



Secretariat

ST/AI/413  
25 March 1996

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ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management

Subject: PLACEMENT AND PROMOTION\*

Introduction

1. The purpose of the present administrative instruction is to revise the placement and promotion system introduced by administrative instruction ST/AI/390 and Corr.1 of 15 November 1993 and 2 February 1994, respectively, in order to provide certain clarifications, and to incorporate a number of amendments that were recommended by the Staff Management Coordination Committee and approved by the Secretary-General. 1/
2. In accordance with the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/267, dated 15 November 1993, this system provides for the announcement of vacancies as they occur or are foreseen. This procedure applies also to movements of staff for periods of one year or more between departments and offices, whether by lateral transfer or reassignment. Therefore, these movements shall be subject to the procedures set out below, including circulation of vacancies, recommendation from the head of the department or office, and review by the appointment and promotion bodies. 2/
3. The present instruction cancels and supersedes administrative instruction ST/AI/390 and Corr.1 with immediate effect.

Notification of vacancies to the Office of Human  
Resources Management

4. Every month departments and offices shall forward to the Office of Human Resources Management, or to the local personnel office for locally recruited

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\* Personnel Manual index No. 4086.

staff, a list of all current and forthcoming vacancies, with an indication of how they propose to fill them. Forthcoming vacancies that can be foreseen, such as those due to retirement, must be forwarded no later than six months in advance. The lists shall include the post number, the grade and title of the post, the organizational unit, the duty station in cases where the head office of the department/office is at a different duty station and a brief description of the functions as contained in the classified job description.

5. The requirement for reconfirmation of the classified level of the post shall be waived with respect to posts classified within five years prior to the announcement of a vacancy, provided the department/office concerned certifies that there has been no change in functions.

Notification and circulation of vacancies to the  
staff at large

6. The Office of Human Resources Management or the local personnel office shall ensure the early issuance of vacancy announcements as soon as the request and corresponding job description are received from the department/office concerned. The Office of Human Resources Management shall publish regularly, at intervals no longer than one month, a Secretariat-wide list of vacant posts for all categories of staff to be filled internally, except for those subject to local recruitment at offices away from Headquarters, which shall be published by the local personnel office. 3/

7. Staff members interested in being considered for a listed vacancy should state their interest in that post within three weeks from the date of transmission of the list from Headquarters, by a memorandum, telegram or fax of no more than one page in which they indicate their name, index number, the title of the post, vacancy number, an update of the factual information that is in their official status file and a statement as to why they believe they are qualified for the post under consideration. A copy of their latest performance evaluation report or performance appraisal, if available, should also be attached. This communication should be addressed to the Office of Human Resources Management for all posts at Headquarters and United Nations information centres and all posts at levels P-5 and above. In all other cases the information should be sent to the local personnel office.

Departmental review

8. The Office of Human Resources Management, or the local personnel office, as appropriate, shall submit to the head of the department/office all applications received that meet the basic eligibility criteria for the particular post. Heads of departments/offices, after reviewing all candidatures and considering the advice of the departmental panels, as explained in the annex to the present instruction, shall make their recommendations for filling the post, which should be forwarded:

(a) To the Office of Human Resources Management as regards all posts P-5 and above in the Professional category regardless of duty station;

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(b) To the Office of Human Resources Management as regards all other posts, Professional and General Service and related categories, in New York;

(c) To the Office of Human Resources Management as regards United Nations information centre posts at all levels;

(d) To the local personnel offices as regards posts P-2 to P-4 and the General Service and related categories in offices away from Headquarters.

One copy of the presentation to the local Appointment and Promotion Committee at duty stations away from Headquarters should be forwarded to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, for information and monitoring.

9. All vacant posts shall normally remain unencumbered until the permanent assignment of a candidate through internal reassignment, lateral transfer or promotion. Exceptionally, departments/offices may, with the prior approval of the Office of Human Resources Management, temporarily assign a staff member from within the department/office against a higher level vacant post while the regular procedure for filling posts is followed. Such exceptional assignments shall be limited in duration to three months and shall not give an advantage to the staff member concerned over other candidates.

#### Review by the appointment and promotion bodies

10. Departments/offices shall present their recommendations to the appropriate appointment and promotion body, in writing and orally, if required, with a copy of the written presentation to the Office of Human Resources Management or the local personnel office. In addition to information on applicants for the posts, the Office of Human Resources Management or the appropriate personnel offices shall provide to the reviewing bodies the reports of the departmental panels and other information on collaterals that may assist them in making their own recommendations, including timely performance evaluation reports or performance appraisals. On a confidential basis, at the time of the meeting when a case is to be reviewed, departments/offices shall make available to the relevant appointment and promotion body tables showing: (a) current vacancies at the level of the advertised post; (b) posts at that level soon to become vacant; and (c) posts encumbered at a lower level. Those tables shall be returned to the representatives of the department/office concerned at the end of the meeting. Special emphasis shall be placed on providing the reviewing bodies with information concerning qualified women in the broader context of administrative instruction ST/AI/412.

11. Applicants for a vacancy who were not recommended by the department or office shall be so notified and invited to provide, within 10 days, any additional information relevant to their suitability for the vacancy that may not have been available to the appointment and promotion bodies. The appointment and promotion bodies shall consider the additional information prior to making their recommendations.

