

(3) Career Patterns

(a) Background

1 Career patterns are the sequence of positions or occupational fields in which an employee serves as he progresses from an entry level to the most responsible level he is capable of assuming. Effectively used, career patterns aid in attracting and retaining quality employees by showing

a the significance of an immediate position as it relates to future duties,

b advancement and development possibilities,

c the self-development activities necessary for advancement, and

d the role of the individual position within the total organization.

2 In some agencies, career patterns may be formalized through narrative and graphic descriptions that show types of positions, grade levels, lines of promotion, and prescribed self-development activities for particular career fields. Such formalized career patterns may serve as the basis for a career program or system that is administered by a headquarters office. A career program is not only intended to provide opportunities for the advancement of employees. Its primary purpose is to facilitate quality staffing by identifying and developing competent employees for future utilization. In order to construct suitable patterns for each career field, an agency must determine future manpower needs, the numbers of jobs affected, the technical and administrative structure, grade and salary opportunities, and other pertinent data such as employee age profiles, or attrition analyses, for each career field involved.

(b) Coverage

When problems exist in recruiting and retaining quality personnel the inspector should determine the extent to which better career planning through the development of career patterns would help to overcome these problems. He should determine what, if anything, stands in the way of more effective career planning. Where there is a formal career program or system the inspector should determine whether its existence is of significant benefit to management as well as employees; he should look into whether it is being used effectively for the development of recruitment sources and the recruitment of quality personnel.

(c) Factfinding Techniques and Sources of Information

1 Review of staffing and career development objectives, policies, and procedures.

2 Interviews with management, personnel staff, union and operating officials, and employees.