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Changes under the Participatory Government in the First Year:
(3) Personnel Management

Sweeping and Systematic Reform Achieved in Personnel Management

In personnel management, the Participatory Government set a model by establishing an objective system rather than relying on personal considerations. It is in this field that “reform through establishing a systematic framework” as emphasized by President Roh Moo-hyun, has been most successfully achieved.

The most notable change is the fact that the channels to search for qualified candidates have been diversified. On the Internet, the *Samgochoryeo Corner*, a standing online window for making recommendations for high-level government posts, has joined the Cheong Wa Dae and Central Personnel Committee homepages.

The Government started a database project to look for and organize candidates in a systematic manner; the database now covers about 72,000 persons, including 3,415 professors at leading universities, 12,000 experts from various fields, 5,000 members of advisory committees in local councils, 5,200 members of boards of government-run organizations and government committees, 600 experts abroad and 300 professional women.
Personnel management has institutionally divided into two parts, with the Senior Secretary for Personnel Affairs responsible for recommendations and the Senior Secretary for Civil Affairs for screening the qualifications.

The information on candidates thus formulated goes to the personnel recommendation committee. When a recommendation is for a cabinet minister, the prime minister, the Cheong Wa Dae chief of staff and other relevant senior secretaries examine the qualifications. When the recommendations are for vice ministers and high-level positions in government-run organizations, the relevant ministers along with other senior secretaries screen the qualifications. After going through the multiple screening procedures, the President makes the final decision, and an announcement is made.

The autonomy of each ministry in personnel management has been expanded, with the relevant ministers given authority for personnel management for most positions below grade five (deputy director level), except for new positions.

Another characteristic of personnel affairs is that a thorough job analysis precedes the search. In the case of government-run organizations, fact-finding analyses were carried out for 415 organizations as part of efforts to formulate rational standards for personnel management by taking into account the characteristics of each organization.

It had often been pointed out that the government lacks scientific evaluation and reward systems based on such analyses. However, a general Governmental reform drive was launched last year regarding personnel management. As a result, about 92.6 percent of the central administrative agencies adopted the multiple screening system while open hiring was instituted for 102 jobs in 15 ministries and agencies. In addition, the employment of civilian experts for open-ended jobs expanded to 30.6 percent, pointing to a fair system in personnel management.

Personnel exchanges have been increasing in three major categories: between the government and private organizations, the central and provincial governments and between ministries.
The doors to government service have been opened wider for those who had been subject to barriers, including persons with disabilities, women and persons from provincial areas. Discriminatory practices have been eliminated as part of the far-flung reform drive. As part of the endeavor to utilize talented persons in a balanced way, the Government also decided to expand the employment of science and engineering majors to 30 percent of jobs above grade four (director level) by 2008.

The Government plans to consolidate a personnel management system suitable to each ministry as a step toward formulating a “human resources management system.” The Government plans to present a blueprint this year for improving the personnel management system; this will benefit officials in provincial areas and those with special portfolios.

The personnel policy of the Administration is clear. And that is to use the right person in the right place as the Administration builds and carries out its goals step by step. It could be said that the policy is based on the “three-R’s principle”: the “right person” in the “right place” at the “right time.”

Under the Participatory Government, efficient and effective people from diverse sectors will be called for government duties regardless of their background and in a balanced, harmonious way.