



GUIDELINES FOR REDESIGNING JOBS AND ASSIGNMENTS IN PUBLIC SERVICE¹

DIRETRIZES PARA REDESENHO DE CARGOS E DE ATRIBUIÇÕES NO SERVIÇO PÚBLICO

¿CUÁL ES MISMO NUESTRO PROBLEMA? RETOS A LAS COMPRAS PÚBLICAS DE INNOVACIÓN

ABSTRACT

Purpose: This technological article presents guidelines on redesigning jobs and assignments in public service to respond to the need to create career mobility mechanisms that meet civil servants' expectations and align with new work contexts. The guidelines are based on key processes identified in the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Brazilian state of Santa Catarina (MPSC).

Context: The MPSC is an independent public institution that defends the public interest in several ways. The body has historically assumed new roles and functions, expanding the direct services to citizens, which requires adequate administrative support in its offices all over the state. This context has led to intense internal discussion that gave rise to the creation of the position of Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office.

Diagnosis: Technical positions at the MPSC are occupied by mid-level professionals and encompass specific activities that no longer satisfy the needs of the institution due to contextual changes, such as the digitalization of processes and procedures, the digitalization of the means of communication, and the centralization of services. Therefore, many attributions of these positions no longer satisfy the needs of the MPSC, and the job overview publicized in the notice of the institution's competitive hiring process is outdated.

Originality/Value: The experience of MPSC may inspire other public organizations to redesign positions regarding managerial, technical, or legal issues, taking into account the particularities of each context. In addition, the presentation of the guidelines seeks to stimulate reflection on the need to incorporate patterns of change in people management in public service, especially regarding the definition of positions and attributions.

Keywords: Job redesign. Public service. People management.

 Emanuella Koerich Zappellini

Master

Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Santa Catarina – Brazil

Santa Catarina State University – Brazil

emanuellakz@hotmail.com

 Eduardo Guedes Villar

PhD

Federal Institute of Education, Science, and Technology of Santa

Catarina – Brazil

eduardo.villar@ifsc.edu.br


 Marcos André Alves Monteiro

Master

Court of Accounts of the State of Santa Catarina – Brazil

Santa Catarina State University – Brazil

marcos.monteiro@tcesc.tc.br

 Danyela da Cunha Lemos

PhD

State University of Santa Catarina – Brazil

lemosda@gmail.com

Submitted on: 12/23/2021

Approved: 06/22/2023

How to cite: Zappellini, E. K., Villar, E. G., Monteiro, M. A. A., & Lemos, D. da C. (2023). Guidelines for redesigning jobs and assignments in public service. *Revista Alcance (online)*, 30(1), 116-132. Doi: [https://doi.org/10.14210/alcance.v30n1\(jan/abr\).p116-132](https://doi.org/10.14210/alcance.v30n1(jan/abr).p116-132)





RESUMO

Objetivo: Diante da necessidade de criar mecanismos de mobilidade funcional nas organizações públicas que sejam aderentes a novos contextos de trabalho e também atendam às expectativas de carreira dos servidores, o presente artigo tecnológico tem por objetivo apresentar diretrizes que orientem à possibilidade de redesenho de cargos e de atribuições no serviço público. As diretrizes são baseadas em processos-chave identificados na análise do caso do Ministério Público de Santa Catarina (MPSC).

Contexto: O MPSC é uma instituição pública independente, que atua na defesa do interesse público de diversas formas. O órgão historicamente assumiu novas funções, aproximando-se do atendimento ao cidadão, sendo necessário, para isso, um apoio administrativo, de forma efetiva, em todo Estado. Tais questões deram início a uma intensa discussão interna que deu origem ao processo de criação do cargo de Auxiliar do Ministério Público.

Diagnóstico: Mudanças contextuais, tais como a informatização de processos e procedimentos, a digitalização dos meios de comunicação e a centralização de serviços, levaram alguns cargos técnicos (ocupados por profissionais de nível médio) no MPSC a se tornar bastante restritivos, em virtude de sua alta especificidade. Muitas atribuições especificadas em edital já não se encaixam no perfil atual necessário para o efetivo desempenho das atividades no MPSC.

Originalidade/Valor: Acredita-se que, com base na experiência do MPSC, outras organizações públicas possam realizar seus processos de redesenho de cargos, motivadas pela experiência relatada, quer seja em relação às questões gerenciais, técnicas ou legais, resguardadas as especificidades de cada contexto. Além disso, objetiva-se, com a apresentação das diretrizes, estimular a reflexão acerca da necessidade de incorporar padrões de mudança na gestão de pessoas no serviço público, sobretudo no que diz respeito à definição de cargos e atribuições.

Palavras-chave: Redesenho de cargos. Serviço público. Gestão de pessoas.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Ante la necesidad de crear mecanismos de movilidad funcional en las organizaciones públicas que sean adherentes a los nuevos contextos laborales y que además respondan a las expectativas de carrera de los servidores públicos, este artículo tecnológico tiene como objetivo presentar pautas que orienten la posibilidad de rediseñar puestos y asignaciones en el servicio público. Las directrices se basan en procesos clave identificados en el análisis de casos del Ministerio Público de Santa Catarina (MPSC).

Contexto: El MPSC es una institución pública independiente que trabaja para defender el interés público de varias formas. El organismo ha asumido históricamente nuevas funciones, acercándose al servicio ciudadano, requiriendo un apoyo administrativo eficaz en todo el Estado. Dichos temas iniciaron una intensa discusión interna que dio lugar al proceso de creación del cargo de Asistente del Ministerio Público.

Diagnóstico: Los cambios contextuales, como la informatización de procesos y procedimientos, la digitalización de los medios de comunicación y la centralización de los servicios, llevaron a algunos puestos técnicos (ocupados por profesionales de nivel medio) en el MPSC a tornarse bastante restrictivos por su alta especificidad. Muchas atribuciones especificadas en el aviso ya no se ajustan al perfil actual necesario para el desempeño efectivo de las actividades en el MPSC.

