CHAPTER V
PROMOTION OF STAFF

Recruitment of competent personnel and efficiency in work depends to a large extent on the condition of the service. Question of compensation and promotion are the principal conditions of service. Particularly question of promotion is a vital condition since it is considered as a reward for a faithful and meritorious service. Willoughby remarked that "to the employees promotion is of direct significance as a reward, or possible reward. Actual promotion is a reward, while the opportunity for promotion is a possible reward." (1)

Promotion helps to retain men of potential ability in service and to place such persons in positions where they may render useful service. But it will depend mostly on the proper scheme or policy of promotion which may attract the personnel in service. Indian Railways has some distinctive principles of promotion of its staff laid down in the Indian Railways Establishment Manual. The Zonal Railways follow the prescribed rules and for any discrepancy clarification is sought for from the Railway Board.

Generally two basic standards of promotion are there in the Railways (i) Seniority & (ii) Seniority-cum-

(1) W.F. Willoughby - Principles of Public Administration - P.299
(Washington D.C., 1927).
suitability. Apart from that departmental examinations are held in certain departments, and passing of these examinations is the condition of promotion in such cases. But where there is no such provision, promotion is considered on the basis of seniority-cum-suitability of the staff. In the N.F. Railway promotion through competitive examination is less and confined to certain categories, where service condition is the main criteria. Even if a staff is recruited by a competitive examination, his posting will be effected on the basis of seniority in service. One thing is to be remembered that system of promotion are different in the Indian Railways. The promotion of the Class -I senior Administrative and junior Administrative officer is maintained by the Railway Board, New Delhi. In the case of other gazetted officers- promotion is based on the seniority and service record (maintained at the Headquarters Personnel Branch, at Maligaon) of which the General Manager is empowered to approve promotion. Of course, a formal approval is necessary from the Railway Board, in the case of Senior Scale Officer.

In case of non-gazetted staff the promotional system is different and exclusively done by department on the basis of records maintained in the particular section (Establishment / gazetted ) of the Personnel Branch.
dealing with the department concerned. The system of procedure of promotion for gazetted and non-gazetted staff will be discussed separately.

There are different scales of pay in non-gazetted service. Railway Board from time to time declared the selection posts and non-selection posts. A railway servant may be promoted to fill up any post, only if he is considered fit to perform the duties attached to the post. Non-selection posts are posts, grades or classes which have not otherwise declared as selection posts.

Promotion to non-selection posts are made on the basis of seniority-cum-suitability. Suitability in this case is determined by the competent authority to fill the post on the basis of record of service and/or departmental test. This test may be oral/written as considered necessary.

Selection posts are posts, grades or classes to which promotions are made by a positive act of selection. Such selections are held with the help of selection Board, consisting of not less than three officers, one of whom must be a personnel officer. One of the members from the Department and other from another department as nominated by the higher authority. For selection posts of pay scales Rs. 500-750/- (RS) and above the
selection Board consists of officer not below the rank of Junior administrative grade. The selection Board may include a personnel officer in the next lower rank - who will be an equal member of the selection Board. For the nomination of officers in the selection Board, the Establishment Branch has to put up papers to the competent authority. The authority empowered to constitute a selection Board directs the Board to assemble and make recommendations and also nominate a chairman of the selection Board from amongst the nominated officers.

Administrative posts in the cadre of a service or department are filled by the Railway Board by selection from members of the service or department concerned, and the general administrative posts on a railway are filled by selection from among the gazetted railway servants of all services and departments. Their promotion from one grade to the next higher grade are also maintained in the railway Board, and the Zonal Railways maintains only the leave and allied records of them, while posted on that Railway. Their promotion orders are also effected as per instruction of the Railway Board. The junior Administrative Officer - receives the promotion to the Senior Administrative level on the basis of seniority maintained uniformly by the Railway Board. They may be transferred on promotion to other Railways or retained on the same Railway against the suitable posts.
Appointments to posts in Class I (Senior Scale) are generally made by promotion in order of seniority and considering the service record, ordinarily, with not less than 4 years service in Class I/Junior Scale. Promotions of Class II Officers already made in the senior scale are generally not disturbed.

