



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING
RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT
DIRECTIVES SYSTEM

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Subject: Merit Promotion Policy and Implementation

Approval:

Title: Director

1. **PURPOSE.** This Directive establishes the Merit Promotion and Internal Placement Plan (hereinafter referred to as the Merit Promotion Plan -- MPP) for the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE). The Plan provides the policies, regulatory requirements, and procedures to be met in effecting promotions and merit placements for covered OSMRE employees.

2. **SUMMARY.** The changes throughout this Directive are too numerous to list, but the major changes to OSMRE Directive PER-16, dated October 27, 1986, are as follows:

a. The criteria for noncompetitive promotions based on gradual assumption of additional duties and responsibilities is clarified (Sec. 1.b.(17) of MPP Guidelines);

b. Candidates may request extensions to submit applications, so long as the application materials are received no later than five (5) work days after the announcement's closing date (Sec. 3.a.(2)(a) of MPP Guidelines);

c. Eligibility requirements must be met within 30 calendar days of the announcement's closing date (Sec. 3.a.(2)(g) and Sec. 4 of MPP Guidelines);

d. Promotion panels may be required depending upon the number and type of candidates (Sec. 8.e/f of MPP Guidelines);

e. Panel members are required to come within five (5) points for their total scores on the same candidates or to document the bases for their ratings (App. E and App. F);

f. A procedure is provided to clarify natural break points and determine tie-breakers for promotion panels to use in selecting best qualified candidates (App. E);

g. Separate Selection Certificates are required for promotion and nonpromotion referrals by grade level (App. I);

h. Under certain circumstances, interviews of candidates by the Selecting Official are mandatory (Sec. 9.c/d of MPP Guidelines);

i. The Selecting Official is required to specify the reasons for selecting a candidate (Sec. 9.e/f of MPP Guidelines);

j. The MPP has been updated to include the current Office of Personnel Management regulations on details (Sec. 10 of MPP Guidelines);

k. A temporary promotion is more appropriate than a detail when an employee's services are needed in a higher-graded position for more than 30 days (Sec. 11 of MPP Guidelines); and,

l. An expedited procedure is established for temporary promotions and details to higher graded duties beyond 120 days (Sec. 12 of MPP Guidelines).

3. DEFINITIONS.

a. Appointing Authority means those individuals in the Division of Personnel and the Servicing Personnel Offices who have been delegated authority to effect personnel actions.

b. Area of Consideration is the area in which the agency makes an intensive search for eligible candidates in a specific promotion action. The minimum area of consideration is the area designated by the promotion plan in which the agency should reasonably expect to locate enough high quality candidates, as determined by the agency, to fill vacancies in the positions covered by the Plan. (When the minimum area of consideration produces enough high quality candidates and the agency does not find it necessary to make a broader search, the minimum area of consideration and the area of consideration are the same).

c. Best Qualified Candidates are those who rank at the top when compared with other eligible candidates for a position. A reasonable number of best qualified candidates are referred for selection.

d. Career Candidates are those who have acquired competitive status for a permanent position through the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations and who must complete service for career tenure.

e. Career Ladder Position is a position in a sequence of jobs with increasing responsibilities from a lower level and grade to the full performance level within a specific occupation.

f. Career Promotion is a promotion of an employee who at an earlier stage was selected from a civil service register or under competitive promotion procedures for a position and the intent, as well as the career ladder, was specifically documented at the time of the initial selection.

g. Crediting Plan lists the documentation required to assure that valid job-related evaluation procedures are applied in merit promotion actions.

h. Demotion is the change of an employee to a lower grade when both the old and the new positions are under the General Schedule or under the same Wage Grade Schedule, or to a position with a lower rate of basic pay when both the old and new positions are under the same type ungraded Wage Schedule or in different pay-method categories.

i. Detail is the temporary assignment of an employee to a different position for a specified period, with the employee returning to his/her regular duties at the end of the detail.

j. Eligible Promotion Candidates are those who meet all appropriate requirements and qualification standards for the position (including selective factors), within 30 calendar days of the vacancy announcement closing date.

k. Entry-Level Position is the lowest grade level at which OSMRE employees normally enter a career ladder position to gain qualifying experience for promotion.

l. Evaluation of Candidates is the process of assessing their qualifications and the degree to which they possess the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics needed for successful performance in jobs to be filled.

m. Full Performance Level is the highest grade level to which an employee may be promoted through successive noncompetitive career promotions.

n. Gradual Assumption of Duties means the establishment of a position at a higher level based on the addition of duties and responsibilities over an extended period of time.

o. KSA means the knowledges, skills, and abilities which are essential for satisfactory performance on the job. The KSA's are identified through a job analysis procedure.

p. Managerial Position means a position in which the incumbent directs the work of an organization; is held accountable for the success of specific line or staff programs; monitors the progress of the organization toward goals and periodically evaluates and makes appropriate adjustments; and performs a full range of managerial duties and responsibilities.

q. Noncompetitive Action refers to a promotion, demotion, reassignment, transfer, reinstatement, or an appointment based on prior service.

r. Planned Management Action is the assignment by management of additional and/or substantially more difficult duties and responsibilities to an individual, or to a specific position.

s. Position with Known Promotion Potential is a position which is to be filled below the performance level or grade established or anticipated for the position. (Understudy, trainee or apprentice positions normally have such promotional potential).

t. Priority Consideration is consideration by Selecting Officials of certain eligibles who are entitled to consideration for a vacancy before other candidates.

u. Promotion is the change of an employee to a position at a higher grade level within the same job classification and pay schedule or to a position with a higher rate of basic pay in a different job classification system and pay schedule.

v. Qualified Candidates are those who meet established qualification requirements for the position (i.e. X-118 Qualification Standards and Selective Factors) within 30 calendar days of the vacancy announcement closing date.

w. Ranking is the process of arranging eligible candidates in order of merit relative to each others, by numerical rank order, according to their ratings.

x. Ranking Factors are those knowledges, skills, abilities and other characteristics identified as desirable for successful performance in the position to be filled, when established as numerically determined evaluation criteria.

y. Rating is the end product of the evaluation process. The candidate's rating is the assessment made of his/her demonstrated or potential ability to do the job.

z. Reassignment is the change of an employee from one position to another without promotion or demotion within the Department.

aa. Reinstatement is the noncompetitive appointment of a former Federal employee when it is based on an appointment which conveyed competitive status (career or career-conditional appointment).

bb. Selection Certificate is a list which identifies, in alphabetical order, the best qualified candidates for a specific vacancy announced under the provisions of a merit promotion plan.

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cc. Selective Factors are those knowledges, skills, abilities or specialized criteria which are essential for successful performance in the position to be filled. As such, they constitute part of the minimum qualification requirements of the position. In order for selective factors to be used, they essentially must be supported by duties and responsibilities in the position description.

dd. Selecting Official is the person who has authority to select an individual to fill a position.

ee. Servicing Personnel Office means the Branch of Personnel Services at Headquarters, the Branch of Personnel Management in the Western Field Operations, and Personnel Services in the Eastern Field Operations.

ff. Transfer is the employment of a career or career-conditional employee when he/she moves from the Department of the Interior to another agency (or vice versa) with or without a promotion, and without a break in service of one full workday.

gg. Underrepresentation is the comparison between the percentage of a particular minority/sex group in a category of Federal employment and the percentage of that same group in the civilian labor force (either nationally or locally). When the Federal employment percentage is less than the civilian labor force percentage, underrepresentation exists. (Additional information and requirements are contained in the OSMRE Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program Plan approved by the Director.)

hh. Voluntary Application is an application submitted by any status candidate for consideration for an open announcement.

4. POLICY/PROCEDURES

a. Policy. It is the policy of OSMRE to fill positions with the best qualified candidates available and to provide employees the opportunity for fair and equitable consideration for promotion. Selection of candidates for promotion, or for any action under this Plan, shall be made without regard to political, religious, or labor organization affiliation or nonaffiliation, marital status, race, color, sex, national origin, nondisqualifying physical handicap, or age and shall be based solely on job-related criteria.

b. Objectives.

(1) To ensure systematic means of selection for promotion according to merit and to conform with the standards and requirements of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 and Department Manual Chapter 370 DM 335. To ensure conformance with these requirements, the OSMRE Merit Promotion Guidelines are included as Attachment to this directive. This attachment includes, but is not limited to: positions covered; area of consideration; locating candidates; determining basic eligibility; evaluating eligible

candidates, promotion panels, ranking, referral and selection; and maintenance of merit promotion records.

(2) To maintain a work force of high competence and character which will contribute effectively to the accomplishment of OSMRE's mission.

c. Responsibilities.