Originalidad/Valor: Se cree que con base en la experiencia del MPSC, otros organismos públicos pueden llevar a cabo sus procesos de rediseño de puestos, motivados por la experiencia reportada, ya sea en temas gerenciales, técnicos o legales, salvaguardando las especificidades de cada contexto. Además, el objetivo de la presentación de las directrices es estimular la reflexión sobre la necesidad de incorporar patrones de cambio en la gestión de las personas en el servicio público, especialmente en lo que respecta a la definición de cargos y atribuciones.

Palabras clave: Rediseño del trabajo. Servicio público. Gestión de personas.



INTRODUCTION

People management in public services faces challenges regarding performance, access to positions, and career mobility (Chanlat, 1995; Salles & Nogueira, 2006; Silva, Balassiano, & Silva, 2014). According to Bresser-Pereira (2008), there is rigidity in the attribution of functions and career mobility in public administration. This occurs because Brazilian legislation does not allow to attribute other responsibilities to civil servants than those specified in the job overview to which the professional was hired – except in the case of appointed positions, as provided by the Statute of Civil Servants of the State of Santa Catarina (Santa Catarina, 1989).

However, it is crucial to rethink the labor legislation applied to public services (Salles & Nogueira, 2006) and adapt to the emergence of new technologies, the increasing outsourcing of services, and the focus on quality in service delivery that are making many government positions and activities obsolete.

Another element in this context in Brazil is the proposal of administrative reform (PEC 32/2020), which is an attempt to concentrate efforts on aspects related to civil service and the people management cycle in public administration, addressing issues such as competitive hiring processes, labor contracts, career progression, job stability, and training and development (Secchi, Farranha, Rodrigues, Bergue, & Medeiros-Costa, 2021).

This study examines the Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Santa Catarina (MPSC), an independent public institution that defends the public interest. MPSC managed to adjust the legislation to cope with this context, obtaining positive results in terms of redesigning positions in the institution and better using its personnel hired long ago for activities that are no longer necessary. The change demanded other training actions and adequacy to the attributions of the new functions.

Based on the in-depth study of the creation of the position of Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Santa Catarina, this technological article offers guidelines for redesigning positions and attributions in the public service. The guidelines are based on key

processes identified in the case analysis, namely: preparing for change; senior management support and involvement; interdepartmental collaboration; job redesign: technical aspects; job redesign: legal aspects; communication; approval flow; motivational/resistance issues. Considering that the proposal is based on the experience of the MPSC, one of the limitations of the work is the need to adapt to other public institutions in Brazil.

CONTEXT AND REALITY

The Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Santa Catarina (MPSC) is an independent public institution that defends the public interest. MPSC protects social rights, offers support for those unable to defend themselves, watches over rights such as life and health, and acts in defense of the legal order and democracy (MPSC, 2020a).

The institution serves citizens from all municipalities of the state through district offices in 111 judicial districts. The office of the Attorney General of Santa Catarina – head of MPSC – is in the state's capital Florianópolis. This office hosts the MPSC Center of Operational Support, the institution's administrative and financial departments, and deals with cases on appeal (MPSC, 2020a).

Until November 2020, MPSC had 59 Deputy Attorney Generals, 423 District Attorneys, 491 civil servants hired through examination, 1,052 appointed civil servants, 296 MPSC civil servants hired through examination and allocated in other governmental agencies, and 1,035 interns to serve all judicial districts and the office of the Attorney General (MPSC's headquarters) (MPSC, 2020a).

MPSC has historically taken on new functions, expanding the direct services to citizens and requiring more administrative support in its offices all over the state (MPSC, 2020a). Thus, the nature of the institution's work changed over time, impacting how the organization relates to society (Carvalho Neto, 1997). These issues gave rise to an intense internal discussion that resulted in the creation of the position of Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office.

Over time, the literature on people management in the public sector has been



addressing the changes in job functions, the development of more flexible approaches regarding employee performance, and ensuring that the workforce is most representative of the citizens it serves (Back & Kessler, 2007; Back, 2019; Dutra, 2019). More specifically, current studies on job redesign have explored the relationship between redesign and engagement (Garg, Han, & Malik, 2021), innovative behavior (Wahab, 2022), changes in technologies applied to work (Gibbs, 2022), and observing studies focused on public service (Chen & Reay, 2021; Freitas & Odelius, 2021).

This research is an instrumental study exploring the case of the Public Prosecutor's Office of Santa Catarina. For Stake (1995), the instrumental study facilitates and increases the understanding of a broader phenomenon, helping to achieve new perspectives about an issue. Therefore, the cases are intentionally chosen because their study is believed to allow a better understanding of a more extensive set of cases (Alves-Mazzotti, 2006).

This is a qualitative research based on semi-structured and in-depth interviews (Godoi & Mattos, 2006). Questions were formulated to understand the process of creating the position of Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office from the perspective of the managers involved in the process (16 questions) and the professionals who

chose to change their careers to embrace the new position (12 questions).

In addition, documentary research was conducted to obtain details about the context. The studied documents were the Guide of the Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Statute of Civil Servants of the State of Santa Catarina; Plan for Positions, Careers, and Salaries for Personnel of the Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Santa Catarina; Organic Law of the Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Santa Catarina; and the Legislative Proposition 0011.0/2018.

Interviews were conducted with four managers and three professionals who opted to migrate to the new position. In these interviews, we sought to understand: (i) the circumstances that aroused the need to create the new position from the perspectives of managers and professionals, (ii) the project formulation process from administrative, technical, and legal perspectives, (iii) the implementation process, covering the approval of the position, disclosure, training, explicit or implicit incentives provided, (iv) the expected and obtained result in terms of adhesions and, (v) the weaknesses and/or resistances perceived throughout the process of formulating and implementing the new position.

Table 1 shows detailed information about the data collection.

Table 1

Data collection information

Interviewee	Type of position	Date	Duration (minutes)	Transcription (pages)
I1	Administrative	Oct 30	65	12
I2	Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office	Nov 18	45	8
I3	Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office	Nov 18	67	15
I4	Representative of the senior management	Nov 23	47	11
I5	Administrative	Nov 25	42	8
I6	Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office	Nov 28	52	14
I7	Administrative	Dec 2	71	15
TOTAL			389	83
			6 hours and 29 minutes	

Source: Elaborated by the authors.