It is, at the discretion of the General Manager, who may appoint a non-gazetted railway staff to officiate in class II service or a gazetted railway staff to officiate in class II service or a gazetted Class II Officer/Assistant Officer to officiate in a senior scale for a certain period. A class II Officer working in the Senior Scale may be promoted to Class I Service as per order of the General Manager. Generally Class II Officer (Working in senior scale) promoted to Class I Service after the nomination of the 'Departmental Promotional Committee' through an oral test. The Committee consist of at least three members including one from the UPSC as the Chairman.

G.M. may order promotion of a Senior Scale Officer (Class I or Class II) to officiate in a Junior Administrative post, provided the vacancy is not likely to exceed 4 (four) month, subject to approval of the Railway Board. G.M. can also regularise adhoc promotions to class II post of non-panelled staff for a period in excess of six months after satisfying himself that all the possible action was taken to form panels after holding regular selection to Class II. In this respect, an
annual statement in the prescribed proforma is generally submitted to Railway Board by the end of February in each year indicating the number of cases of ad-hoc promotions.

Orders for the promotion of non-gazetted staff are issued by the General Manager/Chief Administrative officer or by a lower authority empowered in this respect. An officiating promotion or a promotion in a substantive capacity may be ordered against a regular vacancy. An officiating promotion may also be made against a leave vacancy. On promotion, the employee concerned get the pay benefit of the higher post.

Railway officer undergoing training at the Railway staff college, Baroda, Indian Railway School of Advanced Permanent Way Engineering, Poona, Indian Railway School of Signal Engineering & Tele-communication, Secunderabad etc. are treated as on duty - but officiating arrangements are made for the period by the Administration under normal rules. Although maternity leave is generally not debited against the leave account of the employee, officiating arrangement is made in the place of that female employee proceeding on maternity leave. In all the cases, Administrative officer or a senior scale Officer. is competent to order for promotion.

In the N.F. Railway system there is an age limit
for promotion of certain specialised categories of transportation staff to higher grade. The system is -

(1) For promotion of Assistant Station Masters and Assistant Yard Master to higher grade post in their respective cadres.

(2) For promotion to the post of higher grade ASM/AYMs from the normal course of their duties and channel of promotion having not to pass a basic ASM's exam.

(3) For promotion to posts of sectional controllers from any category.

(4) For promotion of eligible categories of staff to the post Transportation Inspector.

(5) For promotion of switchmen/livermen/Cabinmen to a post of ASM(lowest grade).

In the above cases - age limit has been restricted.

The question of age restriction to the SC/ST candidates will be maintained as per instruction issued by the Railway Board. (1) Rather SC/ST staff eligible to above mentioned posts are determined as per fixed roster and they have the age relaxation as per normal rules.

Normally these officiating arrangements are made on the strength of appropriate office orders. The

seniority list, panel position etc. are being checked to ensure the eligibility of promotion of a staff to the higher post, before promotions are ordered. The promotion orders are issued under the signature of the proper authority.

Local arrangements are made (some times) for promotion in case the person eligible for promotion is not available, the next seniormost person available in the seniority unit is promoted. These promotions are made as an ad-hoc measure and the person promoted, cannot claim in anyway to continue when the permanent incumbent returns.

The procedure for holding the suitability test need to be mentioned since almost all the promotions are ordered on this basis only, with a few exceptions. So far as promotion of staff to the next higher grade is concerned, the Chief Clerks of different departments are promoted to next higher grade (i.e. as office Supdt.) on the basis of seniority of service only. The seniority of the Chief Clerks is maintained department-wise i.e. in the entire N.F. Railway's a particular department is treated as one unit. As for e.g. the seniority of Chief Clerk will be counted of the entire commercial department including the Divisional offices of K.F. Railway for the promotion of office Superintendent.
in that department.

Suitability tests are so framed giving choice as to cover the type of work the staff is doing, and expected to do in the higher post. Where employees do not have adequate experience of sections or types of work, which they may be required to perform on promotions, are given training in Zonal Training School or other training units, depending upon the nature of the job. Candidates are called up to appear in the tests in order of seniority and the number thereof, which are equal to actual number of vacancies. If number of sufficient suitable candidates are not available - other candidates are called up in a subsequent test. The period of original test and subsequent test does not exceed six months in general and this is counted from the date of announcements of the result of suitability tests first held.

All the eligible candidates are notified in regard to holding the test and application or a written consent (application) received from the employees willing to appear in the test.

