

Improving the administrative mechanism for attracting and utilizing talents in the public sector: From the case of Ho Chi Minh City

Hoàn thiện cơ chế hành chính thu hút, trọng dụng nhân tài trong khu vực nhà nước: từ thực tiễn thành phố Hồ Chí Minh

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Abstract: This research article focuses on the administrative mechanism for attracting and utilizing talent in the public sector in Vietnam in general and Ho Chi Minh City in particular. Based on the current practical mechanism, the article proposes suggestions to improve the administrative mechanism for attracting and utilizing talent in the public sector so that talent attraction activities in the public sector can be more effective.

Keywords: *Administrative mechanism; attracting and utilizing talents; talent; talents in Ho Chi Minh City; the public sector*

Tóm tắt: Bài viết nghiên cứu về cơ chế hành chính thu hút và trọng dụng nhân tài làm việc trong khu vực Nhà nước tại Việt Nam nói chung và Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh nói riêng. Từ cơ chế thực tiễn đang được áp dụng, bài viết đưa ra những đề xuất nhằm hoàn thiện cơ chế hành chính về thu hút và trọng dụng nhân tài trong khu vực Nhà nước để từ đó, hoạt động thu hút nhân tài làm việc trong khu vực công sẽ hiệu quả hơn.

Từ khóa: *Cơ chế hành chính thu hút nhân tài; nhân tài tại Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh thu hút; trọng dụng nhân tài; thu hút nhân tài trong khu vực nhà nước*

1. Introduction

Every country needs to pay special attention to the issue of attracting and utilizing talents, as "talents are the lifeblood of a nation". A high-quality labor force will contribute to the country's strong development and the state machinery's effective operation. Therefore, each country builds reasonable mechanisms and policies to attract talent to work in the public sector. Ho Chi Minh City is always at the forefront of the country in attracting talent, as the city has many practical and systematic policies to recruit talent to work in state agencies. In this article, the author analyzes the administrative mechanisms of attracting and utilizing

talents in the public sector of Ho Chi Minh City, thereby proposing some suggestions to contribute to making these mechanisms effective and practical in reality.

2. Overview of administrative mechanisms for attracting and retaining talent in the public sector

Every country in the world develops mechanisms and policies to attract and retain talent to work in their country. State administrative agencies implement administrative mechanisms within the administrative system according to the principles of administrative operations and carried out through administrative procedures and processes. Attracting and retaining

talent in the public sector is a process that employers carry out to recruit, train, use, and retain talented individuals to work in state agencies and state-owned enterprises effectively and sustainably. From the above analysis, administrative mechanisms for attracting and retaining talent in the public sector can be defined as the principles, procedures, and administrative procedures for recruiting, training, using, and retaining talented individuals to work in state agencies and state-owned enterprises effectively and sustainably.

3. The current administrative mechanisms for attracting and utilizing talents in the public sector in Ho Chi Minh City

The Vietnamese Party and State have always paid attention to the work of attracting and utilizing talents, especially those working in the public sector. Therefore, our country has had many policies to encourage talents to serve the country, as evidenced in some documents such as Decree 140/2017/NĐ-CP on policies for attracting and creating a source of excellent graduates and young scientific staff [1]. Ho Chi Minh City is one of the localities that pays special attention to building policies for attracting and utilizing talents, especially those working in the public sector. This is reflected in the fact that Ho Chi Minh City has issued many resolutions, such as the resolutions of the 9th [2], 10th [3], and 11th [4] Party Congresses of Ho Chi Minh City (tenure 2010-2015, 2015-2020, and 2020-2025), all of which identify the program to improve the quality of human resources as one of the

breakthrough programs. Since 2018, Ho Chi Minh City has implemented the work of attracting talent in the 2018-2022 period, striving to attract personnel who are experts or have special abilities for 20 job positions by 2021 [5]. The administrative mechanism for attracting and utilizing talents in Ho Chi Minh City is shown in the following aspects:

3.1. On attracting talents

Regarding talent attraction, Decree 140/2017/NĐ-CP and specific regulations of Ho Chi Minh City apply different recruitment methods to different groups:

3.1.1. For the group of outstanding graduates

Decree 140/2017/NĐ-CP provides that universities will self-detect and list students who meet the criteria to send to the Ministry of Education and Training. The Ministry will then compile and send to the Ministry of Home Affairs to review, consider, and implement policies. Similarly, young scientists can also be discovered by agencies, organizations, and units specified in Article 1 of Decree 140/2017/NĐ-CP, including Party and State agencies, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, political and social organizations from central to district level; public career units of the Party, State, and armed forces, as well as universities that discover, compile, and send lists to the Ministry of Home Affairs. For Vietnamese students and young scientists overseas, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will coordinate with the Ministry of Education and Training to monitor, detect, and list them to send

to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Then, to ensure transparency, the authorized agencies, organizations, and units still publicly announce at least three consecutive times on three mass media channels, including written, spoken, and pictorial press of central or local levels; at the same time, post on the electronic information page of the agency, organization, and unit about the conditions for registration, the number of positions to be recruited, the content of the dossier, the deadline for receiving applications, the location to submit the registration form, the application dossier, phone and email address of the organization, and individual receiving the application.

