

Structure of a Pay Scale by Ismar Baruch

One of the major problems involved in the development of a pay plan is to design a schedule of pay scales, or salary ranges, so integrated as to establish proper pay differentials among the various classes of positions, and to serve such personnel transactions as new appointments, transfers, promotions, and merit increases for effective service. Part of this problem requires consideration of the structure of each pay scale, or pay range, in terms of the mathematical relationships of the individual rates within the scale. The following discussion will treat some of the more important considerations in the construction of class pay scales.

In pay plans in the public service, pay scales consisting of a range of rates rather than a single flat rate are established for most classes of positions. This makes it possible to pay somewhat different rates, between a definite minimum and maximum, to individuals holding positions of the same classification. The principal purpose of the flexibility thus secured is to permit financial recognition—through pay advancement within the scale—of the increased value of an employee's services as he

becomes more experienced and proficient in the work of his position. A range of pay thus serves to establish both incentives and rewards. The normal expectation of a competent employee is to enter the service at the minimum rate of the appropriate pay scale and to receive increases gradually through the rates of the scale in accordance with his service and performance on the job until he reaches the maximum rate, unless he is promoted to a higher position in the meantime.

Basically, a pay scale is a range of pay rates, consisting of a minimum rate, one or more intermediate rates, and a maximum rate, all applicable to a given class of positions. The same range may, of course, apply to different classes of positions. This, is evident when a pay range is established for a "classification-grade," or zone of difficulty and responsibility of work, which covers several or many classes of different kinds but of the same level or value.

The minimum rate is the lowest rate of the scale, below which no employee shall be paid while occupying a position in a class to which the scale applies. It is the rate guaranteed to the employee as long as his work is sufficiently satisfactory to warrant employing him in a position in that class. It is also intended to serve as the entrance rate payable to a new employee on original appointment to a position allocated to that class.

Intermediate rates are primarily for the purpose of recognizing an employee's progress without change of duties or responsibilities, i.e., while occupying the same position. They also permit financial recognition of the various degrees of efficiency, progress, and value of service demonstrated by different employees in positions of the same class.

The President's Message

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sonnel. We believe too that state service should offer attractive life-career opportunities to those who are qualified. State service cannot hope to reach that highly desired degree of efficiency unless these conditions are met.

The Civil Service Law offers the state and its employees the vehicle by which these ends may be attained. The O.S.E.A. is certainly going to exert its influence to see that they are attained, and that the original high purpose of the act is not distorted to meet selfish ends.