

STATE BANK OF INDIA OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

(BENGAL CIRCLE)

(Registered under Trade Unions Act 1926-Regd. No. 6908)

1, STRAND ROAD, KOLKATA-700 001.

Phone: 2213-0663, 2213-0154, 2213-0665 (after 5.30 P.M.), Fax : (033) 2210-1684



e-mail: sbioabengalcircle@gmail.com
www.sbioabengal.com

IP No. 500077

Circular No. 52/2020

Date : 29.02.2020

To All Members (Please Circulate)

We reproduce hereunder the Circular No. 36 dated 25.02.2020 issued by the General Secretary, All India State Bank Officers' Federation, the contents of which are self-explicit.

With revolutionary greetings,

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay
(General Secretary)

To all our Affiliates / Members:

REVIEW OF "EXTENSION IN SERVICE" INTRODUCTION OF EVALUATION METRICS

We have sent a communication to the Dy. Managing Director (HR) & Corporate Development Officer, State Bank of India, on the captioned subject.

A copy is enclosed for information.

Yours comradely,

(Soumya Datta)
General Secretary

No.6704/14/20

Date: 25.02.2020

The Deputy Managing Director (HR) &
Corporate Development Officer,
State Bank of India,
Madame Cama Road,
Mumbai - 400021.

Dear Sir,

REVIEW OF "EXTENSION IN SERVICE" INTRODUCTION OF EVALUATION METRICS

We invite your kind attention to the recent circular instructions issued by the bank vide e-circular no CDO/P&HRD-PM/76/2019-20 dated 04.02.2020 modifying the long-standing well-structured Performance Management System based modalities for extension in service for officers. We are surprised to note that the Bank has taken a unilateral decision to link CDS grade to extension of service which has violated the bilateral understandings. This communiqué has permeated a sense of strong resentment, anger and frustration amongst the fraternity as the extension will be dependent primarily on CDS, a system which carries innumerable loopholes and flaws. The system is also opaque as the officers are not given any opportunity to know the marks awarded by the Reporting authority and Reviewing authority. The evaluation metrics of 100 marks based on a faulty method loaded with errors and confusion will surely ruin the morale and career of our officers which will eventually leave a disastrous impact on the organization and the officers' fraternity in the long run. The circular instructions will invariably dent the confidence and enthusiasm of the already overburdened and demoralized officers' fraternity. We apprehend that such evaluation metrics based on a faulty CDS for extension in service will certainly be utilized as a potential weapon against the officers and there would be instances of mass scale discontinuation of services of officers as extension denied which will eventually create chaos and fear psychosis amongst the officers' fraternity. A personal bias would surely come in effect and the officers are

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay
General Secretary
Mobile : 9434551152

State Bank of India Officers' Association

(BENGAL CIRCLE)

: 2 :

likely to be threatened by the Controllers with awarding lower score so that total scores under all the metrics comes below 65 leading to discontinuation in service. There are thousands of instances as we have received feedback from the grass root level that application for NOC required for Passport, leave application in the HRMS by the Branch Managers (not rejected & not sanctioned status) and bills remain unattended to at RBO level months together despite repeated request by the applicants. The much hyped Sanjeevani portal has failed to address these issues. In this backdrop, we would like to submit our pointwise views on these evaluation criteria for your consideration and urge upon your good office to rescind the captioned circular instructions forthwith.