12. Staff are urged to review regularly their official status files and to bring to the attention of their executive/administrative officer any relevant missing information so as to update all information provided therein. In the case of performance evaluation reports, it is the responsibility of the executive/administrative officer to bring such reports up to date.

13. The paramount consideration in the assignment or promotion of staff shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. The criteria for promotion set out in this paragraph apply to all staff members without exception, and supersede any differing criteria that may have been applied in the past. The reviewing bodies should take into account the following elements:

(a) Past performance, competence, efficiency and demonstrated potential to perform at the higher level;

(b) Integrity;

(c) Relevant experience and seniority;

(d) Relevant academic training and professional qualifications and achievements;

(e) Supervisory abilities and leadership capabilities, if applicable;

(f) Record of mobility and service in hardship duty stations, when appropriate;

(g) Linguistic proficiency.

14. As provided for under administrative instruction ST/AI/412, before a post is filled, a department/office must provide documented evidence of its efforts to identify women candidates, particularly for posts at levels P-5 and above. The reviewing bodies are hereby invited to evaluate the department/office efforts and to formulate their recommendations accordingly.

15. Special attention shall be paid by the Office of Human Resources Management, personnel offices away from Headquarters and the appointment and promotion bodies to staff members who have repeatedly applied for vacant posts for which they are qualified and have not been selected.

16. All appointment and promotion committees shall refer their recommendations to the Appointment and Promotion Board for review.

17. The head of the department/office, or his/her representative where the vacancy is located, may be invited to make an oral presentation when the Appointment and Promotion Board considers recommendations for promotion against vacant posts in that department/office, unless the recommendation pertains to an office away from Headquarters, in which case the Office of Human Resources Management shall present the case on behalf of the office concerned. After reviewing all applicants that meet the basic eligibility criteria for the particular post and eligible staff in the departments/offices concerned the

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Board shall formulate its recommendations. The head of the department/office shall be informed of the Board's recommendations so that he or she can make comments to the Board, if he or she so wishes, on the recommendations of the Board. These comments, together with the report of the departmental panel, shall be reflected in the report submitted by the Board to the Secretary-General, for a final decision.

18. No staff member shall be recommended for promotion unless a vacancy at the higher level has been identified.

#### Other information

19. Staff selected and all applicants shall be informed of the Secretary-General's final decision regarding their candidature.

20. The Office of Human Resources Management shall publish a monthly list of staff transferred laterally or promoted under this system.

21. In the case of promotions, the earliest possible date for the implementation of such a promotion shall be the first of the month following the decision of the Secretary-General to promote, subject to the availability of a post.

22. In the case of posts which involve significant functions in financial management, personnel management and general administration, prior consultation with and approval by the officials indicated in the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/213/Rev.1 is required before any placement in or promotion to these posts can be effected; the Office of Human Resources Management shall be responsible for obtaining such approvals prior to submission to the appointment and promotion bodies. In the case of P-1 to P-4 level posts, local personnel offices should address their requests for clearance to the Office of Human Resources Management, which will follow up with the appropriate officials and inform the offices away from Headquarters of the decision.

#### Notes

1/ As was the case for ST/AI/390, the present instruction does not apply to staff in the Field Service category. Until further notice, this group of staff will continue to be reviewed annually for promotion purposes. Neither does this revision apply to promotions consequent on passing a competitive examination, which are governed by new staff rule 104.15.

2/ It is the long-term intention of the Organization to circulate all vacant posts. However, for the time being, heads of departments/offices may continue to reassign staff within their departments/offices to posts at the same level and inform the Office of Human Resources Management, or the local personnel office, for locally recruited staff, in the monthly report referred to in paragraph 4. Posts so encumbered will not be included in the monthly publication of vacancies to be filled.

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3/ This procedure will not be required for filling, on an interim basis, posts vacated by temporary detachment (including mission assignment) or absence of the incumbent. Also on an interim basis, the requirement that a vacancy announcement be issued will be waived when the classification of the functions of an encumbered post has been upgraded, provided however that the same staff member has encumbered the post for at least three years.

Annex

DEPARTMENTAL PANELS

1. The departmental panels, which have been established to advise heads of departments and offices on the filling of vacancies in the department/office will be maintained. These panels will be constituted by the head of the department/office and will include departmental staff representing the head of the department/office, as may be appropriate, an equitable number of representatives designated by the staff of the department/office, at an appropriate level (in the Professional level and General Service category depending on the category of the post to be reviewed) a/ as well as an officer of the Office of Human Resources Management or the local personnel office acting as an ex officio member to advise on applicable rules and procedures. Alternates should be designated to ensure that staff absences do not unduly delay the convening of the panels. In small duty stations and in duty stations comprising one department/office, one or two officers of the local staff representative body may serve as members of the panel.

2. For each vacancy to be filled by promotion, a review will be conducted by the departmental panels. This review will cover all eligible staff in the department/office concerned, i.e., all staff members at the required level with appropriate seniority and qualifications who are currently or were previously part of the occupational group to which the advertised post belongs. The review will also include all qualified applicants for the post, whether from another department/office or from outside the Secretariat.

3. The panels, which shall be guided by the criteria listed under paragraph 13 of the present document, will submit their recommendations on candidates to be considered for promotion to the head of the department/office. A copy of the reports of departmental panels will be forwarded to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and will be made available to the appointment and promotion bodies.

Notes

a/ Where appropriate, another member will be nominated from Trades and Crafts/Security Services.

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