(1) The Chief, Division of Personnel is responsible for:

(a) Assuring that the OSMRE Merit Promotion and Internal Placement Plan meets the five basic requirements for Federal Merit Promotion Plans as listed in the Federal Personnel Manual (FPM) Chapter 335 and any Departmental requirements;

(b) Administering the Plan equitably and without discrimination in compliance with regulatory requirements;

(c) Assuring that technical guidance and assistance is provided to the Servicing Personnel Officers, managers, supervisors, and employees on this Plan;

(d) Reviewing and evaluating the Plan periodically and effecting necessary changes; and,

(e) Keeping employees adequately informed by providing appropriate and continuing publicity on promotion policy and procedures.

(2) The Chiefs of the Servicing Personnel Offices and Field Office Administrative Officers are responsible for:

(a) Providing operational support to the program;

(b) Providing technical guidance and assistance to managers, supervisors, and employees on merit promotion matters;

(c) Preparing and posting merit promotion vacancy announcements;

(d) Obtaining approval for exceptions to the Plan;

(e) Following affirmative action recruitment and outreach procedures to obtain candidates from all segments of society;

(f) Convening and advising rating panels as necessary;

(g) Establishing and maintaining merit promotion files as appropriate;

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(h) Arranging for prompt release dates of selected candidates; and,

(l) Notifying all nonselected candidates.

(3) Supervisors and management officials are responsible for:

(a) Being fully informed of the provisions of the Plan to provide appropriate guidance to employees. Informing employees of the areas in which vacancy announcements are posted and counseling employees on procedures for submitting applications;

(b) Considering all candidates referred and making selections based on judgment of how well the candidates will perform the job. Following the same procedure to screen/evaluate all promotion candidates on the same Selection Certificate (Appendix I). For example, if one promotion applicant on the Certificate is personally interviewed, the Selecting Official must interview all the promotion candidates on the Certificate. Likewise, all noncompetitive referrals (e.g., reassignment, demotion, reinstatement, special authority) on the same Certificate must be evaluated in a consistent manner with one another;

(c) Completing supervisory appraisals of candidates under their supervision promptly, with an accurate appraisal of the employee's performance and work habits, including potential for developmental and supervisory positions (when applicable);

(d) Furnishing advice and assistance to employees who seek developmental assignments. Advising employees in what areas of job performance, if any, improvement is needed to increase chances for future promotion;

(e) Serving on rating and ranking panels and/or releasing personnel to serve on same, and preserving the confidentiality of candidates' records and qualifications;

(f) Adhering strictly to merit promotion guidelines and all regulations governing details and temporary promotions;

(g) Providing Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer with advanced information on projected staffing requirements, anticipated losses, changes in duties, or other information which may lead to promotions or other actions which may affect internal placements;

(h) Submitting applications on behalf of employees who are temporarily absent for legitimate reasons and who have requested in writing that this be done [ref. Sec. 3.b.(1) Guidelines];

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(i) Promptly notifying and releasing employees selected for promotion; and,

(j) Participating with Personnel and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) officials in developing job analysis, evaluation methods, documentation, and validation requirements.

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(4) Employees are responsible for:

(a) Making use of opportunities to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Promotion Plan and for inquiring about any provisions or actions under the Plan that they do not understand;

(b) Keeping their respective qualifications records up-to-date;

(c) Personally applying for any announced vacancy in which they are interested and for which they meet qualification standards, by submitting the requested application material in accordance with instructions specified on the vacancy announcements;

(d) Participating in interviews or other processes used to evaluate promotion qualifications; and,

(e) Voluntarily offering constructive ideas and criticism of the provisions and operation of the Plan, with suggestions for improvement.

(5) Members of rating and ranking panels are responsible for:

(a) Disqualifying themselves if they have applied for the position being filled, will be involved in the selection process, are related by blood or marriage to any of the candidates, or are in a lower grade than that of the position being filled;

(b) Reporting promptly when selected for merit promotion training or paneling and completing assignments on a timely basis;

(c) Following all guidelines and instructions, and when evaluating candidates, using only the records provided. Personal knowledge of candidates, which is not an established part of the record, will not be used in the rating and ranking process;

(d) Refraining from discussion of any information on candidates' records and qualifications or testing/interview materials except when properly scheduled by Personnel representatives; and,

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(e) Promptly reporting any management or supervisory official's attempt to obtain information or influence the rating and ranking process to the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer.

5. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS. None.

6. EFFECT ON OTHER DIRECTIVES. This plan supersedes the OSMRE Merit Promotion Policy and Implementation Plan, (PER-16) dated October 27, 1986.

7. REFERENCES.

a. 370 DM 311.1. This segment of the Department of the Interior Manual specifies the key positions requiring approval of the Secretary or Assistant Secretary prior to effecting personnel actions.

b. Chapter 335 of the Federal Personnel Manual. This chapter provides the overall Federal policy under which agencies must develop and operate their Merit Promotion Plan and procedures.

c. 370 DM 335. This Directive contains the Department of Interior policies and procedures on Merit Promotion.

d. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Handbooks X-118 and X-118c. These handbooks contain the official statements of minimum qualifications required for competitive service positions covered by this Plan.

e. Department of the Interior Excepted Qualification Standards. These are qualification standards approved by the Department of Interior for filling its positions in the excepted service.

f. OSMRE (PER-22) Agency Administered Grievance Procedure. This Directive establishes the procedure for grieving appropriate matters through the agency grievance procedure.

8. EFFECTIVE DATE. June 1, 1989.

9. CONTACT. Chief, Branch of Personnel Policy and Evaluation, Division of Personnel, (FTS/202) 343-1010.

10. KEYWORDS. Directive, Merit Promotion Plan, Promotion, Noncompetitive Referral, Policy, Merit Promotion Guidelines.

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- Appendix B: Job Analysis
- Appendix C: Appraisal for Promotion
- Appendix D: Evaluation of Supervisory Potential
- Appendix E: Rating Procedures
- Appendix F: Instructions to Panel
- Appendix G: Rating Sheet
- Appendix H: Combined Panelist Rating Sheet
- Appendix I: Selection Certificates
 - (1) Promotion Candidates
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- Appendix J: Interview Worksheet

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION
AND ENFORCEMENT

OSMRE MERIT PROMOTION GUIDELINES

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OSMRE MERIT PROMOTION GUIDELINES

1. POSITIONS COVERED. The requirements and procedures outlined in this Plan apply to merit promotion actions involving positions in the competitive service: GS-1 through GS-15, FWS (Federal Wage System), and GM-13 through 15 positions. Basically, competitive procedures apply to all positions within OSMRE. Listed in "a" below are actions for which the competitive provisions of this Plan must be applied; and, listed in "b" are the exceptions authorized under this Plan. However, this Plan does not apply to temporary, limited, term, or seasonal positions; positions of a confidential or policy-determining nature which are filled under Schedule C; Senior Executive Service positions; and excepted positions of temporary or seasonal nature, except as specifically indicated.

a. The competitive promotion procedures of this Plan apply to the following types of actions:

(1) All promotions of employees within OSMRE except under circumstances specified under Item "b" below;

(2) Reinstatement to a permanent or temporary position at a higher grade than the last grade held in the Federal service, or to a position with promotion potential higher than the last position held in a nontemporary competitive position;

(3) Reassignment or demotion to a position with more promotion potential than the position last held (except as permitted by reduction-in-force regulations);

(4) Selection for detail to a higher grade position or to a position with known promotion potential for more than 120 days;

(5) Selection for training which is given primarily to prepare an employee for advancement and is required for promotion (i.e. when eligibility for promotion depends on whether the employee has completed training);

(6) Temporary promotion which will exceed 120 days;

(7) Transfer to a higher grade position; and,

(8) Term appointments to higher graded positions.

b. The following placement actions may be made as exceptions to the competitive requirements of this Plan:

(1) A promotion resulting from the upgrading of a position without significant change in the duties and

responsibilities due to issuance of a new classification standard or the correction of an initial classification error;

(2) A position change permitted by reduction-in-force regulations;

(3) A promotion to a position for which an employee was initially selected under merit promotion procedures or a civil service register, which identified that the position had promotion potential and listed the career ladder;

(4) Vacancies filled by appointment of 30% or more compensable disabled veterans, veterans readjustment appointments, conversion of cooperative education students, excepted appointment of the handicapped; or other special employment program appointing authority; and selections from competitive examination registers;

(5) Career ladder promotions following non-competitive conversion of cooperative education students in accordance with the requirements in FPM Chapter 308;

(6) Promotion as a result of priority consideration when the candidate was not given prior consideration in a competitive promotion action or as may be required as a corrective action under 29 CFR, Part 1613;