- I. Over decades, the performance appraisal system had been completely subjective and opaque which led to resentment amongst the employees, in the light of this highly competitive and dynamic external environment. As such, "Career Development System" or "CDS" was designed with the idea to bring in objectivity and transparency to this age-old performance evaluation system. However, our Federation had strong reservations on the new system as we had opined that it would end up doing more harm than good. CDS scores have been extremely erratic and do not actually represent the efforts, hard work, sincerity and comprehensive all-round performance of the officers.
- II. AISBOF had earlier made a detailed presentation on our views on CDS and the detrimental effects of the Bell-Curve system. In fact, many global giants like Accenture, Google, Microsoft, Adobe, KPMG, Infosys, Mindtree, HCL Technologies, Cisco, InMobi, GE (the company that pioneered this model) have done away with the Bell curve model and adopted a more practical and concrete way of motivating higher performances amongst employees as the Bell curve system could become counterproductive to improve the company's bottom line.
- III. The reason behind such a strong belief stems from the fact that, since the launch of the new system, we have been overwhelmed with the grievances and complaints from the members and their demand to raise the issue with appropriate authority for remodeling the system and/ or even revoking the system as a whole.
- IV. Ours is a service industry. Officers have to do unscheduled and unstructured jobs all-round the year to keep the bank running and to attend to various customers' demands. Announcement of sudden fiscal and government decisions like Demonetization, Kisan fasal Yojana, waiver of crop loan debts schemes etc. tends to throw the normal work out of gear. These factors are not given cognizance in the system.
- V. Categorisation of branches needs to be revisited and officers and award staff should be posted as per categorized positions only else a situation of staff shortage at different branches will distort the cohorts. There are many roles for which KRAs need to be factored.
- VI. Many branches in rural areas are unable to perform due to acute connectivity issue and acute staff shortage. CDS does not account for these issues. Some of the branches are working in condition where basic infrastructure is not provided in the branch. The captive branches are usually facing acute staff shortage like one officer and one clerical staff despite them serving the customers in large numbers. CDS does not take into these factors while determining the marks of officials.
- VII. CDS has been subsequently modified after our intervention and many of our suggestions have been incorporated but still it needs to be improved significantly. Fact remains that this model has not been able to assess the performance objectively and has created angst and frustration amongst the fraternity.
- VIII. In the light of the above, our Federation decided to conduct a nationwide close ended survey and every officer posted in every nook and corner of the country was open and free to respond to the survey. About 21848 officers from nook and corner of the country participated in the survey. The findings are alarming from the point of view of the officers' dissatisfaction, grievances and angst against the improper and flawed CDS.

1. CDS GRADE: MAX SCORE 50

We have time and again brought out various deficiencies and anomalies in CDS. Such anomalies and deficiencies are depriving many deserving officers who are excellent performers during their entire career from CDS grade matching to their actual performance. While some of the issues have been addressed, still there are many issues resolution of which has not seen the light of the day. Similarly, our demand of removing C category from the CDS was not considered in the past. But we are surprised to note that bank has reckoned this category for assessment of an officer while extending his/her service. We are deeply saddened to note that our demand that CDS should not be linked to extension of service as this is against bilateral understandings has been totally ignored by the management by linking the CDS grade with extension in service. The scoring pattern is also disproportionate to the CDS grade. Consequently, it will be extremely difficult to achieve minimum benchmark score under the metrics for huge number of officers who achieve CDS grade other than "AAA" or "AA".

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay

General Secretary
Mobile : 9434551152

State Bank of India Officers' Association

(BENGAL CIRCLE)

: 3 :

2. MANDATORY LEARNING & CERTIFICATION COURSES : Max score 10

In many cases where an officer is under suspension/sabbatical leave/Medical leave/ study leave or any other long leave, the officer is deprived off from mandatory learnings and certification course. Such officer will automatically get NIL score for non-completion of mandatory learning certification courses as per the criterion. In many suspension cases, the officers are reinstated later on. Such officers will also be deprived from scoring under the criterion in addition to losing the scoring under disciplinary action as there is no provision in the proposed Metrics to factor this aspect. This will be entirely against the natural principle of "autrefois convict" guaranteed under fundamental rights.

3. FALSE COMPLIANCE & DISCIPLINARY ACTION; MAX SCORE 15

While we appreciate that there should not be any false compliances in any of the areas, the reasons and pressures for such compliances need to be perceived and considered. We have already sent a detailed communique to you vide our letter no 7151/68/19 dated 25.11.2019 in which we have detailed the circumstances leading to false compliance. It is very disheartening to note that instead of addressing the concerns raised by us through above letter, a criterion of cases of false compliance has been stipulated and Nil score will be awarded to the officer as against the maximum score of 15 for such instances during last 3 years.

While we appreciate Bank's concern in the cases of financial misconduct, any malafide acts etc there is a need to distinguish between the malafide and bonafide cases. In case of disciplinary action, an officer will be penalized with NIL score which is against the natural principle of "autrefois convict" guaranteed under fundamental rights. As such, this provision is totally unjustified.

Further, if the name of an officer features in 'Agreed List(LODI), he will be awarded zero as per provisions of the circular. This will be a clear of double jeopardy as disciplinary proceedings against the concerned officer may have been completed and punishment meted out.