3.1.2. For experts, scientists, and individuals with unique talents

Talent attraction includes two steps for this group of people: preparation and recruitment plan, and announcement. In which, the preparation phase includes: (1) The agency that needs to recruit determines the field to be attracted, related topics, and research projects to propose needs to the city; (2) The city establishes a Talent Attraction Council and selects according to each field that needs to be attracted.

During the planning and announcement phase, based on the proposal report of the recruitment and selection council, the city's People's Committee issues a plan to attract experts, scientists, and talented individuals. The content of this plan includes the recruitment needs, which describe each job position with specific quantity and criteria, conditions, and instructions for applicants, document

requirements, time and location for submission, and the selection process steps (if any) and result announcement time.

In addition, Ho Chi Minh City has specific regulations for experts, scientists, and talented individuals. These include general criteria such as having a transparent background, good health, and civil capacity, as well as specific criteria on professional qualifications, work experience, achievements, awards, and levels that participants need to meet. Experts, scientists, and talented individuals who apply for a position must meet all specific requirements of that position [6].

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the talent recruitment process implemented by Ho Chi Minh City is very comprehensive and detailed. This contributes to making the talent recruitment process transparent, clear, and practical, as well as accurately targeting the desired audience.

3.2. On talent recruitment

The sequence and procedures for talent recruitment are regulated explicitly by Decision No. 17/2019/QD-UBND dated July 4, 2019, of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City regarding the policy of attracting and developing a team of experts, scientists, and individuals with unique talents for the fields that the city has demand for during the period of 2019-2022 [7].

Step 1: Participants submit their application for a position suitable to their profession, capabilities, and

experience according to the list of required documents.

Step 2: The city's attraction and selection council meets and listens to experts, scientists, and individuals with unique talents presenting their directions, implementation plans, projects, and works that are assigned or evaluated based on the position requirements.

Step 3: The attraction and selection council makes an evaluation report on the participants' capabilities and proposes to the city's People's Committee to select the most suitable candidate.

Step 4: The city's People's Committee issues a decision to attract experts, scientists, and individuals with unique talents.

Step 5: The head of the agency or unit receiving the talent proceeds to draft and sign a contract with the selected candidate.

3.3. On human resource training and development

After being recruited, the talents will be directly trained and developed by the supervising agencies according to the suitable programs for each group of individuals, specifically:

Firstly, outstanding students and young scientists must carry out the apprentice regime for at least 03 months and no more than 12 months, except for cases where they have worked for 12 months or more in relevant professional tasks for the position they were recruited for. This training aims to ensure that these talented but young individuals can familiarize themselves

with the working environment and develop the necessary professional skills and knowledge.

Secondly, for individuals with unique talents, similar to Decree 140/2017/NĐ-CP, Article 21 of the accompanying Regulations in Decision 17 specifies that the receiving agency must have a policy of training and developing the capacity of these individuals after recruitment. Accordingly, individuals with unique talents will be prioritized for training to improve their qualifications and participate in scientific conferences and seminars both domestically and internationally in the fields of science and technology, policy planning, urban infrastructure construction, and public services. In addition, these organizations must also enhance specialized training and send talented individuals to participate in training programs in their fields of expertise.

3.4. On the allocation and utilization of human resources

Regarding the allocation and use of human resources, it is necessary for the state to pay attention to the policy of allocation and use of human resources to ensure that talented individuals feel valued when working in the public sector. In Ho Chi Minh City, this policy is implemented as follows:

Firstly, for outstanding students, young scientific officials, after completing their probationary period, will be appointed to civil service positions, occupational titles, and corresponding professions in accordance with their qualifications.

This content is specified in detail in Article 11 of Decree 140/2017/ND-CP:

- Excellent graduates are appointed as specialized officers and equivalent, ranked 1st;

- Young scientific officers with a master's degree, level 1 specialist doctors, resident doctors, and level 1 specialist pharmacists are appointed as specialized officers and equivalent, ranked 2nd;

- Young scientific officers with a PhD degree, level 2 specialist doctors, and level 2 specialist pharmacists are appointed as specialized officers and equivalent, ranked 3rd.

Secondly, experts, scientists, and individuals with unique talents are recruited separately for each organization, so the allocation and utilization will be stipulated in the contract signed between the parties. The provisions attached to Decision 17 apply to talents who are not civil servants or state officials, so there are many regulations to evaluate their task completion capacity and quality. Based on this evaluation, the recruiting agency will effectively adjust the use and allocation of talent. This group will be regularly evaluated for job performance every six months and before the end of the contract. The evaluation result will be established in a conclusion report with confirmation from the using agency and representatives from the Department of Science and Technology or the Department of Culture and Sports, sent to the city People's Committee for monitoring. In addition to the regular 6-month evaluation period

and the final evaluation, for contracts with fewer than 12 months, the receiving agency and the recruited individuals will coordinate and agree on the periodic evaluation. This evaluation will be conducted based on the legal provisions for quality evaluation of research works and on the contract signed between the parties.