Suitability of the clerks for promotion to non-selection posts in lower grades is determined by written tests - procedure being fixed by the Railway Administration. In the case of the stenographers
prescribed speed tests are held for the promotion to next higher grade.

Class III staff eligible for the Lower Grade Service or Assistant officers of Class II gazetted rank, on the basis of seniority-cum-suitability, has to appear in a written as well as viva-voce test. In their cases suitability is the main criteria, though senior man is given the priority in posting. In almost all cases the service record or confidential report of the candidate that appeared for the examination plays vital part in promotion. The C.R. should be fair enough, (at least for past three years consecutively) which is judged by the selection Board for consideration of the promotion.

Clerks Grade II in the Accounts Department are eligible for the next higher promotion to Grade I, provided they have qualified in the Appendix -II examination held by the Railway Administration in almost every year. Other than the Accounts department, the junior clerks have to sit for a written test exclusively on seniority basis to get the promotion of a senior clerk. This examination is held as per availability of the posts in the department concerned. There is a convention in the Railways that 90 percent of the post in the senior clerk are filled by seniority-cum-suitability tests from the junior clerks. For the rest 10% (1)

(1) This percentage has recently been changed as per Rly. Board's instruction No. FCIII/81/UFG/1 dt. 31-7-61.
a competitive (written) examination is held which is limited to the junior clerks only fulfilling certain condition.

Promotion in Artisans categories are effected only after the employee passed the prescribed tests.

The trade tests are generally arranged by an Assistant Officer of the Branch concerned. The trade tests are supervised by an officer not below the rank of Assistant Foreman. The test result with the recommendations of the officer are forwarded through a senior scale officer of the branch concerned to the Divisional Superintendent/Dy.C.M.E. or officer-in-charge of the shops who are competent to approve the Trade test assessments. The trade test assessment of the Electrical department staff in workshop are also approved by Dy.C.M.E.-in-charge of the shop as the case may be. Technical departments, where there are officers of Administrative rank, the trade test reports are assigned to such officers. All eligible candidates are subjected to oral and practical (trade) tests. Trade test results are generally published within a week of the tests held with the approval of the Chairman of the Trade test panel. The number of higher posts, to which employees in a cadre can seek promotion, are not more than 50 percent (1) of the strength of cadre.

(1) After the restructuring of the cadre of Ministerial staff of all the departments the percentage raised upto 80% on an average vide Rly.Ed's letter No.FCIII-81/UPG/1 dt. 31-7-81.
For reckoning promotional prospects; (1) the sanctioned cadre strength at higher levels alone are taken into account and not the actual vacancies; (2) only the immediate two higher levels of posts available for promotion are taken into account and (3) the higher levels of posts are not necessarily kept in the direct line of promotion. This system is being followed by the personnel branch of the N.F. Railway, (as a rule) though not rigidly in all cases.

The members of the selection Board are generally nominated by the competent authority i.e. not below the rank of an Administrative officer. The selection Board examine the service record and confidential reports of the staff. Selections are made on the basis of overall merit. Factors, that are counted by the selection Board and their relative weight are appended:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum marks</th>
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<tr>
<td>(a) Professional ability 50</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) Personality, address, leadership and academic/technical qualification 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Record of service or confidential report 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Seniority 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total 100</td>
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Candidates must have to obtain 30% marks in
professional ability and 60 percent marks on the aggregate for being eligible to be placed on the panel. In case of SC/ST candidates the qualifying mark is 50 percent in aggregate. Professional ability is judged by holding written and/or oral tests. For general posts i.e. those outside the normal channel of promotion, for which candidates are called from different categories, the selection test is an open competition.

There are certain conditions in the case of promotion of railway servants who are under suspension and/or whose conduct is under investigation. A railway servant, who is under suspension and/or against whom disciplinary proceedings have been initiated, is not eligible for promotion, even he is already borne on a selection panel till the finalisation of proceedings against him. But, he is called for selection/suitability test along with other eligible candidates even if he is under suspension and/or proceeded against for imposition of major penalty.

