



PROMOTION POLICIES IN INDIAN RAILWAYS - A CASE STUDY OF SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAYS, HUBLI

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ABSTRACT

It is a systematic means of finding and inducing available candidates to apply to the company for employment. The promotions from within is a widely accepted and long established policy in many organizations, large and small. Even when no such policy has been formally stated, practice often indicates its general acceptance. While promoting the employees to higher position; seniority, merit and trade test should be considered, but with this the management has also to consider: Personal behavior, past performance, attendance, proper interaction with labour and management etc. Trade unions come into action only when an employee is done an injustice in case of his promotion. The unions cannot fight for the employee even recommend him when he is not fitting into any of the promotion criteria. The present study tried to know the role of unions in providing the promotion.

INTRODUCTION

It is a systematic means of finding and inducing available candidates to apply to the company for employment. It is a major step in total staffing process. Since it is the process of searching for prospective employees, it is concerned with the range of sources of supply of labour and of recruitment practices and techniques. The nature of problems that management faces in recruiting the manpower they require, varies from industry to industry, unit to unit and from time to time. Recruitment is thus an important step in industrial employment and subsequently the ultimate success or failure of such employment depends in large measure upon the methods and organization by means of which the workers are brought into the industry. If the workers in any undertaking are not recruited in accordance with some systematic, proper and judicious manner, most of them are likely to be found inefficient and often quite unfit for the jobs allocated to them it will hinder production which, in turn, will mean a substantial loss to total output. Such a lack

of adjustment between the works and his job is often responsible, to a certain extent, of some part of the prevailing high magnitude of labour absenteeism and labour turnovers in Indian industries. It is, therefore, highly desirable that scientific principles of labour administration and labour management should be applied in recruitment of workers in various units of organized industry, particularly in a country like India, which is forging ahead on the path of industrialization. It is thus obvious that recruitment is a continuing, complex and vital organ of the personnel management involving a careful consideration of a wide range of sources and a number of common practices.

PROMOTIONS

The promotions from within is a widely accepted and long established policy in many organizations, large and small. Even when no such policy has been formally stated, practice often indicates its general acceptance. Promotion is defined as movement to a position in which responsibilities and presumably, prestige are increased. According to Scott, Clothier and Spriegel (Personnel Management: Principal, Practices and Points of view, 1977), “a promotion is a transfer of an employee to a job, that pays more money or that enjoys some preferred status. Promotion involves an increase in rank”. Ordinarily, promotion is regarded as a change that results in higher earnings, but increased earnings or not essentially in a promotion.

A distinction may be made between horizontal promotions (i.e., those which involve similar kind or nature of work) and vertical promotions (those which change the nature of work). Departmental promotions are usually horizontal, inter-departmental promotions are vertical and inter-plant promotions include both horizontal and vertical promotions.

PROMOTIONS IN INDIAN RAILWAYS

India railways consist of four groups of working classes, viz., Group-A, Group-B, Group-C, and Group-D. Even though UPSC appoints Class-I officers, some of other will be promoted from Group-B.

PROMOTION TO GROUP B

All the vacancies in Group B, excepting in medical and security departments are filled by promotion of group staff, of which 70 percent of the vacancies will be filled by selection and remaining 30% on the basis of Department competitive examination.

PROMOTION TO GROUP C

Non selection posts are posts, grades or classes which have not been declared as selection posts. Railway board is the authority to declare a post as a selection or a non selection post.

Non selection posts are filled by promotion of staff on the basis of seniority cum suitability, whereas, in case of selection posts two factors only are to be taken into consideration, i.e., seniority and suitability but in selection posts there are four factors, viz., 1) professional ability, 2) personality, address, leadership and academic/ technical qualification, 3) record of service and 4) seniority.

CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION

Promotions comprehends a change and calls for greater responsibilities and usually involves a higher pay and better terms and conditions of services and therefore, a higher status of rank.

