



Chapter One: Introduction

[Why it was written and why you should read it](#)

[What it is](#)

[... And what it isn't](#)

[The big picture: The government HRM agenda](#)

[HR planning is step one](#)

[Implement the plan early](#)

[Employment equity](#)

[Employment equity and merit](#)

[Values-based staffing](#)

Why it was written and why you should read it

This handbook was written to provide basic information that you as a manager need to deal with the staffing and recruitment challenge confronting the Public Service of Canada.

There has been relatively little recruitment over the past 10-15 years. Some managers may be out of practice, their skills rusty, their knowledge out of date. In the past five years, under the staffing reform initiative, the Public Service Commission (PSC) added flexibility, including changes to the [Public Service Employment Regulations \(PSER\)](#) which took effect March 31, 2000.

This handbook outlines the staffing process, options, and recruitment programs available to help you staff better, be more efficient, and work more effectively with your Human Resources Advisor (HRA).


What it is ...

This handbook has been written to help you find what you need when you need it and identifies other sources for more detailed information, usually Internet Web sites.

You will also find a glossary of staffing terms at the back.

This is a onetime-only print edition but is also a "work in progress" to be housed on the Publiservice site in the near future so you can view or print the most current and relevant


information. Your ideas, comments, questions and suggestions are valued and can be e-mailed to: staffing-dotation@psc-cfp.gc.ca



... And what it isn't

THIS HANDBOOK IS NOT A [STAFFING MANUAL](#). It is not intended to give full details on the various applicable acts, regulations, and policies or to replace the advice of your HRA. Indeed, a key goal is to help you have information at your fingertips so that you can work better with your HRA. Nearly all staffing occurs under departmental authority. Therefore it is in your best interest to know the basics of staffing and recruiting as outlined in this handbook and to have open communication with your departmental HRA, the staffing expert.

This handbook does not include information regarding EX staffing and recruitment. Your HRA can direct you to the appropriate information source.




The big picture — The government human resources management (HRM) agenda

The Public Service is hiring again and is facing a staffing challenge.

During downsizing, managers learned to work with a contingent work force of casuals, terms and contractors. Today, we need to focus on a continuing work force of career public servants to rebuild for tomorrow.

The Public Service must go head-to-head with the private sector for experienced workers and students. You must learn how to tap into diverse talent pools. Major employers are adopting a far more strategic approach to recruiting than they have in the past. Knowledge-based organizations try to identify potential recruits as early as first and second year university. They use summer employment and co-op hiring as part of a conscious recruitment strategy to establish themselves as good places to work (employers of choice). That kind of far-sighted (i.e., strategic) thinking must now be done throughout the Public Service.

Potential staff shortages exist at all levels in the organization. The Public Service is aging across the board. The anticipated increased departures will affect most classification levels and departments.



HR planning is step one

Every manager knows the value of planning. You must include HR planning as part of your business plan. **For more information on HR Planning, you may want to consult the electronic document, [Developing a Staffing Strategy](#).**

The reality of recent years forced "quick fixes" and ad hoc staffing. There was no choice then. Today, you have no choice but to plan. The imminent departure of experienced employees, an increasingly competitive labour market, and the impact on traditional jobs by information technology mean each hiring action must contribute to the strategic goal of rebuilding your organization.

As you draft your business plans, ask yourself these basic questions:

- What knowledge, skills, and personal qualities (i.e., competencies) do I need to accomplish the work in this plan? This year? Next year? The year after?
- Who might be leaving, retiring, and when? How will I replace them? Where will I find replacements?
- How much and what kind of training will those replacements need to get up to speed?
- How does employment equity fit into my HR plan? What are my specific employment equity gaps/goals? What are my strategies for attracting and retaining designated group members?

Discuss your plan early with your HRA.

Implement the plan early

You need an HR plan to anticipate and fill vacancies promptly and efficiently. Each vacancy, whether an existing position that comes open or a job that is reclassified or created, becomes an opportunity to make good on the plan and to achieve your business goals.

The best time to staff is when you don't have to. This may be one of the hardest things to do. It takes real discipline and real planning. It is a classic case of putting the "important" ahead of the "urgent." Finding good talent can be a fairly long and sometimes complex process. It must start early, well before the vacancy exists. Your plan lets you do that, to get a head start on staffing. A lot of things are possible. It just takes planning and determination.

Employment equity

A meritorious Public Service is one that is competent, non-partisan, and representative of the public it serves.

The [Public Service Employment Act \(PSEA\)](#) and the [Employment Equity Act \(EEA\)](#), both passed by Parliament, mandate the PSC to take the necessary steps to increase the representation of employment equity designated groups. This is consistent with the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#).

Employment equity is about appointing qualified, competent people; it is about good human resources management practices, which ensure a representative work force that reflects Canadian society.