The research used content analysis due to the volume of data collected (Bardin, 2011). The qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti (version 8) was used in the process of categorization and inductive analysis.

DIAGNOSIS OF THE PROBLEM SITUATION AND/OR OPPORTUNITY

Brazilian public administration's legalistic and bureaucratic model poses significant challenges for people management (Chanlat, 1995). The creation of positions must occur according to a description of functions to which the civil servant cannot deviate because it characterizes a violation of the law, leading to the imputation of administrative or criminal responsibility (Saravia, 2006; Silva, Balassiano, & Silva, 2014).

The logic of these legal constraints is to avoid practices contrary to meritocracy and the collective interest (Bresser-Pereira, 2007) – the fact that some people could join the public service in a less difficult position and, later, get promoted to higher positions with higher wages based on paternalistic practices to the detriment of more qualified people (Cherques & Pimenta, 2014). In this sense, filling public positions, except for appointed and non-tenured positions, must take place through competitive examinations based on tests and analysis of the educational background, bearing in mind the need for professionals to exercise attributions defined in laws established at the federal, state, or local levels.

This bureaucratic model, enshrined in the 1988 Brazilian Constitution, poses difficulties for managers due to supervening factors that can make a position obsolete and inefficient (Bresser-Pereira, 1996).

As a result, there is rigidity and little dynamism for the management of the workforce in public service (Cherques & Pimenta, 2014), since the way of organizing work is conditioned by strict institutional norms, which can even generate experiences of suffering, fear, and occupational illnesses (Bedin, Fontes, & Braatz, 2020). Even if the Human Resources Department identifies some employees with work overload and others with few assignments or obsolete functions, almost nothing can be done to change

this. As Meirelles (2013, p. 82) explains: "While in private administration it is permissible to do everything that the law does not prohibit, in Public Administration it is only allowed to do what the law authorizes."

However, from the point of view of people management, it is imperative to seek alternatives that allow a career in public service to develop the employee's potential, the fulfillment of organizational needs, and society's satisfaction with the services provided. Thus, it is necessary to promote a more diverse workforce, less dominated by traditional role patterns, capable of quickly responding to the demands of increasingly demanding citizens (Bach, 2019).

Career mobility can be a way to broaden perspectives related to rigid job descriptions and limitations to career progression. This allows a broad view of the organization and its challenges, creating more suitable working conditions and allowing employees to add more value (Dutra, 2019). In this sense, the set of attributions of a given position can be redesigned and include activities emerging from social dynamics.

Given the change in the nature of work in the public service due to technological advances and the very nature of the work, some technical positions (occupied by mid-level professionals) have become restrictive due to their high specificity. It should be noted that the positions and their descriptions in the public service are prepared to legitimize a bureaucratic structure and not to promote and encourage the development of individuals (Salles & Nogueira, 2006).

Some examples of contextual changes are described by the MPSC (2020b): (i) digitalization of processes and procedures, reducing activities related to producing materials (photocopies, printing, etc.), (ii) digitalization of the means of communication, with the use of notifications by email and WhatsApp, for example, which reduced the number of external steps, in addition to the possibility of remote personal assistance to the citizen, (iii) centralization of services, as occurred with IT support, currently provided remotely by the Information Technology Service Center (CSTI), to the detriment of face-to-face services.



Some of the interviewees' statements regarding the change in the nature of work at MPSC are:

You know that with the consolidation of the Public Prosecutor's Office's investigation activities in recent years, the district offices have to handle the [legal] processes and also a huge number of investigations; and these investigations – the bureaucracy of these procedures – are entirely carried out by the Public Prosecutor's Office [I4].

The Public Prosecutor's Office became more open [...], and the citizen started to be seen differently [...] my department [...] began to receive the citizen, and all my knowledge was well used because [...] I started to assist the citizen to listen to them and find out if it was a case of the Public Prosecutor's Office and forward it to the competent district office [E3].

Thus, given the changes described, many attributions specified in positions filled by competitive hiring processes no longer fit the profile of professionals currently needed at MPSC. As a result, it was necessary to expand the scope of attributions of a portion of the institution's mid-level technicians, making more efficient use of the available workforce (without the need for new hires) and, at the same time, increasing the possibility of career progression for these employees (Kerr, 2006; Andrade, 2018).

ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM SITUATION AND INTERVENTION PROPOSAL

Faced with the problem situation presented in the previous section, MPSC proposed the creation of a new mid-level position, approved and sanctioned by State Complementary Law 727/2018 and currently consolidated in State Complementary Law 736/2019).

The position of Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office was created to respond to the multiple questions and problems presented in the previous section, offering, among other solutions, (i) flexibility in the attributions given to the position, (ii) greater administrative efficiency, (iii) modernization of the structure of mid-level positions, (iv) alignment between the activities

carried out and the institution's financial-budget limits.

According to the Guide of the Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office, the versatile and contemporary nature of the position is the keystone of the restructuring and reorganization of mid-level activities at the MPSC, leading to efficiency and improvement of the public service, in the present and in the future.

The interviewees shared their points of view about the reasons that led to the creation of the new position:

The context of the creation of the position of Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office is the need to gain effectiveness in these mid-level positions. Again [...], aggregating as many tasks as possible within a job. [...] This was the main idea, the administration wanted more efficient and effective work, [...] it was a strategic turn on the part of the high administration [I5].

The main objective was to make the attributions of our mid-level positions more flexible [...] the key is flexibility. [...] Firstly, a watertight, rigorous division of functions in these positions of administrative support [referring to the previous positions requiring professionals with high school-level education] no longer met the ever-increasing and ever-more dynamic needs of the district offices. And a second issue [...] concerns the limits of our personnel expenses. It is unreasonable [...] not to take full advantage of the capacity of these employees as our growth limit [in terms of number of employees] was reaching saturation [...]. So, [...] the two main reasons for the creation of the assistant position were the flexibility of attributions and the need to adjust [...] to the institutional limits regarding expenses with personnel [I4].