(7) Repromotion of employees to positions or grades at or below the grade from which demoted in the Department of the Interior without personal cause, and not at his or her request;

(8) Selection of a candidate from a Reemployment Priority List for a position at a grade no higher than the last one held in a nontemporary position in the competitive service;

(9) Detail to a higher graded position or to a position with known promotion potential for 120 days or less;

(10) Detail to a position at the same or lower grade level with no known promotion potential;

(11) Detail to an unclassified position;

(12) Temporary promotion for 120 days or less;

(13) Reassignment from a position having known promotion potential to a position having no higher potential, when there is sufficient documentation to prove that the grade potential of both positions is the same;

(14) Reassignment, demotion, and transfer to a position with no known promotion potential;

(15) Reinstatement to a position with no known promotion potential at a grade no higher than the last grade held in a nontemporary position in the competitive service;

(16) Bargaining unit employees applying for bargaining unit positions when covered by negotiated merit promotion procedures;

(17) Reclassification of an employee's position at a higher grade when based on performance of additional duties and responsibilities. Assumption of duties over a significant period of time (at least 180 days) is inherent and the same basic function must be performed and the former position must be absorbed administratively into the new position. All of the following conditions must be met before the exemption granted under this authority can be approved --

(a) The requesting management official must submit a statement, to the Servicing Personnel Office, explaining how the additional duties and responsibilities in the new position evolved;

(b) The new position is in the same organizational location and retains the same supervisor;

(c) These additional duties and responsibilities must not adversely impact other incumbered positions in the same organization;

(d) There must be no evidence of preferential treatment given to an employee who is similarly situated with other employees in the same organization;

(e) The new position must not involve the addition of project or team leader duties to a nonsupervisory position or the addition of new supervisory duties when serving as the basis for upgrading an already established supervisory position;

(f) A desk audit must be conducted by a representative of the servicing Personnel Office to verify the changes. Justification must include an evaluation statement prepared on the position; and

(g) The employee meets all of the qualification requirements.

(18) Other actions which are approved by the Director of Personnel (PPM) as exceptions to bureau merit promotion plans.

2. AREA OF CONSIDERATION.

a. The minimum area of consideration is the geographical area in which OSMRE can reasonably expect to locate enough well qualified candidates to fill vacancies in the positions covered by this Plan. A primary consideration in establishing this area is the extent to which coverage is sufficient for positions and grade levels where under-representation has been identified. Below are minimum areas for announcing OSMRE positions and recommended extended area of consideration to use when necessary:

<u>Position Covered</u>	<u>Min. Area of Consideration</u>	<u>Extended Area Of Consideration</u>
All Vacancies GS/GM-13 thru GS/GM-15	Departmentwide	*Governmentwide or nationwide
All Vacancies GS-1 thru GS-12	OSM-wide **Local commuting area	Departmentwide or governmentwide Local commuting area
Positions designated as Upward Mobility opportunities, grades GS-9 and below or equivalent Federal Wage System positions	May be limited to field installation where the vacancy exists, or the local commuting area.	

(1) Where underrepresentation has been identified, the area of consideration should be set initially to achieve the maximum coverage feasible.

(2) On an annual basis, the Chief, Division of Personnel and the EEO Officer must examine and, if necessary, redefine minimum areas of consideration established under this Plan.

*(3) When the area of consideration is Governmentwide, vacancy announcements are distributed nationwide for status applicants only. However, when the area of consideration is Nationwide, vacancy announcements are distributed nationwide for both status and nonstatus applicants.

***(4) When the area of consideration is the Local Commuting Area, vacancy announcements are distributed throughout the geographic area that includes the surrounding localities in which people live and can reasonably be expected to travel back and forth daily to their employment.

(a) Consideration of Employees Within the Minimum Area. All employees within the minimum area of consideration must have the opportunity to be considered for promotion to positions for which they apply and are eligible.

(b) Consideration of Voluntary Applications Outside the Minimum Area. Voluntary applications submitted by candidates with status, who are outside the minimum area of consideration specified in a vacancy announcement, may be accepted for consideration. However, Departmental candidates who are outside the minimum area must be considered by the same means as those within the minimum area.

(c) Systematic Extension of Area of Consideration. When and how far to extend the area of consideration depends upon factors such as the following:

- 1 The number of qualified candidates produced;
- 2 The need for identifying sufficient qualified candidates; and,
- 3 The extent to which specific positions and grade levels are underrepresented.

(d) The area of consideration should normally produce at least three to five candidates who are well qualified. In the event the area of consideration does not produce three well qualified candidates, it may be expanded. However, if less than three qualified candidates are produced by a specific vacancy notice, and the Selecting Official is willing to choose one of them, extension is not required.

3. LOCATING CANDIDATES. There are a number of methods available for locating eligible candidates for a vacancy. Some of the more frequently used methods are described below.

a. Vacancy Announcements.

(1) All vacancies that will be filled through competitive merit promotion procedures shall be advertised. Vacancies will be announced by posting advertisements on bulletin boards and, if feasible, by circulating announcements or announcement summaries to employees. Announcements must be open long enough to allow all eligible employees within the area of consideration to learn of the vacancy and to apply.

As a minimum, vacancies will be advertised as follows:

<u>Area of Consideration</u>	<u>Length of Advertising</u>
Governmentwide/Nationwide	6 weeks
Departmentwide	4 weeks
OSMRE-wide	4 weeks
Governmentwide/Nationwide/ Departmentwide/OSMRE-wide Local Commuting Area	2 weeks

(2) As a minimum, a vacancy notice will include the following information on the position:

- (a) Title, series, and grade, and, if less than full-time, the work schedule of the position;
- (b) Area of consideration;
- (c) The merit promotion announcement number;
- (d) Organizational location and duty station of the position;
- (e) The full performance level or promotion potential of the position;
- (f) Statement of duties;
- (g) Qualification requirements, including any selective factors, and a statement that candidates who meet those qualification requirements within 30 calendar days of the closing date will be considered;
- (h) Basis for applicant evaluation (knowledges, skills, abilities, and other characteristics--KSA's);
- (i) Privacy Act Notice;
- (j) Equal employment opportunity statement;
- (k) As appropriate, a statement regarding the applicability of a supervisory or managerial probationary period;
- (l) Position coverage under the Performance Management Recognition System, when applicable;
- (m) Requirement to submit a signed "Evaluation of Supervisory Potential" form, if appropriate;

(n) The number of positions to be filled under the announcement;

(o) The sources from which applications will be accepted;

(p) A statement as to whether the employees must file a statement of employment and financial interest and/or conflict of interest;

(q) Information as to what one must do to apply, including the need for a completed and updated Standard Form 171, the necessity for submitting the Appraisal For Promotion form (Appendix C) which is attached to the vacancy notice and the location of the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Office where the completed forms should be submitted;

(r) The opening and closing dates of the announcement;

(s) A statement that all application material must be received by the closing date of the announcement unless, by that date, a potential applicant requests an extension to submit an application. The request must be approved by the Personnel Officer or Chief of the appropriate Servicing Personnel Office or their designees, or by the Administrative Officer in the Field Office which issued the vacancy announcement. Requests for extensions must be made by telephone, in person, or in writing by the closing date of the announcement. Requests for extensions will normally be approved, with the requirement that all application materials be received no later than five (5) working days after the closing date. The office which receives the request is responsible for documenting in the merit case file requests for extensions to submit applications;

(t) Any special conditions of employment related to a specific position, such as part-time employment and the potential, if it exists, for reassignment and/or promotion to a position on the full-time permanent work force, etc.;

(u) Any special requirements related to the job (e.g. percent of time spent in travel; requirement to sign a mobility agreement, etc);

(v) A statement whether the position is subject to medical suitability (e.g., physical examination, drug testing, etc.), or security requirements. The statement for drug testing designated positions is: "The selectee for this position must pass the Department of Interior approved drug screening test prior to appointment;"

(w) A statement requiring completion of a Preemployment Certification Statement concerning Selective Service Registration for covered applicants prior to appointment;

(x) A statement requesting candidates to submit an "Applicant Background Survey Form" (DI-1935), attached to the vacancy announcement; and,

(y) A statement if the selectee is required to wear the OSMRE field uniform, to read: "A condition of your employment is the wearing of the OSMRE uniform in the manner prescribed in the Uniform Standards and Allowance Directive."

(3) Applications will be accepted from qualified candidates who are eligible for appointment under special hiring programs (e.g. handicapped, Veterans Readjustment, Peace Corps/Action, etc.).

b. Consideration of Absent Employees.

