

Notes

Introduction

1. At the Food and Consumer Service, only two group interviews were conducted. The number of SES members there was so small that I interviewed most of them individually rather than conduct a group interview. At all other headquarters units, three group interviews were conducted.
2. At the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, which is enormous, two interviews with Wage Grade (blue-collar) supervisors were conducted, and white-collar supervisors were interviewed individually.

Chapter One

1. A word about terminology: the component parts of the department are technically "services," such as the Food and Consumer Service, but they are often referred to as "agencies." The term "department" refers to the Department of Agriculture as a whole.

Chapter Three

1. Currently, an applicant for an entry-level position in personnel at grade GS-5 can qualify either with a bachelor's degree or with three years of general work experience that includes at least a year of personnel work at the equivalent of GS-4. In contrast, most private sector employers require a bachelor's degree (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1993).

2. These figures are unpublished data from the study reported in U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (1993). The trend toward requiring a college degree for personnel work is much more advanced in the private sector. One study stated that "today some 95 percent of HRM professionals have some collegiate training" (Hoyt and Lewis, 1980, p. 53).

Chapter Four

1. ACWA groups the same one hundred-plus positions covered by the Professional and Administrative Career Examination (PACE) into six job families, each covered by a separate test. The groupings are: Group 1: health, safety, and environmental; Group 2: writing and public information; Group 3: business, finance, and management; Group 4: personnel, administration, and computers; Group 5: benefits review, tax, and legal; and Group 6: law enforcement and investigation.
2. Recently, at least in the D.C. area, OPM has begun to delegate to agencies the responsibility for hiring in some of these occupations, including management analyst and personnel specialist.
3. The only exception to the requirement to rate and rank the candidates is if there are three or fewer applicants identified and either none is a veteran or all are veterans.
4. Schedule B was designed originally for other purposes, but was expanded temporarily to cover PACE occupations. For a fuller discussion, see Ban and Ingraham (1988) and U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (1987a).

Chapter Six

1. There are a handful of jobs at GS-16 to GS-18, but most such positions were folded into the Senior Executive Service when it was created in 1979.

2. There are currently two different systems being used to develop the standards. One is the Factor Evaluation System (FES), which assigns points to nine specific factors. Many published standards have not yet been converted to the FES; they use narrative descriptions of the work at each grade level, based on similar factors (see Shafritz, Riccucci, Rosenbloom, and Hyde, 1992; Warman, 1986).

Chapter Seven

1. Some years ago, Allen Schick developed a typology of four types of resource scarcity (Schick, 1980). Severe scarcity, as I am defining it, is similar to his worst case category.
2. The one exception is for veterans with a 30 percent or greater "service-connected compensable disability," who can retreat as many as five grades or grade levels (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1987b).

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