4. CONTINUED USEFULNESS TO THE BANK: MAXIMUM SCORE 5

Under the criterion, overall assessment of officer's utility to the bank will be done and accordingly whether or not his/her continued service in the bank will be useful or not will be decided. There is no provision in the Metrics for leveraging performance of an officer in regard to natural calamities, political unrest leading to closure of branches for a considerable period of time like in Jammu& Kashmir, bandh in the Darjeeling district for couple of months, sudden announcement of schemes by the Government like demonetisation, other programmes like Aadhar linkage, Census related work, which will affect considerably an officer's performance at the material time. As the performance of an official is dependent on various factors including unproductive work being done in branches particularly in rural and semi urban branches, it is the need of the hour to consider all such factors while determining the utility of an official. We apprehend that the score under this category will be at the mercy of the controllers as there is no specific quantifiable and transparent criterion which will determine such utility and also this will be utilised against the officers for taking any revenge. So, awarding of zero score under this criterion cannot be ruled out. Further, as stated earlier personal bias could well come into picture while awarding the score.

5. ATTITUDE TOWARDS SENIORS/PEERS/SUBORDINATES: MAX SCORE 5

We have time and again raised the concern on increasing use of abusive and threatening language of the controllers publicly in meetings for under performance more particularly in the selling of third party products irrespective of the potentials of a particular branch demeaning the officers continuously which eventually lead to many untoward incidences. We have always been vocal on respecting the dignity of officers at all levels. Due to continuous abusive and threatening language used by the controllers, the situation turns into a conflict many times. The officers cannot desist themselves from disagreeing with the seniors/controllers even sometimes for the sake of the institution. Such disagreement leads to further harassment of officers. We fear that this criterion will be utilized to victimize mainly junior level officers by awarding them zero score. It is also an irony that the same controller who misbehaves with his subordinates would be assessing the attitude of the concerned official towards seniors, peers and subordinates.

6. SOCIAL MEDIA VIOLATION: MAX SCORE 5

While concurring with the views that all officers should adhere to the guidelines of Code of Conduct for expressing views in Social Media, we wish to point out that despite official communication, the bank has not discontinued the so called "WhatsApp" groups where internal information, fact and figures are openly shared. It has also become an open forum for humiliation of officers by their superiors. It will be an irony when someone is pulled up by the assessing official for having violated the social media guidelines is flouting the same at every instance.

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay

General Secretary

Mobile : 9434551152

State Bank of India Officers' Association

(BENGAL CIRCLE)

: 4 :

7. EXTERNAL INFLUENCE FOR TRANSFER/PROMOTION: MAX SCORE 2

In many genuine cases, there is abnormal delay in transfer of officers to their place of choice. Similarly, many deserving officers do not get promotions due to various flaws in CDS which has been brought to your kind attention from time to time. There may be very few cases in which the officers' approach outside authorities and that only because of sheer frustrations and after losing all the hopes of redressal of their grievances within the bank's framework. While we will continue to educate the officers to approach the forum which are available within the bank, we are of the opinion that such harsh penalty will only increase the frustration and anxiety levels in officers.

8. ATTITUDE TOWARDS CUSTOMER SERVICE: MAX SCORE 8

We agree that customer service has paramount importance in today's highly competitive world and each employee must ensure an excellent customer service and speedy redressal of customer grievances. However, it is also a fact that the increased workload over the years due to implementation of various government initiatives and non-recruitment of adequate staff commensurate with increasing workload is the major reason in spurt of customer grievances. This has coupled with incompatibility of various available technological resources with the Bank's operating systems viz CBS and loss of connectivity in branches for hours together or throughout the day more particularly during the day after consecutive holidays. Instead of analyzing the actual reasons and addressing the issues beyond the control at branch level leading to customer grievances, the approach of the management is only to identify scapegoat. It is our considered opinion that recruitment of the staff commensurate with increasing workload and deployment of them judiciously will certainly redress the customer grievances effectively.

Further, the Internal Customer service, which we have been focusing on, has not been cognizance. The assessing authority, who tramples upon the fundamental principles of the constitution by humiliating his subordinates will be assessing the official on his attitude on customer service

At a time when the attrition rate is increasing day by day, and in the background of mounting NPA's, provisioning, tardy recovery due to the economic conditions prevailing, we feel it necessary to ensure that the officers morale is kept high with encouraging and positive signals at least in the area of appraisals, promotions and extension in service etc. The implementation of the circular instructions without understanding the sentiments of the grass root level officers, who are working tirelessly to carry the Bank through the tough times and challenges will only demoralise the officers in the bank. Therefore, we impress upon you to please understand the sentiments of the grass root level officers and rescind the circular instructions immediately. It is high time to understand that well being of the officers and relationship are more valuable than ego.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,



(Soumya Datta)
General Secretary
Mob- 9830044737

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay

General Secretary
Mobile : 9434551152