(1) As appropriate, OSMRE employees must receive consideration for promotions while on military furlough, extended detail, extended leave, assignment to a public international organization, on long-term training, on IPA (i.e., Intergovernmental Personnel Act) assignments, or on leave without pay. Such consideration will be available if the employee requests it in writing from their supervisor prior to departure. The employee request must include an updated copy of his/her SF-171 "Application for Federal Employment" asking that it be applied against specific or all appropriate OSMRE vacancy announcements which come out during the employee's absence. The employee's written request also must identify the grade(s) and location(s) for which they wish to be considered.

(2) The Appointing Authority will implement procedures which will provide absent employees with the opportunity to receive consideration for promotions.

(3) Employees must be informed of this service and the procedures to follow on at least a yearly basis.

c. Alternative Recruitment Sources. Recruitment sources, other than the Merit Promotion Plan, may be used to recruit qualified candidates who are eligible for reinstatement, Peace Corp/Action Volunteer Program, Veteran's Readjustment Program, transfer, or selection from OPM certificates. Non-competitive eligibles do not have to meet merit promotion procedure requirements for area of consideration or for filing by the closing date. They will be referred separately from promotional candidates. The decision as to what recruitment sources(s) will be used to fill a particular vacancy at any given time must be based on sound management considerations, and may vary depending on the circumstances of each vacancy.

(1) Handicapped Programs - Applications will be accepted from qualified applicants with handicapping conditions who are eligible for appointments under section 213.3102 (t) or (u) of Schedule A and from applicants who are 30 percent or more disabled veterans who have been certified by the Veterans Administration or a State Vocational Rehabilitation Office or on a DD-214. If qualified, these applicants will be referred separately to the Selecting Official, up to issuance of the Selection Certificate, and are not required to file by the closing date of the vacancy announcement.

(2) Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP)
- In filling vacancies, qualified candidates from groups covered under FEORP will be given every consideration.

d. Underrepresentation. If underrepresentation has been identified for the occupation and grade level(s) of a position to be announced under the merit promotion plan, the merit promotion announcement should be distributed to appropriate minority and women's organizations. The outreach effort will be documented as a part of the merit promotion file.

4. DETERMINING BASIC ELIGIBILITY. The Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer will screen applicants in order to determine eligible candidates. To be considered for promotion or placement, candidates must meet minimum qualifications requirements, selective factors, time-in-grade restrictions, and time-after-competitive appointment requirements within 30 calendar days of the vacancy announcement closing date. However, they may not be promoted until all qualification requirements are met.

a. Minimum Qualification Standards. Minimum qualifications used for the promotion will be the appropriate OPM qualification standard and any selective placement factors which have been developed for the position. All candidates who meet the minimum standards have basic eligibility for the position being filled. No employee will receive a career ladder promotion unless his or her current rating of record is Fully Successful or higher.

b. Selective Factors constitute a part of the minimum requirements for the position in question and must be reflected in the position description and vacancy announcement.

c. Ranking Factors are not qualification standards, and do not affect basic eligibility. They are used to distinguish between applicants who have basic eligibility.

d. Qualification requirements for a particular position may be modified after the selection process is underway provided the vacancy is reannounced and all applicants eligible under the modified qualification requirements are considered.

e. When selective and/or ranking factors are used, their validity and propriety must be clearly reflected and supported by a current position description of the job for which they are used, as well as the OSMRE Crediting Plan used.

5. EVALUATING ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES.

a. The Merit Promotion Plan is designed to provide the Selecting Officials with a reasonable number of best qualified candidates for each announced vacancy. The procedures used to identify those candidates should include an analysis of position requirements by the supervisor, which results in the identification and application of job-related ranking factors or criteria. The criteria must:

(1) Provide a basis for considering and comparing candidates based on the knowledges, skills, abilities, and other characteristics that an employee should possess to be successful in the position;

(2) Provide adequate emphasis on those qualifications which indicate a candidate's potential for future promotion, when the job being filled actually leads to further advancement; and

(3) Distinguish carefully between the knowledges, skills, and abilities an employee must possess at the time of promotion and those which can be quickly and easily acquired after promotion through experience or training.

b. Methods of Evaluating Candidates. (See Appendix E for a specific description of OSMRE Rating Procedures).

(1) Once the ranking factors are identified, the Selecting Official, a representative of the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer, and, when useful, panel members will determine the way in which the evaluation criteria will be applied. The ranking factors and evaluation criteria must be outlined in the specific vacancy announcement.

(2) Following are the criteria which may be used in evaluating candidates. In each case that a factor is used, job-related evaluation criteria for that factor must be established. The criteria must provide an adequate measurement of the qualifications needed for the particular position and make meaningful distinctions among the candidates.

(a) Experience - The criteria must be established in terms of the type of work performed and how well the experience has prepared the candidate for the work of the particular vacancy.

(b) Training and Self-Development - The criteria must permit an evaluation of the degree to which these factors increase the employee's potential for effective performance in the position to be filled. Training includes formal courses taken within or outside the Federal Government. Self-development includes such activities as participation in professional organizations, and attendance at or participation in occupational seminars, conferences, symposiums, and college/university courses.

(c) Appraisals for Promotion - Appraisals (see Appendix C) detail the applicant's general work-related skills, as well as the specific ranking factors for the position to be filled. Ranking panel members and/or the Selecting Official will consider the appraisal along with other appropriate documentation in determining the overall evaluation of the applicant. If requested, an employee must be shown the evaluation of his performance and/or potential.

(d) Awards - Consideration will be given to any award received by the employee, which is reasonably related to the position to be filled.

(e) Written and Performance Tests - These may be properly used as one factor in rating individuals, but only when such tests have been previously approved by OPM and the Department.

6. SUPERVISORY EVALUATION FORMS.

a. For each position covered under this Merit Promotion Plan, the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer, with the assistance of the supervisor of the position to be filled, will develop a list of job-related criteria upon which applicants are to be rated by their supervisors. The relative importance of the individual ranking factors should be determined as they relate to the position.

b. Extreme care should be exercised by both the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer and the supervisor to insure that ranking factors measure the applicant's ability and potential to perform in the position.

c. Evaluation factors stressing work-related personal qualities should be clearly defined and must be directly related to the position to be filled. Such factors as loyalty, intellectual integrity, and maturity should be avoided unless such terms are clearly defined in order to establish a common meaning and understanding.

d. Appraisals for Promotion forms (see Appendix C) will normally be obtained from each applicant who applies for a position covered by this Merit Promotion Plan. However, applicants will not be excluded from consideration if they fail to submit a supervisory evaluation form.

e. Applicants applying for supervisory positions will be required to submit a specific appraisal which evaluates supervisory potential or performance (see Appendix D).

7. PROMOTION PANELS. The following procedures will apply in establishing promotion panels:

a. The Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer shall be responsible for designating and/or approving the members on the panel;

b. Promotion panels will be composed of at least three members who are at the same or higher grade than the position being filled. One member should be a subject matter specialist technically competent in the area related to the position being filled; the other two members should have technical or administrative competence relevant to the position. The Selecting Official cannot be a member of the promotion panel, but may be consulted regarding prospective panel members;

c. All promotion panels will be "ad hoc," and members will be designated with consideration of their knowledge regarding the position being filled. There will be no "permanent" or "standing" panels;

d. A representative of the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer should be available to serve as an advisor to the panel on matters such as qualification standards, particular requirements of the position being filled, and merit promotion procedures; and,

e. Particular effort should be made to include minority and/or female members on panels.

8. RANKING, REFERRAL AND SELECTION.

a. Panels are used to rank candidates applying for promotion. This ranking will be based on the overall evaluation of each applicant's ability and potential to successfully perform in the position as measured by job-related evaluation criteria (ranking factors).

b. The ranking process should result in a distinction between promotion candidates. A reasonable number of the best qualified (those who rate at or above the quality level score established by the Selecting Official) will be referred for consideration for each position.

c. The Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer refers the best qualified promotion candidates to the Selecting Official on an OSMRE Selection Certificate [see Appendix I (1)], listing names alphabetically. Final ratings will not be reflected on the Certificate. Separate Selection Certificates for promotion candidates will be referred to the Selecting Official for each grade

level. A copy of each candidate's application, with supervisory appraisal must accompany the Certificate. Certificates expire one month after issuance unless the Selecting Official requests and receives an extension of the time from the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer. A maximum of two extensions may be granted, not to exceed 15 days each. Extensions beyond 30 days require the concurrence of the Chief, Division of Personnel, or Chief of the appropriate Administrative Service Center.

d. Normally, a minimum of three of the best qualified promotion candidates will be certified to the Selecting Official. If a position is advertised at more than one grade level or occupational series, or if more than one position will be filled, additional candidates may be referred to the Selecting Official.

e. Promotion panels will be used in filling:

(1) Key Positions (those requiring Departmental clearance -- ref. 370 DM 311) if there are more than five (5) qualified promotion candidates; and,

(2) Other Positions if there are more than ten (10) qualified promotion candidates for each grade level specified on an announcement [e.g., A position is advertised with three (3) different series and grade levels (GS-5/7/9) on one vacancy announcement. Twenty-five (25) qualified promotion candidates applied, four (4) for GS-5, ten (10) for GS-7 and eleven (11) for GS-9. The promotion candidates for the GS-5 and GS-7 do not have to be rated by panel. However, a promotion panel must be convened to rate the promotion candidates for the GS-9].