Indian Railways undertakes one of the best promotional policies in India. Promotion is present in all the four groups of railway employees. Railways are following a procedure of promotion, but the present study tries to know that the promotion criteria should be based on which of the following things i.e., seniority, merit or trade test.

The present study covered 250 employees, 130 from Group C and 120 from Group D. out of the 250, 106 (42.4%) employees say seniority should be the criteria, 111(44.4%) employees go for trade test and very few i.e., 33 (13.2%) employees say that merit should be considered for promotion.

BASE FOR PROMOTION CRITERIA

Criteria	Group C	Group D	Total
Seniority	49	57	106 (42.4%)
Merit	18	15	33 (13.2%)
Trade Test	63	48	111 (44.4%)
Total	130 (100%)	120 (100%)	250 (100%)

In railways, the employees who have put in maximum years of service will be called for the trade test, and whoever clears the trade test will be promoted. But some of the employees say that the merit is also equally important as that of seniority and trade test.

SUCCESS OF PROMOTION CRITERIA

While promoting the employees to higher position; seniority, merit and trade test should be considered, but with this the management has also to consider: Personal behavior, past performance, attendance, proper interaction with labour and management etc. the person who is due for promotion should be a dynamic personality. The present study covered 250 employees to know the success of promotion policy, which is based on the above said criteria.

SUCCESS OF PROMOTION CRITERIA

Employee Group	Highly Successful	Partly Successful	Not Sure	Total
C	104	14	12	130
D	97	11	12	120
Total	201 (82.5%)	25 (8.9%)	24 (8.6%)	250 (100%)

Out of 250 employees surveyed, 201 (82.5%) employees said that the above said criteria are highly successful in evaluating the person who was due for promotion, 25 (8.9%) employees say that the criteria are partly successful and 24 (8.6%) Employees are not sure about the results. The study reveals that majority of the employees surveyed, i.e., 104 out of 130 in group C and 97 out of 120 in group D, are of the opinion that the above said criteria, such as personal behavior, past and present performance, attendance, dynamism etc, are highly successful in evaluating the person who is to be promoted. Then the promotion criteria will be successful.

At present railways consider only seniority, merit and trade test, hence they should note the above said criteria henceforth.

ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN PROVIDING PROMOTION

Trade unions come into action only when an employee is done an injustice in case of his promotion. The unions cannot fight for the employee even recommend him when he is not fitting into any of the promotion criteria. The present study tried to know the role of unions in providing the promotion.

Out of 250 respondents covered by the study, 91 (37.3%) employees say that trade unions play only a supportive role, 67 of them said that unions play active role, 59 have said that unions are playing passive role and 33 employees say that union has absolutely no role to play in promotion of the employees.

ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN PROVIDING PROMOTION

ROLE	EMPLOYEE	EMPLOYEE	TOTAL
Active Role	21	46	67(27.5%)
Supportive Role	50	41	91(37.3%)
Passive Role	37	22	59(24.2%)

No Role	22	11	23(11.0%)
Total	130	120	250(100%)

Hubli division of the South Central Railway follows the policies regarding recruitment, training and promotion as it is done in any other zones of the Indian Railways.

CONCLUSION

The study has not revealed any uniformity of perceptions of the respondent employees of the South western Railways, Hubli regarding the basis for the promotions. There is a sharp division of opinion among the 250 respondent employees about the criteria of promotions viz seniority merit and trade test. A relative majority of respondent employees (44.4%) have favoured the criteria of trade test compared to the criteria of seniority for promotion (42.4%). The criteria of merit is supported by a minimum of respondents (13.2%). It is significant to find that large majority of respondents (82.5%) have confirmed the success of present promotions policy of the railways. Hence the railways need to formulate a promotion policy which is balanced with due weightage of factors like performance, personal behavior, dynamism, seniority, merit and trade test. This would help in maintaining a healthy industrial relations. Further the role of trade unions in this direction needs to be more proactive.

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