The position of Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office is part of the institution's occupational group classified as mid-level and replaces the positions of (i) Technician, (ii) Chauffeur II, (iii) Officer, and (iv) IT technician. Therefore, when there is a vacancy in one of these positions (for retirement, dismissal, death,



or another reason), MPSC replaces the employee with an Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office hired through a competitive examination.

The attributions of Assistants present a wider scope when compared with the positions to be discontinued, as observed in the job overviews in Table 2

Table 2

Synthesis of the job overview of the positions requiring high school education in MPSC

Positions to be discontinued	New position
<p>Chauffeur II: Perform mid-level activities related to the driving and conservation of vehicles used to transport passengers and cargo.</p>	<p>Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office: Perform mid-level support activities – of medium complexity – related to any and all administrative services, whether internal or external, in addition to offering support to the processing, physical or digital, of documents, extrajudicial procedures, and judicial proceedings within the scope of the Public Prosecutor's Office.</p>
<p>Officer: Perform mid-level support activities – of medium complexity – related to judicial and extrajudicial proceedings within the scope of the MPSC, at the office of the Attorney General, at the district offices, or other offices designated by the Attorney General.</p>	
<p>Technician: Perform mid-level support and repetitive activities of medium complexity related to any administrative, financial, personal, or material nature.</p>	
<p>IT technician: Perform mid-level activities – of medium complexity – related to technical support, services of installation, and maintenance of computers and other IT equipment in the MPSC's offices.</p>	

Source: Elaborated by the authors, observing Complementary law 736/2019.

Interviewee 4 explains other reasons to replace the positions to be discontinued:

The objective was to leverage the institution's work throughout the entire territory of Santa Catarina, and in the inner state, most of the positions require only a high school education. So, if we had to gain effectiveness in positions that demand multiple functions by hiring higher education personnel, this change would occur only in the city capital, which was not the intention [I4].

In addition to this process of replacing vacant positions with professionals hired as Assistants to the Public Prosecutor's Office, MPSC offered the option for civil servants hired in the four positions to be discontinued to migrate definitely to the new one if they meet the requirements for the position (having completed high school education and possessing a driver's license "category B"). The possibility of migrating to the new position was considered during the design process, I1 highlighted:

The initial objective was to create a new position to meet MPSC's needs and to design a competitive hiring examination for this position. However, the project had its scope expanded due to the crisis that the state went through at that time [...], offering to those [civil servants] already employed by the MPSC and interested in career mobility the opportunity to change position. The position of Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office offers better career mobility, more training, and a diversity of activities that contribute to personal development. It was not a position created for people already employed by the MPSC; that was not the objective. The objective was to serve the district offices with the resources we had, [...] but the institution found, in my opinion, a model that the civil servant could choose [...]. Somehow, the institution [Public Prosecutor's Office] found a solution that did not harm its employees, [...] and enabled modernization [I1].



The study of the case of the MPSC sought to identify the key processes employed in creating and implementing the new position. The results are presented below, grouped into the following key processes: (i) preparation for the change; (ii) senior management support and involvement; (iii) interdepartmental collaboration; (iv) job redesign: technical aspects; (v) job redesign: legal aspects; (vi) communication; (vii) approval flow; (viii) motivational issues/reactions to implementation.

Regarding **preparation for the change**, there was already a changing process under development in the institution. MPSC was detailing and formalizing administrative processes in its district offices distributed throughout Santa Catarina.

The Public Prosecutor's Office had implemented a management process at the district offices, an initiative that received the [Name of the Award] [...], and in this process, the MPSC carried out the ISO certification of the district offices. They went there and mapped all the activities, looked for improvements, rationalized activities, reduced the use of paper, made full use of the organization's systems, connected the archive sector, the warehouse, [they worked] on document issues, materials, many things. So, this previous study was done, and after that, they began to redesign the activities of civil servants based on management by processes, and they sought, together with the senior administration, to request more employees for the district offices where there were vacancies and no professionals to conduct the activities [...] [I1].

The creation of this position [Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office] perhaps was facilitated because of this previous process. In fact, we started a project of management process [at the district offices] to facilitate the Attorney General's administration of the team [...] [I7].

As highlighted by interviewees I1 and I7, this previous management process that mapped and rationalized the operations in the district offices fostered a process of change and readjustment of administrative activities in MPSC.

The support and involvement of senior management was crucial. The interviewees

stated that the demand to redesign the mid-level positions that required high school education came from the District Attorneys, who supported the processes all the way through. This means that, in addition to the technical work and climate of change emerging from the previous management process, the involvement of senior management also contributed to redesigning the positions, which is a complex and controversial issue in public administration. According to Richards (1998), turning your back on the bureaucratic paradigm in public service is challenging. Interviewee I1 mentioned the initial demand and support from senior management:

As I said, the origin was in the senior administration, with the involvement of the general secretary and the Deputy Attorney General, in the formatting of what could be [the future position]. [...] Most important was the management's decision to proceed with the elaboration and development of this position. There were conversations, planning, which positions would be accepted or not, and it arrived at that moment "do it or don't do it," so the central point was the initiative: "Yes, let's go down this path" [I1].

Additionally, the project was made possible thanks to the engagement of different sectors of the MPSC, in a multidisciplinary and interdepartmental collaboration. The interviewees highlighted the involvement and cooperation of the different MPSC sectors in designing the new position.

For me, [the most important thing] was the involvement of that initial group formed of people from the human resources area, from the management process at the district offices initiative, and the MPSC senior management. Each area involved could express their concerns and share perceptions over the years in contact with the civil servants. Also, the senior management wanted to improve the services in the judicial districts [...] Thus, it was possible to think of a new position, to think of this possibility. It emerged from a group and was based on questions about legislation and issues raised by members of the administration. This position was



successful thanks to teamwork. I don't think any of these areas alone would have reached this solution; they would not manage without the involvement of the large group [I1].

In fact, they [the workgroup] thought more broadly. They took it [the idea] to the Processes Office [sector in the structure of the MPSC] and obtained support from the Attorney General. It was a process built by several hands. It started in one way and ended in another [I2].