When there are five (5) or less qualified promotion candidates for key positions and ten (10) or less qualified promotion applicants for other positions, the candidates may be certified to the Selecting Official without being rated or ranked. If this occurs and the Selecting Official requests that the candidates be rated and ranked, then a promotion panel will be convened to evaluate the candidates.

f. Candidates who are not applying for promotion (e.g., applicants for reinstatement, demotion, reassignment or lateral transfer, or persons with Office of Personnel Management eligibility, or persons eligible for appointment under special appointing authorities) will not be rated and ranked in relation to promotion candidates. However, the Selecting Official may request that a panel be convened to rate and rank nonpromotion applicants in relation to other noncompetitive referrals. Separate Selection Certificates [Appendix I (2)] for noncompetitive referrals will be referred to the Selecting Official for each grade level.

9. ACTION BY SELECTING OFFICIALS.

a. Selecting Officials may select any candidate from among those who have been certified, based on their judgment of how well the candidates will perform in the job being filled, and when relevant, what their potential is for future advancement.

b. A Selecting Official is not required to fill a vacant position by means of merit promotion. The job may be filled immediately or subsequently by some other type of authorized placement action, such as reassignment, lateral transfer of someone from another agency, or selection from an OPM register.

c. The Selecting Official interviews or uses other appropriate evaluation methods which must be job related, consistent with merit principles, and properly documented. Evaluation methods must be uniformly applied to all promotion candidates on the same Selection Certificate (Appendix I). Likewise, all noncompetitive referrals (i.e., nonpromotion candidates) on the same Certificate must be evaluated in a consistent manner with one another. Except as provided below, interviews are not mandatory, but are encouraged. Promotion candidates from the same commuting area as the Selecting Official must be treated in the same manner (i.e., if one promotion candidate is interviewed in person, the other promotion candidates must be given an opportunity for a personal interview). If interviews are conducted with any promotion candidate on the Selection Certificate, the Selecting Official must interview all promotion applicants on the Certificate. Interviews may be conducted in person or by telephone. The Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer in a Field Office should provide the Selecting Official a copy of the OSMRE "Interviewer's Checklists for Conducting Selection Interviews" with the Selection Certificate(s). Selecting Officials should document the results of the interviews (ref. "Interview Worksheet" at Appendix J).

d. The format and process used for the interview should be as consistent as possible among candidates. All questions asked during the interview must be job-related and every effort should be made to obtain the same information from all candidates. The interviewing official may not ask or discuss the race or ethnic background of a candidate; the candidate's religious beliefs or creed of life; age; marital status; family status; or non job-related personal matters. Selecting Officials may request other individuals to conduct the interviews on their behalf. However, the same persons (the Selecting Official or his/her designee) must conduct all interviews for a specific vacancy. If a candidate is not available for an interview within a reasonable period of time, (normally one week), the applicant should still receive consideration for the position. However, the selection process need not be delayed.

e. The Selecting Official must provide a written statement on the Selection Certificate (Appendix I) documenting the reasons for selecting a specific candidate. This statement must reflect the candidate's qualification with regard to the requirements for the position being filled. The statement will be retained in the merit case file.

f. If a qualified candidate is selected over a best qualified candidate (e.g., if the Selecting Official does not select from among the best qualified candidates, and wants to consider and/or select a qualified candidate), the Selecting Official must provide a separate memorandum to the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer justifying the selection. At a minimum, the justification must include: (1) specific factors that qualify the candidate over the best qualified candidate(s); and (2) reasons on a candidate-by-candidate basis why each best qualified candidate was not selected. The justification must be approved by the Appointing Authority before the qualified candidate can be appointed.

10. DETAILS. The detail of an employee to meet temporary work requirements may be made under the following conditions.

a. Employees may be detailed to the same or lower-graded positions with no known promotion potential, or to unclassified duties, for an initial period of 120 days or less with extensions in 120-day increments up to one year.

b. Details to higher grade positions or to positions with promotion potential also may be made for an initial period of 120 days or less with extensions in 120-day increments up to one year. However, if these details are expected to exceed 120 days, competitive promotion procedures are required. Generally, if an employee's services are needed in a higher-graded position for more than 30 days, a temporary promotion would be more appropriate than a detail.

c. A request for extension of details beyond one year should be sent by the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Area Office or, in the Washington, D.C. area, to the OPM Associate Director, Career Entry Group, Washington, D.C. 20415.

11. TEMPORARY PROMOTION. A work situation requiring the temporary services of an employee in a higher grade position for 30 or more days is most appropriately met by a temporary promotion, rather than by detail. However, a temporary promotion is subject to the OPM qualification standards, whereas details are not. A temporary promotion must not be used to give an employee a trial period before permanent promotion, to decide among candidates for permanent promotion, or to train an employee in higher graded duties. In addition:

a. The competitive procedures of this Plan must be used when a temporary promotion will exceed 120 days. In computing the 120 days, an individual's non-competitive temporary service in all higher graded positions during the preceding 12 months is counted, including details and other temporary and term promotions;

b. An employee may be temporarily promoted for the expected duration of the need for their services in the higher grade, but the initial period should not exceed one year. Temporary promotions (after reviewing the situation to determine whether it is actually temporary) may be extended for up to one additional year, with the approval of the Chief, Division of Personnel;

c. An employee selected for a temporary promotion must be informed, in advance of the promotion, of:

(1) The particular circumstances that make a temporary rather than permanent promotion appropriate;

(2) The temporary nature, including expected duration of the action and all conditions relating to it; and,

(3) The fact that employees will return to their regular position when their services are no longer needed, whether or not the expected period of promotion has ended.

12. SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR TEMPORARY PROMOTIONS AND DETAILS TO HIGHER GRADED DUTIES BEYOND 120 DAYS. In the interest of time, responsible officials may elect to use these abbreviated procedures to staff details to higher graded duties and temporary promotions which will exceed 120 days.

a. These procedures may be used only when:

(1) The temporary promotion/detail is known or expected to last less than one year; and,

(2) The temporary promotion will not be made permanent without further competition.

b. Using these special procedures, the responsible official may:

(1) Reduce the areas of consideration to as small as the OSMRE organization in the local commuting area; and,

(2) Solicit interest by memorandum or brief notice of vacancy throughout the area of consideration for a period as short as 5 working days.

13. PROCEDURES FOR FILLING KEY POSITIONS. Concurrence by the Director is required on all selections of key positions (e.g., GS/GM-15 employees reporting directly to the OSMRE Director, Deputy Director, or Assistant Directors -- ref. 370 DM 311,1). Prior approval by the Secretary or appropriate Assistant Secretary is required before certain key positions may be filled either as permanent or as temporary promotions and details.

14. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.

a. The Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer will notify all candidates by letter of their status within thirty (30) days after acceptance of an offer of employment by the selectee, or within thirty (30) days after the selection process has been discontinued.

b. Official notification of selection and request for release of employees must be handled by the appropriate Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer. Selecting Officials shall not make formal or informal commitments to candidates.

c. Employees normally will be released to report to their new position no later than two weeks following notification of selection by the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer. In no case will the action be delayed more than 30 days without the recorded approval of the Chief, Division of Personnel or the Chief, Administrative Service Center. The selected employee will be notified in writing within five working days following receipt of the completed certificate.

d. Promotion and placement actions will not be based on nepotism, personal favoritism or patronage, including personal friendship or political affiliation.

15. TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION COSTS. Selections of current Federal employees under competitive procedures, including candidates selected for reassignment or demotion, are considered to be in the best interest of the agency and travel and transportation costs incurred in a change of headquarters or duty station will be paid by the Government. Payment is also authorized as specified in OSMRE and Department regulations for shortage category positions.

16. MEDICAL, SUITABILITY AND SECURITY REQUIREMENTS. Normally, employees shall not be placed into positions or informed of a tentative selection until all medical, suitability and security requirements for the position have been met. In the event of a reversal of the selection decision due to medical, suitability, or security reasons, the employee shall be promptly informed by the Appointing Authority processing the personnel action.

17. INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO EMPLOYEES.

a. A discussion of the OSMRE Merit Promotion Program shall be incorporated into the orientation of new agency employees. In addition, continuing publicity shall be given the program in agency internal communication publications. As a minimum, the following shall be made available to employees:

- (1) Promotion plans, or information as to where they may be reviewed;
- (2) Career path information indicating short and long range career opportunities;
- (3) Information about the qualification requirements, evaluation techniques and methods used in selecting candidates for promotion to positions in which they are interested; and,
- (4) Information on the various methods of selecting candidates and filling vacancies.

b. Questions about the promotion program or specific promotion action may be referred to the employee's supervisor or the Servicing Personnel Office for informal handling. Upon request the following information shall be made available by the Servicing Personnel Offices to the employee regarding his or her application:

- (1) Whether the employee was considered and, if so, whether the employee was found eligible on the basis of the minimum qualification requirements for the position;
- (2) Whether the employee was one of those in the group from which selection was made; i.e., one of the best qualified candidates available and appeared on the Selection Certificate;
- (3) The employee's supervisory appraisal of past performance used in considering the employee for selection;
- (4) Who was selected; and
- (5) In what areas, if any, the employee should direct improvement efforts to increase chances for future selection.

c. Any employee on the Selection Certificate can directly request from the Selecting Official information concerning reasons for non-selection as well as advice and counsel on how the employee could improve future chances for selection.

18. RESOLUTION OF EMPLOYEE COMPLAINTS.

a. Every effort will be made to be responsive to employee inquiries or criticism concerning any aspect of the Merit Promotion Program. Resolution of complaints by informal discussions between an employee and the supervisor is encouraged.

b. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the employee may submit a complaint under applicable grievance procedures or under the procedures for handling equal employment opportunity complaints, whichever is appropriate. Matters which are not grounds for a formal complaint include the following:

(1) Failure to be selected for promotion when proper promotion procedures have been used; and

(2) An action required to be taken by the office under provisions of statute or instructions as a result of the Office of Management and Budget, OPM, Departmental, or OSMRE directives.

c. Complaints of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin or handicap are specifically excluded from the agency grievance procedures. They are handled in accordance with EEO procedures.

19. CORRECTIVE ACTION.

a. Action to rectify a promotion violation may involve the employee who was erroneously promoted, the employee or employees who were not promoted or considered because of the violation, or the officials who caused or sanctioned the violation. It may also involve correction of program deficiencies.

b. The nature and extent of actions to be taken in any case have to be determined on the basis of all the facts in the case, with due regard to the circumstances surrounding the violation, and must consider the equitable and legal rights of all parties concerned including the interests of the Government. Corrective actions will comply with applicable OPM and Department requirements (See FPM Chapter 335, Appendix A-4, and 370 DM 335, 2.11).

20. MAINTENANCE OF MERIT PROMOTION RECORDS. A promotion case folder for each position filled through competitive procedures must be maintained by the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer for two years following the effective date of the personnel action or until after the program has been formally evaluated by OPM (whichever comes first), if the time for grievance has lapsed. It must contain sufficient information to allow reconstruction of the action. As a minimum, the record must include the information below:

- a. Vacancy announcement and any amendments;
- b. Official position description;
- c. Copy of Request for Personnel Action (SF-52);
- d. Listing of all applicants considered for the position;

- e. Applications of all candidates considered, except for non-status applicants who apply for announcements limited to status candidates;
- f. Documentation of any selective placement and ranking factors;
- g. Job analysis and crediting plan;
- h. Names of evaluation panel members;
- i. Personal Qualifications Statements (SF-171's), narrative qualification statements, supervisory appraisals, and any other attachments received from each qualified candidate;
- j. Rating and ranking criteria used, including evaluation methods and systems; and a record of all determinations and ratings on each applicant, including the rating sheets completed by the rating panel;
- k. Names of applicants as they appeared in the final ranking;
- l. Names of best qualified candidates;
- m. Names of any applicant who received priority consideration and the reason(s);
- n. Documentation of candidates' request for extensions to submit applications;
- o. Copies of letters notifying all promotion applicants or other candidates of the results of the competition;
- p. Record of any further screening actions on each of the best qualified candidates (e.g., interviews, supplemental supervisory checks) if submitted by the Selecting Official;
- q. Record of the reasons given by the Selecting Official for nonselection of a candidate receiving special consideration (if applicable);
- r. Name of employee selected and copy of Selection Certificate signed by the Selecting Official, including official's written justification for the selection; and,
- s. Any other pertinent records, including supporting documentation for exceptions to competitive procedures, a copy of any guidance and instructions given to the rating panel, and a record of interviews and reference checks, etc.

21. REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF PROMOTION PROGRAM.

a. The Merit Promotion Plan will be reviewed on a continuing basis. The Personnel Officer shall review the Plan and its operations at least annually in order to determine its effectiveness. The Division of Personnel will initiate action to accomplish any revisions which are required. A review of the Plan should insure that:

(1) The Plan is as effective as possible and useful to management and employees;

(2) Promotion actions are taken promptly and properly and that employee complaints are handled in a prompt and proper manner;

(3) Promotion actions are used effectively in order to select the best qualified employees for OSMRE positions and to insure the maximum utilization of their skills and abilities; and

(4) Employees, supervisors, and managers have a full understanding of the promotion program.

b. Employees, supervisors, managers, and employee groups or organizations are encouraged to present their views or recommendations on the promotion plan's effectiveness or need for modification. Such recommendations will receive careful consideration.

MERIT PROMOTION AND INTERNAL PLACEMENT

Career Promotions

1. An employee may be promoted without further competition when:

A. Competition was held at an earlier stage; that is, the employee was selected from an Office of Personnel Management register or under competitive promotion procedures for an assignment, intended (with the intention made a matter of record) to prepare him or her for the position being filled; or

B. The employee's position is being classified at a higher grade because of the assignment of additional duties and responsibilities.

Promotions under A and B above are called career promotions. The majority of career promotions normally will be the type described in A. It is important to keep in mind that a promotion is exempt from promotion plan procedures under A. above only if: (1) the full promotion potential of the position, when it was filled initially at the lower grade level, was documented and made known to all eligibles (this potential must be documented in the vacancy announcement, on Requests for Eligibles sent to OPM, and on inquiries of availability sent to OPM certificates eligibles); and (2) the employee was selected under competitive procedures at that time. In order to advertise that a position has promotion potential, there must be classified position descriptions at the intervening and target grade levels.

Career Ladders

The following are the normal career ladders for certain occupations in the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE). A career ladder consists of a group of positions in the same occupational series ranging in grades from the basic entry level to, and including, the full performance level. The full performance level is the grade level for a position or a specific group of similar positions to which untrained or partially trained employees in that work and organizational unit can aspire without using further competitive procedures under the Merit Promotion Plan. Full performance level refers to positions not to individual employees. However, this listing does not mean that each office or organization has or can have career ladders to the full performance level, or that positions are limited to the grade range shown.

Career ladder promotions are neither automatic nor mandatory. There is no guarantee that an employee in a career ladder will be promoted, nor a commitment that a promotion will be made at a set time. Promotion is dependent upon such factors as meeting the time-in-grade requirement, demonstrated satisfactory performance at

the employee's current grade, potential or ability to perform higher graded duties, and the availability of such higher graded duties.

This list should be used primarily as a guide in establishing career paths from entry level or trainee positions to full performance level positions. If, in a particular organization, it is determined that the career ladder is different from that shown below, or the occupation is not listed, the actual career ladder must be shown on vacancy announcements and appropriate career ladder records maintained by the Appointing Authority.

