

service, such as retired military officers whose training and experience would meet the specifications except for recency.

It is recommended that civil service requirements at all levels within state service should provide alternate patterns of qualifications which would take into account breadth of experience, length and quality of education, and the individual's ability to fit into the duties of the job.

D. Qualifications Appraisal Panels

The oral interview is part of the examining process for many positions in state service. Qualifications Appraisal Panels make the final decision (short of an appeal to the State Personnel Board itself) as to applicants' total qualifications for admission to the examination and the overall evaluation of their capacities. While a high written score may counterbalance a low but passing oral score, the individual who fails to pass the oral examination is eliminated unless he is successful in appealing the QAP's decision. The weight of the oral interview has a major effect on the examinee's examination score, especially when the written and oral tests are rated 50-50 or 60-40 respectively.

The SPB has devoted much effort to establishing standards and procedures for the selection of Qualifications Appraisal Panels and the conduct of oral interviews. Still, as in most selection interviews, opinions of the interviewers play a part. Members of QAP's are human beings, and like other human beings have acquired attitudes over the years which influence their decisions.

Some applicants have complained of discrimination because of age, based on their own reactions to oral interviews. Such complaints may be a matter of individual opinion. However, the successful appeal of one applicant may illustrate how this factor enters into the selection process.

Mrs. X, a state employee with 30 years of service as an interviewer and counselor, made a high written score on a promotional examination for a counseling job. The QAP, however, found that she "did not demonstrate an integrated understanding of job-related knowledge" and "did not provide evidence of adequate ability to relate with other people effectively with respect to counseling youth." Mrs. X in her appeal to the State Personnel Board stated that she felt that age bias (she is 62) and "erroneous interpretation or application of the minimum qualifications prescribed for the class" might be the reasons for her rejection. She cited her long experience in counseling persons of all ages, recent experience with older persons, and several years of recent experience with younger individuals, including counseling assignments within the past year at several local high schools. There was nothing in the job specification to indicate that counseling would be performed only for youthful applicants. Mrs. X cited highly commendatory performance reports she had received, including one complimenting her for passing the written portion of the counselor test.

Mrs. X was successful in her appeal. As she is a highly trained, articulate, and professionally competent individual, she was able to state her case effectively. Other examinees with less outstanding abilities may accept their rejection, feeling that further argument is useless.

The older job applicant should expect to face oral interviews, but should also expect that his prospects will depend on his performance