The use of special initiatives that permit departments or agencies to appoint qualified candidates from one or more designated employment equity groups is consistent with merit. They are used in situations where the number of potential applicants is large enough to ensure the selection of a qualified candidate and to address issues of representation that other

measures have not resolved.



Employment equity and merit

The traditional methods for recruiting and promoting have not produced a Public Service that is as representative as it should be. You can improve representativeness by making considered staffing decisions and using available flexibility, such as expanding an area of selection to make the candidate pool more representative.

In all cases, fully qualified people are appointed. The merit principle will be maintained as we build a truly representative Public Service.

Employment equity is a good human resources management concept to promote a representative work force where all employees can contribute. It requires strong commitment to the values of equity — providing access to employment opportunities; transparency — communicating resourcing practices and processes; and fairness — using barrier-free practices and judging people on their strengths and abilities.

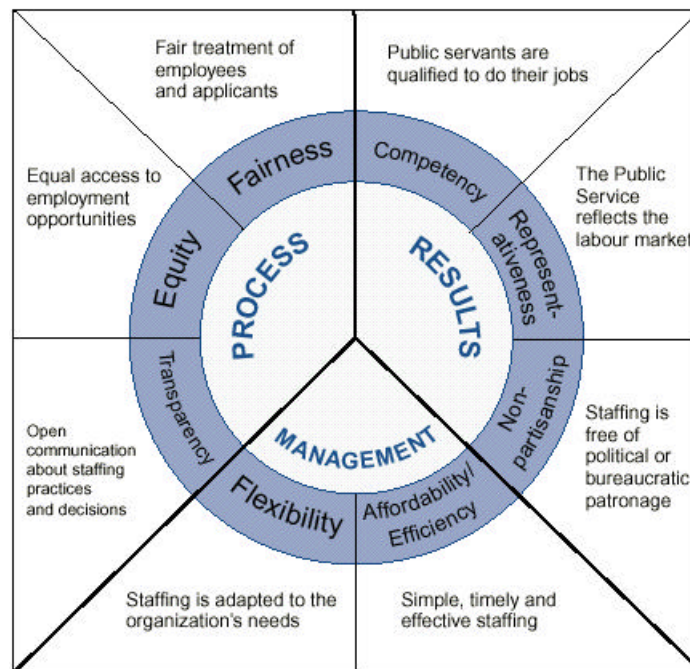


Values-based staffing

The PSEA governs staffing. It requires appointments to be based on merit, which means that people are hired based on their qualifications. The PSC applies merit by striking the optimal balance between the three results values, the three process values, and the two management principles.

These values aren't unique to the PSC; they're shared by many organizations in the public and private sectors. They don't exist in the abstract or in isolation. In day-to-day practice, you must balance these six values with two management principles: flexibility (most appropriate staffing option) and affordability/efficiency (best use of time and money).

THE "VALUES WHEEL" Values-based Staffing – A Balance of Merit Values & Management Principles



The values "wheel" comprises the three **results** values, the three **process** values and the two **management principles** which are defined as follows:

Results Values

Competence: Public servants are qualified to do their jobs.

Representativeness: The Public Service reflects the labour market.

Non-Partisanship: Staffing is free of political or bureaucratic patronage.

Process Values

Fairness: Fair treatment of employees and applicants.

Equity: Equal access to employment opportunities.

Transparency: Open communication about staffing practices and decisions.

Management Principles

Affordability and Efficiency: Simple, timely and effective staffing.

Flexibility: Staffing is adapted to the organization's needs.

You must strive for an informed and ethical balance of values and principles—not a compromise or trade-off, but a balance. Your primary objective is to uphold the merit principle. In short, you must keep your eye on the big picture and do your best to ensure your decisions and actions reflect an employer of choice, meet your business needs, and take into account the future needs of the Public Service as a whole.

By applying values to staffing, you improve your human resources management. You also address the issues raised in the [1999 Public Service Employee Survey](#), which found that 30% of employees did not think staffing was done fairly.

Values may conflict, may seem outright contradictory, and may well be difficult to balance at

times. But they must be considered, weighed, and balanced to reach a decision. Each step in the staffing process may bring into play certain values more than others.



What does it mean in practice?

Your challenge is to staff and recruit using the best balance you can in each specific circumstance. Values-based staffing creates greater trust between managers and employees.

Values-based staffing can also affect how you make an informed choice and your relationship with your HRA.

Informed choice in values-based staffing is three-fold:

- Facts – What **must** I do? (e.g., the law, departmental policy, etc.)
- Options – What **can** I do?
- Values – What **should** I do?

Your relationship with your HRA is important. This handbook will help you know what you want and how to get it so you can work more effectively with your HRA. For example, if you need someone yesterday, don't ask how to run a competition; discuss a faster option. This handbook will help you identify your options.

Advanced planning helps your HRA to map out a course of action and to present options to assist you in reaching your goal. Once HRAs know your needs, they can provide you with facts and the pros and cons of each option. They will do their best to help you meet your program requirements.

But the final decisions are yours!

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