GS-0110	Economist	to GS-12
GS-0201	Personnel Management Specialist	to GS-12
GS-0203	Personnel Clerk/Assistant	to GS-07
GS-0212	Personnel Staffing Specialist	to GS-12
GS-0221	Position Classification Specialist	to GS-12
GS-0230	Labor Mgmt/Employee Relations	to GS-12
GS-0235	Employee Development Specialist	to GS-12
GS-0260	Equal Employment Specialist	to GS-12
GS-0301	General Admin/Program/Mgmt. Spec.	to GS-12
GS-0303	General Clerk	to GS-05
GS-0312	Clerk-Stenographer	to GS-04
GS-0318	Secretary	to GS-06
GS-0322	Clerk-Typist	to GS-04
GS-0334	Computer Specialist/Analyst	to GS-12
GS-0335	Computer Aid	to GS-05
GS-0341	Administrative Assistant/Officer	to GS-11
GS-0342	Support Services Specialist	to GS-11
GS-0343	Management Analyst	to GS-12
GS-0345	Program Analyst	to GS-12
GS-0401	Biologist/Natural Resource Spec.	to GS-12
GS-0404	Biological Aid/Technician	to GS-06
GS-0460	Forester	to GS-12
GS-0470	Soil Scientist	to GS-12
GS-0471	Agronomist	to GS-12
GS-0501	Financial/Collection Specialist	to GS-11
GS-0503	Audit Clerk/Assistant	to GS-07
GS-0510	Accountant	to GS-12
GS-0511	Auditor	to GS-12
GS-0525	Accounting Technician	to GS-06
GS-0540	Voucher Examiner	to GS-06
GS-0560	Budget Analyst	to GS-12
GS-0561	Budget Clerk/Assistant	to GS-05
GS-0801	General Engineer	to GS-12
GS-0802	Engineering Aid/Technician	to GS-05
GS-0809	Construction Inspector	to GS-08
GS-0810	Civil Engineer	to GS-12
GS-0880	Mining Engineer	to GS-12
GS-0890	Agricultural Engineer	to GS-12

GS-1035	Public Affairs Specialist	to GS-12
GS-1082	Writer-Editor	to GS-12
GS-1083	Techn. Publications Writer-Editor	to GS-12
GS-1084	Visual Information Specialist	to GS-12
GS-1087	Editorial Clerk/Assistant	to GS-05
GS-1102	Contract Spec/Procurement Analyst	to GS-12
GS-1105	Purchasing Agent	to GS-07
GS-1106	Procurement Clerk/Assistant	to GS-05
GS-1170	Realty Specialist	to GS-12
GS-1171	Appraiser	to GS-12
GS-1301	Physical/Environmental Scientist	to GS-12
GS-1311	Physical Science Aid/Technician	to GS-05
GS-1315	Hydrologist	to GS-12
GS-1350	Geologist	to GS-12
GS-1410	Librarian	to GS-11
GS-1411	Library Aid/Technician	to GS-05
GS-1701	Training Specialist	to GS-12
GS-1801	Surface Mining Reclamation Spec.	to GS-12



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 OFFICE OF SURFACE MINE RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT
 JOB ANALYSIS



Vacancy Announcement Number		Position Title, Series, and Grade		Location	
SELECTIVE FACTORS (Required Factors)	VALIDITY	RANKING FACTORS (Desirable Factors)	WEIGHT POINTS	VALIDITY	
BEST QUALIFIED CUT OFF SCORE		Selecting Official Signature or Designee		Date	
Personnel Representative / Administrative Officer				Date:	



**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT
APPRAISAL FOR PROMOTION**

SIGNATURE OF RESPONDENT		TITLE		DATE	
APPLICANT'S NAME		TITLE, SERIES & GRADE OF PRESENT POSITION		VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER	
DEMONSTRATED PERFORMANCE		SUPERIOR	ABOVE AVERAGE	AVERAGE	UNKNOWN OR NOT OBSERVED
1. Exhibits understanding of general office procedures and can operate effectively in his/her environment.					
2. Quickly comprehends and adheres to established regulations, guidelines and procedures that govern present position.					
3. Able to plan, organize, and effectively carry through on assignments and do so in a timely and accurate manner.					
4. Able to make sound and effective decisions within his/her realm of authority.					
5. Effectively analyzes and follows through on course of action in dealing with work related problems.					
6. Able to work effectively under pressure.					
7. Able to perform duties under a minimum degree of guidance/supervision.					
8. Demonstrates willingness and ability to take on additional work.					
9. Easily and willingly adapts to changes in policies, procedures, etc.					
10. Accepts constructive criticism well and takes appropriate corrective action.					
11. Establishes and maintains effective and productive work relationships.					
12. Makes clear and effective oral and written presentations.					
13. Adheres to and supports management decisions.					

OSM 147 (10/88)
(Formerly MB 155)


 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT
 

EVALUATION OF SUPERVISORY POTENTIAL

ANNOUNCEMENT NO.	NAME
POSITION (Title/Series/Grade/Location)	GRADE
	LOCATION

PART I - TO BE COMPLETED BY THE NON-SUPERVISORY CANDIDATE

Candidates for a supervisory position must have demonstrated in their work experience or training that they possess or have the potential to develop the qualities of successful supervision. Describe below the work experience or training which in your opinion has prepared you for a supervisory position.

INSTRUCTIONS: Check and complete the blocks which best describe supervisory related experience.

A.	Experience Statements	Position Title, Grade, Location, and Dates of Experience
	Experience as a group, unit, section supervisor (5 or more subordinates).	
	Experience as a group, unit, section leader responsible for at least three employees.	
	Assignments which involved providing guidance and training to new employees.	
	"Project Leader" assignments which involved coordinating and integrating the work of others into a completed work product.	
	Assignments as a "troubleshooter" or source of advice to others regarding organization's work.	
	Assignments which involved devising new work methods and procedures or improvements in existing work practices, and getting the cooperation of employees in applying the new methods and practices.	
	Other: (Include outside activities involving significant leadership assignments).	

PART II - CERTIFICATION

I certify that this statement is true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature _____

Date _____

PART II - TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CANDIDATE'S SUPERVISOR

A. Please assess the candidate by marking that column below on each element which best expresses, from your first hand knowledge, your judgment of the probability of the candidate's success in a supervisory position.

POTENTIAL: A - Poor B - Fair C - Good D - Excellent

The Candidates would:

	A	B	C	D
1. Delegate authority and responsibility and work with others effectively.				
2. Accomplish the quality and quantity of work expected within set limits of cost and time.				
3. Understand, interpret, and gain support for management goals and objectives.				
4. Be able to motivate and guide employees into an effective team working toward a common objective.				
5. Effectively train and develop employees of varied background and skill levels.				
6. Make sound and timely decisions which take into consideration various alternatives and circumstances.				
7. Be able and willing to judge people and situations on the facts.				
8. Recognize the need for and develop improvements in work methods and procedures.				

B. Supervisory Comments and Remarks. If the assignment(s) indicated in Part I were completed under your supervision, please describe the candidate's effectiveness in terms of supervisory abilities. Describe any other items which in your opinion would detract from or add to the candidate's success as a supervisor. Each item in Part II above, in the C or D column, must be justified in writing. You may also use this space to make any other comments regarding the candidate's potential for a supervisory position.

(If additional space is needed, attach plain bond paper)

Supervisor's Signature

Date

MERIT PROMOTION AND INTERNAL PLACEMENT

Rating Procedures

In accordance with the OSMRE Crediting Plan Process, the following procedures will be used in rating applicants for each vacancy.

1. THE SELECTING OFFICIAL:

a. Develops and submits to the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer the ranking factors, which are those knowledges, skills, abilities, and other characteristics he/she feels are desirable for successfully performance in the position;

b. Develops and submits the weighted percentages for each ranking factor: e.g., he/she may decide that ranking factor #1 should be 40% (4); ranking factor #2 40% (4); ranking factor #3 10% (1); and ranking factor #4 10% (1). The weight percentages must total 100% (10); and

c. Decides what quality level score (see example below) will be acceptable to determine the best qualified candidates.

d. The ranking factors, with the weighted percentages, and the best qualified cut off score are included on the job analysis form (Appendix B).

2. PROMOTION PANELS. The requirements for promotion panels are outlined in the OSMRE Merit Promotion Guidelines, Section 7(a-e). The panel members will review all applications referred to them by the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Officer for the position to be filled. The panel will evaluate each applicant on the knowledges, skills, and abilities which have been identified as desirable for successful performance in the position to be filled.

Each panel member will evaluate each applicant on a Rating Sheet (Appendix G), based on the applicant's quality of experience, training, etc., on the quality level range as follows:

08-10 - Superior
05-07 - Above Average
01-04 - Average

The quality level score of each factor will be determined by multiplying the weighted value times the quality level. An evaluation of an applicant by one member might look like this:

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Weight</u>		<u>Quality Level (0-10)</u>		<u>Score</u>
#1	40% = 4	x	8	=	32
#2	40% = 4	x	9	=	36
#3	10% = 1	x	0	=	0
#4	10% = 1	x	5	=	5
	<u>100% = 10</u>		Quality Level Score (Total Score)		<u>73</u>

The quality level score for this applicant, by the panel member, is 73. If the scores received from the other members were 78 and 74, the final rating would average 75 for this applicant.

The members of the promotion panel need not come to an exact agreement on the total points for the same candidate, but panelists must attempt to resolve differences of more than five (5) points in the total score. The points must be based on job-related evidence which is present in the application. Panel members should discuss the candidate's background and determine why there are inconsistencies in their scores. If there is still more than a five (5) point difference in total points for the same candidate after the panel member discussion, they must document the bases for their ratings on the reverse side of the "Combined Panelist Rating Sheet" (Appendix H).

