fifteen persons.
- Use of group information presentation techniques such as syndicate, panels, reading assignments, special assignments, preparation of reports.
- Use of participative training techniques such as management games, skits, role playing, in-basket exercise, case method.
- Field trip

Audio-visual aids are also effective in helping to learn and in increasing retention but the problem is how they may be used. The effectiveness of the training material however depends on the way in which the trainer uses the material.

Training materials may include field reports, preparation of case studies, preparation of role playing exercises, skits etc., accounting ledgers, instructional manuals, classification and pay plans, correspondence files, or whatever materials singly, or in combination, might be necessary either to simulate an actual situation or to aid in solving a problem.

Administrators are interested in discovering how well training programmes are operating. Training managers need feedback about the competence of their programmes in respect to such subjects as : the effectiveness of the instructors, the facilities, the training design. Instructors also like to know how well they are performing. Trainees are interested in the various methods to be used for evaluation purposes. Pre-and post-course testing may be used to identify their knowledge and skills in performing their work prior to training.

An effective system of evaluating the impact of administrative training on the employee's performance may help in establishing a more positive correlation. Such evaluation may help in improving the future course content and the use of training methodology in achievement of the course objectives. The accumulated experience of the trainers in successive training courses when combined with the feedback from the trainees is a resource for reevaluating the course content, the quality of instruction and the training methodology.

### **Summary**

Training in administration and management is an expanding function in Thailand. The recognition of its possible contribution to more productive work performance is evident. The Civil Service Commission is now taking an active leadership role which will be greatly reinforced by the proposed National Civil Service Training Center. Training administration entails a number of specialized components which will determine the success of the training. The current emphasis is on participative training methods supported by a variety of audio-visual aids to meet explicit behavioral objectives. Constant evaluation and feedback on the relevance and effectiveness of training offered must be enforced.

### **Employee Relations**

The employee relations function may be defined as the active promotion of harmonious employee-management relations basic to maintaining high standards of employee morale and efficiency including the development of policies and practices designed to improve morale, work satisfaction, and proper utilization of the work force. Training policies and programs increase career development potential as well as providing a channel for positive management-employee communication. Training and development thus bear a significant relationship to the employee relations function. In the Thai public service, employee relations is not generally regarded as a separate area of full time work activity.

Whether or not the responsibilities for the employee relations function are accomplished on a full or part time is not too material. The essential point is the implementation of a personnel policy providing that active measures should be

continuously pursued towards improving all aspects of management-employee communication and understanding. Two main categories of this area are :

a) Organizational communications and b) Employee services and welfare benefits.

Limitations of space do not permit the extensive treatment that should be provided for explanation of this subject. However, some predominant values within the context of the employee relations sector are basic to effective personnel management and should be therefore discussed.

In Thailand, management tends to be highly centralized with a heavy dependence upon senior management authority operating within a defined legal and regulatory framework. The opening up of communication channels between senior officials and their subordinates either on an individual or organizational basis requires special leverage based on concerted efforts starting from the top of the organizations and the leadership of the central personnel agency and moving through all management levels.

The dominant force is the management attitude towards the work force as reflected in the management doctrine and style of senior management. Positive top management attitudes supported by implementing policies can enhance management-employee communication in many meaningful and productive ways. The development of a desired "responsive management" approach is not easy, demanding considerable effort in identification of the range and depth of management practices to be incorporated within the total management system. The management decisions as to the content and coverage of the implementation aspects are very important to successful achievement.

Some employee relations policies and practices that are considered as contributing to responsive management are those relating to :

- a. Conduct of employee-management meetings on policies and practices affecting directly the employee to be conducted at different organizational levels.
- b. Joint consultative committees on management policies and practices.
- c. Employee handbooks and newsletters.
- d. Various performance incentive activities e.g., performance awards, suggestion program.
- e. Assistance in providing employee welfare and other employee services.
- f. Equitable disciplinary and grievance appeals policies and procedures.