It took a lot of work; there was an analysis to assess if these positions were adequate, both in the present and in the near future. This analysis was conducted in meetings of the administration and, subsequently, in the Human Resources Coordination. We studied the positions that should be redesigned, where these employees were allocated, if in the inner state, and how many positions and vacancies. So, it was a joint effort by the senior management and mainly by the Human Resources Coordination [I3].

The [attorney's name], coordinator [of the Processes Office] at the time, contacted the administration [of MPSC] when the idea came up. Then we started to work together, as a group, the Human Resources [Department], the Human Resources Coordination, the Legal Department, [...] it was crucial to have someone from the Legal Department in the group, and senior management [...] since the budget would go through some changes. Creating a new position is something forever. So, it is a complicated task, different from a [private] company where you have this flexibility. The public service is quite slow in this regard [...] we started working together to make this idea viable [I4].

It is possible to verify the engagement of different areas such as the Processes Office, the Human Resources Coordination, the Legal Department, and the senior management (including the Attorney General). Several interviewees highlighted the work of the group using terms such as "working together," "many hands," or "teamwork," stressing the intense collaboration of different areas of MPSC co-creating the initiative.

The **redesign of the position** can be analyzed by technical and legal aspects. The **technical aspects** refer to the attributions of the new position in line with the changes and perspectives for the future of the institution's operations. According to the interviewees:

We studied the description of the activities in the job overview of the institution's mid-level positions, examining the compatibility to avoid the issue of function deviation [when proposing the creation of a position to those with obsolete activities], which violates the legislation. Also, we researched other public agencies that might have already taken similar measures. [...] The [previous initiative] management process at the district offices mapped activities, and the Department of Human Resources and the senior management studied the attributions of this new position. As all activities were classified as medium complexity, they were considered mid-level activities [I1].

Meetings took place to [...] discuss the number of employees in these positions [positions do be discontinued], where they were allocated, and what their future would be. This is a very important point. A crucial moment [was] deciding which positions would be subject to changes. I think this was a great challenge because there could be no mistake at that moment. Because if we change a position that, "wow, this position couldn't change because it has its particularity and specification," we could be shooting ourselves in the foot. I think this was a very important point [I5].

The interviewees highlighted that high school positions had, until then, very specific attributions, separated into different positions (see Table 2). This training generated a fragmentation of administrative activities in the prosecutions and, sometimes, due to the lack of a specific civil servant, part of the administrative processes (due diligence, for instance) was stopped or carried out by civil servants or interns without the proper legal competence for the activity.

There were welcome creative practices, let's put it this way, to solve the problems



in the inner state. And somehow, [...] to fight any type of allegation or questioning any type of function deviation, the proposal for the [position] of assistant comes with a very comprehensive project. In addition to flexibility, the [position of] Assistant [to the Public Prosecutor's Office] is characterized by having a broad range of functions [I4].

Regarding the **legal aspects**, the legal department worked to prevent the possibility of understanding the replacement of previous positions by the Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office as function deviation, avoiding future inquiries. Function deviation occurs when civil servants perform activities outside those formally assigned to their position (Marconi, 2003).

The legality [of creating the position] was discussed. Members of the senior management were in doubt, researched, and after several meetings, they reached a consensus about the legality [I1].

At some point in the creation [of the position], all this [legal] assessment at the senior management level, [discussion] of what could or could not happen. So, from what I remember, yes, this was evaluated case by case, position by position, whether there could be this change or not. Legal consequences and legal implications [I5].

In addition, the change required efforts to ensure that the positions redesign respected the careers, compensations, and the employees' career progression.

[...] the [employees'] original position and their new positions are at the same salary level, and the civil servant will remain at the same level and reference as the previous position. Furthermore, promotions based on seniority, merit, and improvement will continue [Cartilha de Divulgação, MPSC, 2019b].

The implementation of the new position demanded efforts to **communicate** with the civil servants, mainly with those who could choose to migrate to the position. The communication shared information and explanations of the process, attributions, and consequences of the

change in the structure of positions in MPSC, as the interviewees' observed:

After passing the legislation creating the position, the administration prepared presentations, released news articles on the intranet, and created the guide. The institution suggested to some of the employees who were interested [in changing positions] to approach the area of human resources to discuss the possibilities with the personnel with a background in psychology, considering that the change was an irreversible option [...]. After the creation, the administration was engaged in this way through the intranet news articles, disseminating the guide in official communication channels for civil servants, and making available the people development area through the psychology service to answer questions and conduct interviews. With the chauffeurs, the administration contacted the area manager and asked to talk to them, saying that anyone interested could look for the Human Resources area [I7].

We are in the process of presenting these advantages in a systematic way to colleagues and other civil servants working in the inner state. With meetings and online video calls, we even thought of holding an expanded meeting before the end of the year with a general presentation of our guide [...]. This work of explaining the changes is now entering new stages [I4].

As for the **approval flow**, the public nature of the institution led to several processes and instances after the proposal of designing the positions, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**

Internal and external flow of the approval of the new position

		External (Legislative and executive branches)	
Action	Actor responsible	Action	Actor responsible
Approve the project and submit it to the Collegiate of Deputy Attorneys General	Attorney General	Examine, change, and pass the bill of complementary law	Legislative Assembly of the State of Santa Catarina
Issue an opinion and propose the creation of positions and support services	Collegiate of Deputy Attorneys General	Enact the complementary law	Government of the State of Santa Catarina
Send the proposal to the state's legislative branch as a bill of complementary law	Attorney General	Publish the passed law in the State Official Gazette	Government of the State of Santa Catarina

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on Complementary Laws 736 and 738 and Proposition 0011.0/2018 (ALESC, 2018).

Table 3 shows the process for approving the new position after the project was elaborated. First, the project was forwarded to the office of the Attorney General, where the head of the state Public Prosecutor's Office conducted an internal analysis and approved the project. The project was sent to the College of Deputy Attorneys General. The Deputy Attorneys were informed about the details of the project and offered their opinions on the creation of positions. The passage through the college served as a way to share the project internally and gain institutional legitimacy. After going through the internal process, the project was written in the format of a bill of complementary law and sent to the state's legislative branch (ALESC) for analysis and voting. The next step after the bill passed, the legislation was sent for sanction by the State Governor and published in the Official Gazette of the State of Santa Catarina (DOESC). Therefore, the creation of the position of Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office was published in the DOESC on July 26, 2018, through Complementary Law 727/2018, today consolidated by the state Complementary Law 736/2019 (Santa Catarina, 2019a).