4. Some proposals to improve the administrative mechanism for attracting and utilizing talents in the public sector based on the practical experience of Ho Chi Minh City

It can be seen that Ho Chi Minh City has very detailed and appropriate mechanisms and policies for attracting and utilizing talents in accordance with the laws and the Party and state's guidelines and policies. However, there are still some shortcomings and limitations in the administrative mechanism for attracting and utilizing talents in the public sector based on the practical experience of Ho Chi Minh City that need to be improved and overcome.

Firstly, it is necessary to expand the scope of application of the law on attracting and utilizing talents to those working in the public sector.

Currently, Ho Chi Minh City only has regulations on attracting talented individuals such as outstanding students, young scientific staff, experts, scientists, and those with special talents outside the public sector to work in state agencies. However, there is no regulation for those who are currently working in state-owned enterprises and institutions. This is not reasonable

because, in addition to attracting talent, it is also necessary to utilize talent within the public sector to maintain stability and promote development. Neither the regulations of Ho Chi Minh City nor the laws of Vietnam have a specific provision for this issue. Currently, the discovery, planning, attraction, and training of talents are being implemented in accordance with the guidance of relevant agencies and are adjusted and supplemented annually. On the one hand, this regulation can be considered flexible and responsive to actual needs. However, on the other hand, there is an opinion that such regulations are not sufficient and there is a need for unified standards for talent [8].

Secondly, the recruitment process needs to be more precisely regulated to comply with Decree 140/2017/ND-CP regulations. According to Decree 140/2017/ND-CP, the process of recruiting talent is as follows:

Step 1. Applicants submit one registration form in the latest 30 days from the date of the recruitment announcement.

Step 2. The authorized recruitment agency notifies the result of the document inspection to the applicants within eight days from the expiration date of the registration form. The authorized recruitment agency establishes the Recruitment Council and determines the successful candidate according to the law on recruiting civil servants and officials.

Step 3. The authorized recruitment agency issues the employment decision,

notifies the applicant in writing, and sends the list to the Ministry of Internal Affairs within five working days from the date the authorized person approves the recruitment decision. The successful candidate must report to the agency within 30 days from the date of the recruitment decision or another deadline specified in the recruitment decision.

Step 4. The head of the authorized recruitment agency makes the decision to cancel the recruitment decision and may recruit the next highest-ranked candidate if the successful candidate does not report to work within the specified deadline.

The recruitment process under Decree 140/2017/ND-CP [1] is built in compliance with the Law on Civil Servants and Officials 2008 [9], as well as the Law amending and supplementing some articles of the Law on Civil Servants and Officials and the Law on Public Employees 2019 [10]. This means that outstanding students and young scientific officials recruited will work under the state staffing system. The recruitment process under Decision 17 focuses on assessing the practical work abilities of candidates through direct meetings and presentations between the Recruitment Council and potential candidates, thus being suitable for individuals such as experts working under a contract form.

Therefore, Ho Chi Minh City can apply both of these processes to recruit talent to work in the public sector, but the regulations in Decision 17 need to be revised and supplemented with specific deadlines for each step to facilitate the implementation process.

Thirdly, the recruitment methods need to be more flexible

It can be seen that the recruitment process in Decree 140/2017/NĐ-CP and the Regulations accompanying Decision 17 both demonstrate recruitment methods such as testing, selection, and direct interviews of potential candidates. However, in today's era, using only this method would show a lack of flexibility in recruiting human talent. In some cases, talented individuals living and working in a different location or country face difficulties participating in the recruitment process to work for state agencies. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh City, in particular, and Vietnam, in general, need to study and apply more flexible recruitment methods to recruit human talent to not miss out on highly qualified personnel working in the public sector.

Fourthly, it is necessary to specify the procedures and steps for implementing policies on fostering and training human talent in the public sector.

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Currently, training and fostering human talent mainly rely on policies and resolutions of the People's Council and People's Committee at all levels but have not been uniformly regulated in any legal document. Therefore, the work of fostering and training human talent still faces some obstacles in implementation. Therefore, it is necessary to specify the work of training

and fostering human talent to work in state agencies and state-owned enterprises.

5. Conclusion

Attraction and retention of talent pose a significant challenge for every country and locality, especially in the current context where there is a brain drain and many talented individuals who study abroad do not return to serve their country. With its own efforts, Ho Chi Minh City has built a comprehensive and effective administrative mechanism and policy to attract and retain talent to work in the public sector. Although there are still some limitations and shortcomings, it is hoped that through the proposed solutions, Ho Chi Minh City will soon develop an even more effective administrative mechanism to attract and retain talent to work in the public sector and achieve meritorious achievements.

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