### Summary

Management support on a continuing basis should be devoted to the employee relations field. Changes in attitudes towards employee-management communication and provision of employee benefits and services are important aspects of good employee relations. The establishment of a well balanced employee

relations program towards fostering a responsive management is a major factor in developing increased employee motivation and group identification with the mission of the organization.

### **Performance Appraisal System**

Public services have had relatively little success in developing and maintaining a performance appraisal system that provides the benefits that in theory should be anticipated or that justifies the costs involved. Different views are held on such areas as the degree of confidentiality of the information in the report; the operational use of performance ratings in other components of personnel management; and the location of responsibility and extent of financial and other support for the operation of the programme. It is not expedient in the limited space to examine in detail many administrative obstacles and negative factors that national performance appraisal systems may have confronted. Focus should be on some constructive results that may be obtained.

A personnel appraisal system should be judged on its capacity for satisfying the special requirements and goals of individual national personnel management system. The appraisal system should have operational simplicity and ample flexibility to meet special demands. Flexibility of design is a prerequisite in conceiving and operating any programme that involves human behaviour. A positive goal is getting a better not a perfect output of constructive results useful to better management and recognition of human resources.

A particular operational methodology is described here which focuses especially on improving communication between employees subject to the performance appraisal plan and their supervisors and on contributing to better career planning and job satisfaction.

A significant value is assigned to designing and using the performance appraisal system as a chief instrument for identifying and recognizing officially both the high achievers typically described as outstanding and for providing appropriate remedial assistance for the low achievers with marginal or not acceptable performance. An underlying thesis to this design is that higher employee motivation should result from better understanding by the employee of the work assigned; from his increased identification with the development aims of his organization; and from concrete recognition of outstanding performance.

Measuring with some degree of validity the work performance of employees is basic to effective personnel management. The instruments, however, for properly accomplishing this are controversial and complex, with no apparent consensus as to the best means. In public service, the technical problems of employee performance assessment are compounded by the legal and regulatory context within which any performance appraisal must be executed, as well as by the frequent ambiguity of the perceived goals.

Clearly, developing and operating a performance system that would completely solve all problem situations would appear to be an administrative impossibility. An acceptable course may be to recognize that any system will only be relatively successful even in satisfying such limited objectives as the following :

- a. to provide a basis for judging whether employees are performing at an acceptable level;
- b. to identify and assist employees where performance may not be at an acceptable standard;
- c. to identify and recognize employees whose performance is consistently outstanding;
- d. to provide reliable information and guidance to officials responsible for management decisions on awards, increments, promotions, assignment;
- e. to improve communication among supervisors and the staff under their direction.

The foundation for the performance appraisal process should be the knowledge explicitly stated of the major continuing official duties and responsibilities of the employee to be appraised. This information should be incorporated as an integral part of the appraisal forms. Employee performance is thus appraised within a known context of explicit duties and responsibilities. The rater and the ratee are required to indicate their concurrence as to the accuracy and continuity of these particular duties and responsibilities.

Individual appraisal reporting forms may vary in content, scope and requirements, depending on the nature and level of the work performed and the work setting. These job differences should be the basis for determining the number and kind as well as the work factors and rating procedures to be followed. Independent of the selection of the reporting form, the principle should be maintained of fostering open supervisor-employee communication on job requirements and mutual agreement on performance objectives and performance standards.

An interview should be required between the reporting officer and the employee under appraisal to communicate and discuss the reporting officer's judgments as stated on the appraisal form, particularly in respect to the achievement of the performance objectives previously established.

Intensive group and individual training of all personnel involved in the performance appraisal system is essential to ensure their understanding and support of the policies, procedures, objectives and related matters pertaining to the successful implementation of the performance appraisal system.