After the bill was passed and following the suggestion of a civil servant willing to change their position, MPSC issued a norm – Administrative Act 743/2019/PGJ – establishing a period of 30 days for adaptation before the definite and irreversible effect of the change. According to the regulation, this adaptation period is optional, and

the employee can interrupt it at anytime (MPSC, 2020b). The MPSC states in the Administrative Act:

[...] the fact that the change in positions is irreversible may bring insecurity for the civil servant and inhibit the effectiveness of the opportunity of change;

[...] the allocation of human resources in a public institution, when in line with the interest of the employees involved and their superiors, contributes to their motivation and the quality of the public service;

[...] the implementation of an adaptation period in cases where there is the possibility of changing the office where the employee will work when taking over the new position as provided in Art. 37 of the State Complementary Law 736/2019 can mitigate possible mistakes in the exercise of this option and encourage the transformation of positions, taking into account the institutional interest [...] [Act 743/2019/PGJ].

The emergence of the idea of a trial period is illustrated through the speech of a representative of senior management (I4) and the contribution of one employee that chose to move to the new position before the act establishing the adaptation period (I6):

This proposal [adaptation period] came from civil servants; the institution's administration did not think of it, [...] that made me very happy. It came up because



HR and the General Secretariat heard the idea coming from an area of MPSC and materialized the suggestion, designing a norm that was embraced by the Attorney General. Today we have this adaptation period before the definite change. You can skip this period if you want – it is not mandatory – or you can use it to evaluate if this is what you want, and you have the chance to go back to your old position [14].

[...] I think this period of experience is very important. [...] if I had [had] this period of experience I wouldn't have to think so much, you know, I would come here and I would acclimatize or not, and I would choose or not. But since I didn't have this trial period, it was well thought through, it was a time full of doubts [...] but it would be much easier for me to decide, having a trial period [E6].

Finally, **motivational issues/reactions to the implementation** of the proposal are highlighted. The interviewees suggest that the proposed changes bring effectiveness in the provision of public services and more satisfaction and motivation to the employees.

I didn't want to live the rest of my life in a position where people look at you and say: "They are a hindrance there, they are useless" (laughs). Here I am... I found myself! [...] I'm feeling fulfilled, I'm really happy, really happy, feeling much more valued. [...] What I do here is well regarded [16].

The greater sense of purpose and achievement is one of the main [perceived advantages of changing positions]. The possibility of learning. New issues and new challenges. There are better opportunities to improve; because the attributions of the position are more comprehensive, there are more training courses available [17].

Although the task of creating the new position was fluid and, according to the interviewee (17), "without resistance," its implementation provoked some unforeseen reactions in the workforce, particularly from employees in mid-level positions eligible for changing to the new position. Some of these reactions were (i)

the negative view of the position's title, (ii) the criticism of the dispersion of attributions in the position's job overview, and (iii) the lack of clarity and caution in the process of migrating from the old to the new position.

With regard to the position's title, "Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office," the term "Assistant" was considered a term that reduces the employee's importance, as highlighted by interviewees that chose the new position:

"Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office" gave the impression of a subaltern function, of subservience. They wanted a different title, something like "Support Technician to the Public Prosecutor's Office," but not "Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office." Some people do not change to the new position because of the title [12].

[...] the title is [...] the title is derogatory [13].

Despite this negative view of the title, interviewee 15, who was part of the administrative team that prepared the proposal leading to the new position, pointed out that there were other options. However, the title "Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office" was justified precisely for its meaning as a central support position for the core activities of the MPSC.

I contacted other agencies in the country that possibly had similar functions, and other suggestions for titles were presented to the senior management. They chose this title [Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office] because it would encompass various support activities in the end area. So, this mid-level position seeks to help the MPSC by performing multiple tasks, so the title sought to consolidate these functions through the nomenclature [15].

Regarding the civil servant's criticism regarding the dispersion of attributions that the new position implies, the expansion of attributions was also perceived as an exploitation of the workforce. Because the job overview included attributions of four old positions in one, the understanding was that the employee would have to perform tasks and activities in multiple areas. Informally, the new position was also dubbed by many civil servants as "*Severino*



do MP," alluding to a character from a Brazilian entertaining television program who had several functions and was always at the others' beck and call. This image brought a sense of depreciation of the position.

People were also concerned about the number of assignments because they took all the assignments of technicians, officers, basic IT technicians, and chauffeurs and put them all in the same position [I2].

They called us [Severino]. Do you want to be the Severino [Name of the civil servant]? I didn't even know, Severino is one who does everything, you know [...] there was this character in a TV show [I3].

You may have heard that joke before, but the union president told me there was a character on a sitcom of the... have you heard that one? That the assistant is the 'Severino do MP,' right? The jack-of-all-trades [I4].

In addition, a lack of clarity and caution was identified in the process of migrating from the old to the new position.

It is about training; you cannot touch the money issue because it is a law; there is the state law, ok. But without training, it is insane. So, let's fix what we can fix. [...] [it is crucial to] offer training to these people. [...] I feel sorry for those who have to do [due diligence] and do not have the profile [I3].

Changing from the old to the new position involves the civil servant's career and, consequently, the life of the MPSC's workforce. Therefore, the proposal around this process has to be a collective construction, with conversations involving the civil servants working in the positions under analysis. Some of the critical perceptions of the new position and challenges to the implementation process emerged from communication frictions.

CONCLUSIONS AND TECHNOLOGICAL/SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION

This final section presents the guidelines that emerged as key processes enabling the effective redesign of positions and attributions in this case study. Changing assignments, positions, and careers in public service is controversial (Salles & Nogueira, 2006). The bureaucratic assumptions constituting the operation of public administration create a dysfunctional reality when considering the changes in the nature of work and the social, economic, technological, legal, and political context (Bresser- Pereira, 2008).