If, however, after finalisation of the proceedings the person concerned is fully exonerated or his punishment held to be unjustified, his name will be included in the qualified list - provided his proceedings is finalised within two years of the approval of the provisional panel. If necessary, the junior man will be reverted to promote the person concerned. It is also a general rule, that if a person is eligible for promotion after finalisation of the disciplinary proceedings and the
penalty imposed being (i) withholding of promotion; (ii) stoppage of increments or reduction to a lower post or grade, will be promoted only after the expiry of the above penalties imposed to him. The above procedure is also applied in case of railway servant who is prosecuted for an offence by a court of law, provided, that the prosecution of a railway servant in a summary trial will not be treated as prosecution within the meaning of these instruction. (1)

It is apparent that for the purpose of promotion, based on the result of departmental examination, or trade test the relative seniority of the railway servants are determined with reference to substantive or basic seniority. But, when candidates are called up from different seniority groups, the combined seniority is being made on the length of service in comparative grades, without disturbing the seniority of the staff belonging to same category. SC and ST candidate found suitable, are listed in order of their original seniority and promotions are effected accordingly, although the number of vacancies are determined with reference to roster points. (2) A note on the roster of the reserved communities need to be mentioned.

(1) Rly. Board's letter No. E(D&A) 72 RG 6-23 dt. 22-11-71
(2) Rly. Board's letter l.o.E(SCT) 72CM1/15/5 of 11-1-73.
In almost all cases of promotion (Recruitment and so on) system are maintained with reference to the 'roster' with effect from 11-2-72, the roster is maintained in all the Zonal Railways for Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes. The quota of reservation, varies from place to place, except in cases of Class III vacancies filled by direct recruitment on all India basis and in cases of promotional grades. The percentage of reservation quota to fill up the vacancies has been fixed by the Railway Board and each Zonal Railway has to maintain the same accordingly. N. F. Railway has also the fixed reserved quota of 16 percent for SC and 14 1/2 percent for ST candidates in case of recruitment, as approved by the Railway Board. Of course, the reservation quota in recruitment are maintained category-wise and not on overall basis.

In cases of promotions chances are given to SC & ST candidates with the minimum prescribed qualifications and standard of fitness with 50 percent marks (obtained in the examination) are given chance in accordance with his general seniority. The minimum qualifying marks (in the promotional examination) for SC/ST candidates is 40% (per cent) in case of promotion against senior clerks or clerk Grade I. In cases of promotion, the chances are

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(1) Railway Board's letter No. E(SCT)70CM1/10 dt. 20-4-70.
given to SC/ST candidate on usual system of 'roster' maintained by the N.F.Railway - departmentwise.

Sometimes, an eligible employee is overlooked in promotions by the administration. Persons who have been overlooked for promotions to higher grades or have lost promotion, on account of administrative error has been promoted at a later stage, assigning the correct seniority. Persons overlooked may resort to a court of law for the redress of his grievance.

In almost all cases of promotion in the higher grade, irrespective of services in the Railway, seniority of the person concerned, is the main criterion with a few exceptions. In class I services, promotion is effected exclusively on the basis of seniority. Class I officers have two higher grade promotion, first being junior administrative and 2nd senior administrative position. In class II services, practically scope for promotion is less. Class II officers have an open channel to the senior administrative position through different stages, first being the senior scale (Class II) to Class I (through a nomination by departmental promotional Committee), then to Junior administrative grade. Class II direct recruited officer has no such delayed process after successful completion of their probation. Scope for
promotion to Class II service from Class III supervisory grade, has been opened at least 60 percent, subject to availability of the working post, as noticed in the N.F. Railway system. On the other hand, the chances are opened to those, who can qualify through seniority-cum-suitability process only.

Again promotions are strictly limited to the departmental staff only with few exceptions particularly in class II, Class III and Class IV services. Such as promotional examinations in the Accounts Department are strictly restricted to the department itself including the divisional units. Even, the statistical branch being the Accounts Unit, has no scope to avail a chance for promotion in the Accounts department.

Railway Board, as a policy have approved the upgrading of Class III Ministerial staff of the Railways by a recent circular. By this upgrading, at least 60 percent of existing ministerial staff have been promoted with effect from 1-10-80. This overall upgradation has benefited the Ministerial staff of N.F. Railway. The total percentage of upgradation in case of Class III Ministerial staff ordered by the Railway Board are the following


(2) Ibid.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Posts</th>
<th>Scale of Pay</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Office Superintendent</td>
<td>Rs. 700 - 900/-</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Chief Clerk</td>
<td>Rs. 550 - 750/-</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Head Clerk</td>
<td>Rs. 425 - 700/-</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Senior Clerk</td>
<td>Rs. 330 - 560/-</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Junior Clerk</td>
<td>Rs. 260-400/-</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Not only this, Rly. Board has instructed the Railways that 13 1/3 percent of the vacancies of senior clerks in grade Rs. 330-560/- should be filled from amongst graduate clerks already serving in the lower grades by a limited departmental examination. This upgradation was first ordered only for the personnel branch, with a view to bring about a quantitative improvement in the functioning of the Personnel Branch, which later on, given effect to all the departments. So far it is learnt, that this upgradation is the result of an agreement with the staff side in the J.C.M. at the highest level.