A comprehensive performance appraisal system may be composed of the following main areas :

- a. Component on Instructions and Job Information
  1. Instructions
  2. Personal and Job data

- b. Component on Personal Qualities
- c. Component on Performance Factors
- d. Component on Definition of Performance Factors and Rating Scale
- e. Recognition of outstanding employees
- f. Recognition of Unsatisfactory Performance
- g. Component of Communication and Career Growth
- h. Component on Performance Objectives
- i. Component on "Pen" Appraisals
- j. Component on Role of Reviewing Officers

An employee appraisal system should reinforce employee motivation by providing incentive awards for outstanding employee accomplishment during the time period covered by the employee appraisal report. This concept depends on management sponsorship of a range of incentive awards that confer official recognition broad enough to include employees in various occupations and at different levels. Monetary recognition may have greater meaning to many employees as compared to honorary types of recognition. A practical combination would be desired. The important element to be accentuated is that some kind of official recognition is given to outstanding performance. The general criterion is to provide such recognition as will be appreciated by the recipient and will stimulate others to equal the achievements. Whatever the form of the recognition—a letter of appreciation or official recommendation, a granting of special consideration, a cash award or an honorary action—it should be seen as appropriate by the employees concerned.

To eliminate favoritism or questionable recommendations, the full documentation in support of all "outstanding" ratings is an absolute requirement. This should include concrete illustrations of exceptional merit and narrative descriptions of continuing critical incidents of outstanding performance. The ratings and the supporting documentation should be reviewed by a carefully selected board or panel, acting on a governmentwide basis, which would evaluate and certify, where justified, the authenticity of the recommendation.

Employee whose work performance has been perceived as unsatisfactory should be identified as early as possible by their supervisors. Supervisors should discuss the work and the standards expected to be met with such employees to work out a mutually acceptable performance improvement programme and thereby to avoid an unsatisfactory rating.

### **Summary**

The design and mode of operation of the performance appraisal system described are directed principally towards strengthening the kind and quality of interaction between management and employees towards achievement of both employee career growth objectives and management achievement of national develop-



ment goals. Its support indicates belief in a doctrine of improvement of employee-supervisor communication and in expecting an out-put oriented result. The overall effectiveness of this approach will be reinforced if implementing action deals with the process not as a self-contained but as an essential and integral sector of the total personnel management system.

### CONCLUSION

In this paper, an analysis has been provided of the meaning, significance, and coverage of the personnel management function. The inherently professional character and body of organized knowledge represented in many of the major components of operational personnel management have also been set forth. A case has also been presented for the recognition of the existence of an urgent training need to be met by transfer of a wide range of needed knowledges, abilities, skills and attitudes to chief personnel officials and their colleagues. In such training content, special attention should be addressed to such topics as the character and impact of the "job"; the development of effective inter-personal relations in an organizational setting; and the use of management analysis methods in eliminating unnecessary procedures, forms, and administrative blocks to expeditions rendering of services to the employees and the general public.

The paper has dealt primarily with the infrastructure of effective personnel management particularly emphasizing the knowledges, skills, and abilities that are most desirable. Another major area which profoundly affects the authentic effectiveness of personnel management in providing genuine public service should not be overlooked. This is the vast complex of individual and group attitudes of government work force controlling the scope of inter-personal behaviour both within and outside the work-place towards the public interest and to the public itself. Such attitudes may cover an ascending scale from personal attitudes of cooperation or work interest to ethical attitudes towards wide scale corruption and malfeasance of public trust.

The scope and coverage of this paper do not allow for adequate discussion of the kind of analysis and problem identification and solution activities involved. The most profound consideration however must be given to launching major scale offensives to reduce the negative and frustrating consequences of misdirected and counter-productive interpersonal relations and attitudes. Personnel officials may become more skillful in the technical processes of personnel management but the critical evaluation of the real effectiveness of personnel management depends on the way in which the individual employee sees his moral and ethical obligations to the public in both the collective and individual sense. In concluding, a final idea may be advanced, namely : that the past twenty years might be regarded as the age of the professional technique but the future decades should be considered as the age of improvement of personal and inter-personal attitudes towards meeting higher ethical and social standards of public service.