Table 4 below lists and describes the guidelines mapped in this research, presenting specific actions related to each. The MPSC experience may inspire other public agencies to engage in similar processes of redesigning positions regarding managerial, technical, or legal issues. Furthermore, the suggestion of the following guidelines aims to stimulate reflection on the need to incorporate patterns of change in people management in public service, particularly when defining job positions and attributions.

Table 4

Guidelines for the redesign of positions and attributions in public service

Guideline	Description	Specific actions
Preparing for change	This refers to previous changes and actions that may support the redesign, such as previous procedural and technological changes to help break down established individual and organizational barriers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carrying out previous studies that support the nature of the change; - Alignment of job redesign with process management; - Research in other public agencies that carried out similar actions; - Diagnosis of the level of maturity and readiness for the desired change.
Senior management support and involvement	This involves the role of senior management as an inducer of the job redesign process. Their involvement avoids dissonant decisions regarding the main objectives sought with the change and allows the proposal to go through the various approval instances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prior discussion of the proposal at the strategic level.



Interdepartmental collaboration	This involves the various departments/ areas of the organization that need to act in a collaborative and integrated way, providing information on eligible positions and main institutional needs. This multidisciplinary work minimizes biases in the redesign process and helps build a proposal more in line with the needs of the entire organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forming committees or working groups that bring together different areas, including the union and/or class associations; - Gathering professional competencies that allow the sharing of different points of view.
Job redesign: technical aspects	This refers to the dimensioning of the activities carried out in the different areas, and the planning of the workforce compatible with the institution's financial and budgetary reality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of key technical aspects that can support decisions and stances; - Identification of positions whose content needs to be resized; - Specification of the attributions of the new position, in the perspective of the intended change and in a broad way, not linked to processes that may fall into disuse; - Construction of a timeless job title, given the longevity of the job; - Analysis of the proposal's financial-budgetary impact.
Job redesign: legal aspects	This considers the legalist approach at the foundation of public administration. The discussion about the change must be based on legal opinions detailing jurisprudential precedents that demonstrate that the project meets legal requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gathering information that supports and reinforces the legal character of the change; - Establishing rules that value civil servants' careers, compensation, and career progression.
Communication	This includes using available means of communication to inform civil servants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting a wide campaign to publicize the process; - Conducting presentations to disclose the details of the proposal; - Raising the awareness of employees eligible for the process; - Elaborating an informative guide; - Creating a channel to answer questions.
Approval flow	This is the path the proposal must follow for approval concerning internal and external hierarchical instances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing the internal and external procedures that the proposal must go through; - Besides involving deliberative instances, creating space to expand knowledge and strengthen the proposal's legitimacy.
Motivational/ resistance issues.	This refers to how civil servants receive the proposal, both the aspects that motivate them to engage and those that generate resistance to the project implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying the profiles of civil servants aligned with the proposal; - Intensifying communication actions during the process to clarify doubts; - Paying attention to the title of the position, reinforcing its meaning.

Source: Elaborated by the authors



These key processes materialized as guidelines, do not consist of fixed and watertight steps and procedures that must be blindly used, and are not developed in a linear process to be followed. On the contrary, these guidelines are directions that have proven to be drivers of change, but they must be implemented after translation and adaptation to different contexts.

Regarding the impact of the problem solution addressed in this study on the institution, it was observed that six out of the ten civil servants who chose to change to the position of Assistant to the Public Prosecutor's Office were assigned a wide range of tasks to support District Attorneys. The other four civil servants were allocated to administrative areas, including the area of citizen assistance, subordinated to the MPSC General Secretariat.

MPSC held a competitive examination to hire professionals for the new position, hiring forty Assistants, most of them allocated in the judicial districts with at least two district offices. Therefore, MPSC increased the number of employees throughout the state, ensuring a better direct service to citizens.

The case study of redesigning positions in MPSC presented in this technological article offers managerial contributions to reduce barriers and rethink dogmas regarding career changes in the public service (Salles & Nogueira, 2006, Cherques & Pimenta, 2014). In addition, this challenging activity of rethinking the hierarchical and, at times, fragmented structure of positions in public administration (Longo, 2007) can be seen from another perspective that considers current issues and the need for flexibility.

This study is limited by its focus on a specific case, with a reality that allows only one particular theorization. The transfer of knowledge from this case will depend on its translation into other contexts, considering the nature of the researched public agency and the activities of the redesigned positions.

Finally, the wealth of details presented, the guidelines and processes created, the controversies and turning points highlighted in this technological article can support and encourage future initiatives. This reinforces the importance of human development policies

in public administration, enhancing skills that contribute to the integration of different areas of knowledge (Bedin, Fontes, & Braatz, 2020).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To FAPESC, due to the resources received by the research group.

REFERENCES

- Alves-Mazzotti, A. J. (2006) Usos e abusos dos estudos de caso. *Cadernos de pesquisa*, 36(129), p. 637-651.
- Andrade, G. de A. (2018). Articulações na carreira pública: uma análise do comprometimento com a carreira dos servidores técnico-administrativos de uma universidade federal. *Revista de Carreiras e Pessoas*, 8(3), 331-342.
- ALESC - Assembleia Legislativa do Estado de Santa Catarina (2018). *Proposição PLC/0011.0/2018*. Recuperada de: <http://www.alesc.sc.gov.br/legislativo/tramitacao-de-materia/PLC/0011.0/2018> em 8 dez. 2020.
- Bach, S. (2019). Human resource management in the public sector: new public management, responsive governance and the consequences of the economic crisis. Teoksessa: Adrian Wilkinson, Nick Bacon & S. Snell. *The Sage Handbook of Human Resource Management*, 557-74.
- Bach, S., & Kessler, I. (2007). HRM and the new public management. Boxall, P. F., Purcell, J., & Wright, P. M. (Eds.). *The Oxford handbook of human resource management*. Oxford Handbooks, 469-88.
- Bardin, L. (2011). *Análise de conteúdo*. São Paulo: Edições 70.
- Baron, R. A., & Greenberg, J. (1989). *Behavior in organizations: understanding and managing the human side of work*. 3. ed. Londres: Allyn and Bacon.
- Bedin, É. P., Fontes, A. R. M., & Braatz, D. (2020). Discrepancy between prescribed and real work: the case of outsourced service contract supervisors at federal universities in the state of São Paulo. *Revista Brasileira de Gestão de Negócios*, 22, 232-249.
- Bresser-Pereira, L. C. (1996). Da administração pública burocrática à gerencial. *Revista do Serviço*



Público, 47(1).