But for other categories of staff, less scope is open before them. It is already stated that the scope of promotion is very limited in the Railways as a whole.

The principle of promotion cannot be appreciated whole-heartedly. Because, promotional chances laid

before the staff of the railway, although based on seniority-cum-suitability (probably the best of its kind), but in practical field - seniority becomes the only footage to measure the suitability of the candidate. So far studied in the N.F.Railway system, 25 percent post in the LGS (1), candidates are called for competitive examination on the basis of grade and pay scale, as well as completion of 5 years of service in the substantive scale, that is a staff, who has completed his service for five years in not below the scale of Rs.550/- per month, will only be eligible to complete in LGS. The examination is held on composite syllabus, which covers the concerning subjects of 'Personnel' Commercial and Operating departments. If a junior person could do well in the examination along with other senior staff in the competitive examination, should have got his due promotion. But due to lack of adequate post, he will not be considered for promotion since his name is not in the seniority list. At least, in this case, seniority suppressed the zeal and intelligence in the exercise of the function of a person who could take the chance to improve his qualities in service. On the otherhand, a senior man qualified in the examination may not be considered for promotion for his

(1) L.G.S = Lower grade service (Gazetted Class II Service)
unfair service records and inefficient ratings. Yet it is appreciable, that at least a scope of promotion is open to the employees in a tight position and with a limited chance to fulfil their contemplation.

In course of study about the promotional opportunities in the N.F.Railway system it is noticed -

With a few exceptions, a proportion of posts in various services is reserved to be filled by persons already serving in the lower grade or services. The proportions may however differ yet -

In class I services, approximately 60 percent of the posts are held by those directly recruited to that class and the rest are filled by promotions. The exact proportion of promotion varies from one service to another, depending upon the vacancies arising in a year (at least 20 to 30 percent) in the Railway and filled in the common pattern.

In Class II (Gazetted) service and posts, there is relatively little direct recruitment and 65 percent (approximately) of the posts are filled by Class III staff of different categories and departments. In general, direct recruitment in Class II (Gazetted) service is confined to Medical, Scientific and to a lesser extent
in the engineering services. 25 percent of the posts are filled by promotion from Class III Supervisory staff through an open competitive examination.

In the Class III service generally the promotion is restricted within the Class only. Class III service of the railways, there are 5-7 grades. The posts are allocated to each grade and expressed as a percentage of the total number of posts in the service. This allocation, reflects the degree of responsibility attached to the posts in different grades. This has been made with a view to ensure a reasonable avenue of promotions to the person concerned.

Normally promotion from Class IV to Class III post is considered in the N.F.Railway as per provision of the Railways. The person (serving in Class IV category) who is educationally and otherwise qualified - is allowed to avail the chance of promotion in the next higher post. In almost all the departments of N.F. Railway, a quota of 33 1/3 percent of the posts of clerks in grade and scale Rs.260-400/- are open to eligible class IV Employee.

For the above type of promotion all the departments of N.F.Railway do not follow a uniform policy. In some
cases, much importance is given on the principle of seniority-cum-suitability and in some other seniority is the only criterion for promotion. The departmental rules mostly give importance on Merit for posts of higher and middle level and seniority-cum-suitability at the lower level. This is not consistance with the principle of promotion recommended by the Central Pay Commission.

Further a common thing came to notice that for lack of promotional avenue qualified person working in the railway administration loses interest in performing their work sincerely. Grievances crop up for administrative negligence and tend them to inefficiency which subsequently speak upon the administration. This negligence or lack of promotional avenue sometime resort to resignation of competent person from railway service. This chances could have been avoided by applying the principle of promotion recommended by the Pay Commission or by negotiation with the staff Council at the appropriate level.

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