

- *Special Salary Rates.* Authority to increase salary rates for shortage category jobs allows the Commission to raise the entire range of rates within the grade when necessary to meet private-enterprise salaries in shortage occupations. Such increases may be authorized on a nationwide, regional, or locality basis. They are subject to review once a year. This authority is now being widely used for professional engineering, scientific, and medical positions.
- *Special Recruitment Salary Rates for Individuals With Superior Qualifications.* For positions in grade GS-11 and above, the Commission has authority to give consideration to an individual candidate's existing salary, unusually high or unique qualifications, or a special need of the Government for his services, and to permit his appointment at a rate above the minimum rate of the appropriate grade. One major use of this authority is to recruit persons with doctorates.
- *Promotion Increases.* The minimum amount of additional salary an employee receives upon promotion is the equivalent of two within-grade increases. (Where there is no scheduled rate in the higher grade which is at least two steps above the previous rate, the employee receives the maximum salary for the grade or keeps his existing rate, whichever is higher.)
- *Structural Features.* The internal structure of the General Schedule has been improved significantly. For example, it now provides for:
 - Regular and meaningful salary differences between grades.
 - Uniform and meaningful rate ranges at most grades. (For grades up to GS-15, ranges are about 30% of the minimum rate of the grade.)
 - Uniform and meaningful within-grade increases, with nine increases available at most grades, each amounting to about 3.3 percent of the entry rate.
- *Absence of Numerical Restrictions on Top Grades for Certain Occupations.* Professional engineering positions primarily concerned with research and development and professional positions in the physical and natural sciences and medicine are not subject to the numerical limitations covering positions at GS-16, 17, and 18. Thus agencies may recommend to the Commission as many such positions in these grades as duties and responsibilities warrant.