Non-federal candidates are not ranked, rated, or certified along with federal promotional candidates because their entrance to a government position is properly through an OPM register which may be requested simultaneously with inside advertising.

3. IDENTIFYING THE BEST QUALIFIED.

a. The points assigned to each candidate by each rater are listed and averaged to arrive at the final score. The average score for an applicant should be rounded to closest whole number (e.g., an average of 73.50-73.99 would become 74; whereas, an average of 73.00-73.49 would become 73). After the final scores of all candidates have been determined, they should be recorded on the Combined Panelist Rating Sheet (Appendix H). The best qualified may be identified by using either Method 1 or Method 2 described below. The method selected must be identified on the Combined Panelist Rating sheet. If the method used appears to screen out minorities, women, or other "protected" groups, the alternative method should be used.

Method 1:

A cutoff point is established as a dividing point between the best-qualified and the qualified candidates. The cutoff point normally will be where there is a natural break point between two consecutive candidates when listed sequentially by their total scores. If there is no meaningful break between applicants as determined by the rating panel, as many as 10 candidates (with another candidate for each additional occupational series and/or grade level) may be referred to the Selecting Official. An example of this method is as follows:

Panel Ratings:

<u>Candidates</u>	<u>KSA</u>	<u>Evaluator A</u> <u>Level Weight</u>	<u>Evaluator B</u> <u>Level Weight</u>	<u>Evaluator C</u> <u>Level Weight</u>
<u>Johnson</u>	1	6 x 5 = 30	7 x 5 = 35	6 x 5 = 30
(average score,	2	7 x 2 = 14	5 x 2 = 10	6 x 2 = 12
55 (rounded)	3	3 x 3 = 9	4 x 3 = 12	4 x 3 = 12
		53	57	54
<u>White</u>	1	8 x 5 = 40	9 x 5 = 45	9 x 5 = 45
(average score,	2	7 x 2 = 14	6 x 2 = 12	7 x 2 = 14
81 (rounded)	3	9 x 3 = 27	7 x 3 = 21	8 x 3 = 24
		81	78	83
<u>Peters</u>	1	7 x 5 = 35	8 x 5 = 40	7 x 5 = 35
(average score,	2	6 x 2 = 12	4 x 2 = 8	5 x 2 = 10
69 (rounded)	3	8 x 3 = 24	7 x 3 = 21	7 x 3 = 21
		71	69	66
<u>Terrance</u>	1	7 x 5 = 35	8 x 5 = 40	8 x 5 = 40
(average score,	2	6 x 2 = 12	5 x 2 = 10	7 x 2 = 14
75 (rounded)	3	9 x 3 = 27	8 x 3 = 24	8 x 3 = 24
		74	74	78
<u>Ross</u>	1	9 x 5 = 45	8 x 5 = 40	9 x 5 = 45
(average score,	2	6 x 2 = 12	8 x 2 = 16	7 x 2 = 14
77 (rounded)	3	6 x 3 = 18	7 x 3 = 21	7 x 3 = 21
		75	77	80

Average Score:

81
77
75
Break Point
69
55

Method 2:

All candidates whose rating equals or exceeds the combined total of the weight value times the quality level of all the KSA's will be considered as best-qualified. The KSA weights and levels are established by the Selecting Official. The following is an example of this method:

	<u>Weight</u>		<u>Level</u>		
KSA "A"	- 3 points	x	7	=	21
KSA "B"	- 3 points	x	7	=	21
KSA "C"	- 2 points	x	7	=	14
KSA "D"	- 2 points	x	7	=	<u>14</u>
			TOTAL	=	70

In this example, the Selecting Official has given the KSA's weighted values of 3 points, 3 points, 2 points, and 2 points. The quality level was established at 70% = 7. Therefore, in the above case, all candidates rated with total points of 70 or higher would be in the best-qualified group.

b. When the best-qualified group contains more than 10 promotion candidates and meaningful distinctions simply cannot be made, the following tie-breaking factor may be used: Retain only those with the highest scores on the most heavily-weighted KSA's.

INSTRUCTIONS TO PANEL

You have been selected to serve as a panel member because of your expertise or personal knowledge of the position being filled. Evaluation panel members may be appointed on an ad hoc basis by the Servicing Personnel Office or Administrative Office in consultation with appropriate management officials. Panel members should be of a grade level equivalent to, or higher than, the position to be filled. Each panel should consist of a minimum of three employees who are fully knowledgeable of the position to be filled. Panel members will be individuals from outside the line of supervision over the vacancy and who are not applicants. Due regard will be given to representation on the panel by women and minorities. A personnel representative or administrative officer will act as an advisor to each panel.

The following guidelines are for promotion panel use in evaluating applicants. These procedures represent a uniform approach to the consideration of an individual's qualifications. In all cases, the key to evaluation is the position description and the vacancy announcement which outline qualification requirements and ranking factors. A Merit Promotion Plan Rating Sheet (Appendix G) will be used to document the evaluation of each candidate. Rating factor documentation will be in sufficient detail to permit reconstruction following the promotion action, if required.

Background Material

We have provided the promotion panel with the following documents for use in rating applicants:

- 1) Vacancy Announcement;
- 2) Position Description;
- 3) Each applicant's SF-171 and evaluation forms;
- 4) Crediting plan for use in rating applicants;
- 5) Rating sheet; and
- 6) Combined panel rating sheet.

Procedures

Each applicant will be rated by applying a numerical system which has been designed to include weighted factors for each evaluation element. In evaluating the applicants, the panel will use the following instruments:

- 1) A candidate is rated based on evidence which is present in the application and is job related. Such evidence includes experience, training, education, awards, hobbies, volunteer activities, honors, self-development, etc. Nonmerit factors (such as race, sex, age, national origin, religion, marital status, physical handicap, housing requirements, child care, etc.) must not be considered. Panel members with personal knowledge of an applicant must rate according to what is in the application package and not what they know of the applicant.
- 2) The panel members will examine an applicant's SF-171 and attachments for evidence of possession of each KSA and the applicant's level of KSA. The panel members will assign a rating of 0 to 10 points according to the criteria in the crediting plan. The crediting plan is to be used to aid panel members in determining an applicant level of experience as it relates to each ranking factor (e.g., Superior, Above Average, Average). The descriptions are not intended to be all inclusive, but to provide examples of the kind and level of experience needed to satisfactorily perform the work of the position to be filled. The crediting plan provides narrative descriptions for scores of 8-10 (superior level), 5-7 (above average), 1-4 (average level).
- 3) Panel members will review to determine whether the appraisal indicates a high potential for success in the type of position advertised. Some outside applicants may not have performance evaluations or promotion appraisals comparable to OSMRE. Whenever other types of evaluations are received, the panel should to the extent feasible consider these applicants in a manner similar to those who use the OSMRE form (Appendix C).

Ranking Factors

The ranking factors are used in addition to any mandatory selective factors considered in determining qualified applicants. Panel members should consider recency, quality, and depth of experience, and assign an appropriate numerical rating to each factor not to exceed the maximum number of points indicated on the crediting plan.

Training and Awards

All training should be considered which may increase the applicant's potential for the position. The number of points assigned to each ranking factor should reflect related training. The number of training courses, seminars or institutes attended is not significant, however. The recency, level and content of the courses should be considered along with job-relatedness.

Awards which are related to any ranking factor will increase the ratings assigned to those factors.

Final Rating

The members of the promotion panel need not come to an exact agreement on the total points for the same candidate, but panelists must attempt to resolve differences of more than five (5) points in the total score. The points must be based on job-related evidence which is present in the application. Panel members should discuss the candidate's background and determine why there are inconsistencies in their scores. If there is still more than a five (5) point difference in total points for the same candidate after the panel member discussion, they must document the bases for their ratings on the reverse side of the "Combined Panelist Rating Sheet" (Appendix H).

The panel will then designate the best qualified to be referred to the Selecting Official. Normally a minimum of three and not more than ten, of the best qualified candidates will be certified to the Selecting Official, the exact number to be determined according to the grouping of numerical scores. A limit of ten candidates will be certified if meaningful distinctions cannot be made among a smaller number of qualified candidates. When more than one occupational series and/or grade are involved, more than ten candidates may be certified at the rate of one additional name for each additional series and/or grade.

Confidentiality

The entire MPP package is restricted to use by personnel officials, individuals with a need-to-know, and members of the promotion panel. Under no circumstances is this package or any part thereof to be shown or discussed with the general public or applicants or potential applicants.

You are further cautioned that all discussions, ratings, ranking and recommendations which take place during a panel meeting are strictly confidential and are not to be discussed with anyone outside the panel meeting (Except with authorized Personnel Officials.) If you are approached by anyone regarding the panel proceedings, please refer them to the Servicing Personnel Office.