Bresser-Pereira, L. C. (2007). Burocracia pública e classes dirigentes no Brasil. *Revista de Sociologia e Política*, (28), 9-30.

Bresser-Pereira, L. C. (2008). O modelo estrutural de gerência pública. *Revista de Administração Pública*, 42(2), 391-410.

Carvalho Neto, A. M. de (1997). O Estado concorrencial e as mudanças na natureza do trabalho no setor público. *Revista de Administração Contemporânea*, 1(2), 25-43.

Chanlat, J. F. (1995). Quais carreiras e para qual sociedade? (I). *Revista de Administração de Empresas*, 35(6), 67-75.

Chen, Y., & Reay, T. (2021). Responding to imposed job redesign: The evolving dynamics of work and identity in restructuring professional identity. *Human Relations*, 74(10), 1541-1571.

Cherques, H. R. T., & Pimenta, R. D. C. (2014). Norma e produtividade do trabalho no setor público federal brasileiro: percepções acerca de barreiras e estratégias de superação. *Organizações & Sociedade*, 21(71), 563-579.

Dutra, J. S. (2019). *Gestão de Pessoas em Empresas e Organizações Pública*. Grupo GEN.

Freitas, P. F., & Odellius, C. C. (2021). Work design: características do trabalho de servidores do superior tribunal de justiça. *RAM. Revista de Administração Mackenzie*, 22(3).

Garg, P., Han, K. S., & Malik, P. (2021). Exploring the nexus between job design and work engagement: mediating role of meaning in work. *International Journal of Business Excellence*, 23(3), 389-414.

Godoi, C. K., & Mattos, P. L. C. L. (2006). Entrevista Qualitativa: instrumento de pesquisa e evento dialógico. In C. K. Godoi, R. Bandeira-De-Mello, & A. Silva, *Pesquisa qualitativa em estudos organizacionais: paradigmas, estratégias e métodos*. São Paulo: Saraiva.

Gibbs, M. B. (2022). How is new technology changing job design?. *IZA World of Labor*.

Kerr, H. (2006). Desenvolvimento de competências de servidores na administração pública brasileira. *Revista do Serviço Público*, 57(4), 549-563.

Longo, F. *Mérito e flexibilidade: a gestão das*

pessoas no setor público. São Paulo: FUNDAP, 2007.

Marconi, N. (2003). A evolução do perfil da força de trabalho e das remunerações nos setores público e privado ao longo da década de 1990. *Revista do Serviço Público*, 54(1), p. 9-45.

Meirelles, H. L. (2013) *Direito administrativo brasileiro*. São Paulo: Malheiros.

MPSC (2020a). *Portal MPSC*. Ministério Público de Santa Catarina. Recuperado de: <https://www.mpsc.mp.br/> em 15 dez. 2020.

MPSC (2020b). *Cartilha do Cargo de Auxiliar do Ministério Público*. Ministério Público do Estado de Santa Catarina, 1-23

Oliveira, C. G. de (2007). O servidor público brasileiro: uma tipologia da burocracia. *Revista do Serviço Público*, 58(3), 269-302.

Richards, S. (1998). Flexibilidade na gestão de pessoal da administração pública. algumas comparações entre o setor público e o setor privado. In R. Locan Filho, *Cadernos ENAP*, 16.

Salles, D. M. R., & Nogueira, M. G. (2006). Carreiras no serviço público federal: antigos dogmas, novas perspectivas. In M. Balassiano & I. S. A. da Costa (Orgs.), *Gestão de carreiras: dilemas e perspectivas* (p. 134-149). Rio de Janeiro: Editora Atlas.

Saravia, E. (2006). O sistema de carreira no setor público: descrição análise comparativa e perspectiva. In M. Balassiano & I. S. A. da Costa (Orgs.), *Gestão de carreiras: dilemas e perspectivas* (p. 150-178). Rio de Janeiro: Editora Atlas.

Santa Catarina (1989). Lei n. 6.745, de 28 de dezembro de 1985. *Estatuto dos Servidores Públicos Civis do Estado de Santa Catarina*. Redação dada pela Lei Complementar 28, de 1989.

Santa Catarina. (2019a). Lei complementar n. 736, de 15 de janeiro de 2019. *Consolida as Leis que instituem o Plano de Cargos, Carreira e Vencimentos do Pessoal do Ministério Público do Estado de Santa Catarina*. Recuperada de: http://leis.alesc.sc.gov.br/html/2019/736_2019_lei_complementar.html em 8 dez. 2020.

Santa Catarina. (2019b) Lei complementar n. 738,



de 23 de janeiro de 2019. *Consolida as Leis que instituem a Lei Orgânica do Ministério Público do Estado de Santa Catarina*. Recuperada de http://leis.alesc.sc.gov.br/html/2019/738_2019_lei_complementar.html em 8 dez. 2020.

Secchi, L., Farranha, A. C., Rodrigues, K. F., Bergue, S. T., & Medeiros-Costa, C. C. (2021). Reforma Administrativa no Brasil: Passado, Presente e Perspectivas para o Futuro frente à PEC 32/2020. *Cadernos Gestão Pública e Cidadania*, 26(83).

Silva, J. R. D., Balassiano, M., & Silva, A. R. L. D. (2014). Burocrata proteano: articulações de carreira em torno e além do setor público. *Revista de Administração Contemporânea*, 18(1), 01-19.

Stake, R. E. (1995) *The art of case study research*. London: Sage Publications.

Wahab, E. (2022). A Study On The Relationship Between Job Design and Innovative Work Behavior. *Research in Management of Technology and Business*, 3(1), 065-077.

Endnotes

1 The translation of the article is the responsibility of the authors.