

**PATTERNS OF APPOINTMENT AND
PROMOTION IN CHINA'S
OFFICIALDOM**

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Synopsis in English, [Chinese](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

The appointment power of Chinese officials during the Mao era was concentrated in the hands of higher-level leaders, with official appointments largely influenced by their decisions rather than formal bureaucratic procedures. Since the reform and opening up, efforts have been made to rectify the deficiencies of the cadre system, such as excessive centralisation of power, nepotism, personal and career *guanxi* networks, and the lifelong tenure of leading cadres. The party leadership has championed the construction and enhancement of various selection and appointment mechanisms.

Under President Xi Jinping's leadership, the Chinese Communist Party has introduced more detailed and stringent rules and procedures for cadre selection and appointment. Institutional supervision over cadre selection has reached unprecedented levels of intensity. Written records at every stage of the cadre selection process are now more comprehensive and standardised, rendering the performance of all actors in this process more traceable. This enhances the ability of superiors within the bureaucratic system to effectively supervise and hold subordinates accountable.

Chinese:

中国官员的任命和晋升模式

毛泽东时代中国官员的任命权集中在上级领导人手中，官员的任命很大程度上取决于他们的决定，而不是遵循正式的行政程序。改革开放以来，着力纠正干部制度中权力过分集中、裙带关系、个人和事业关系网络、领导干部终身制等弊端。党的领导倡导建立健全各类选人用人机制。

在习近平主席的领导下，中国共产党出台了更加详细、更加严格的干部选拔任用规则和程序。对干部选拔的制度监督达到了前所未有的强度。干部选拔过程中各阶段的书面记录更加全面、规范，使干部选拔过程中各主体的表现更加有迹可循。这增强了官僚系统内上级有效监督下级并追究其责任的能力。

French:

MODÈLES DE NOMINATION ET DE PROMOTION DANS LA BUREAUCRATIE CHINOISE

Le pouvoir de nomination des responsables chinois à l'époque de Mao était concentré entre les mains des dirigeants de haut niveau, les nominations officielles étant largement influencées par leurs décisions plutôt que par des procédures bureaucratiques formelles. Depuis la réforme et l'ouverture, des efforts ont été déployés pour remédier aux déficiences du système de cadres, telles que la centralisation excessive du pouvoir, le népotisme, les

réseaux personnels et professionnels de guanxi et le mandat à vie des cadres dirigeants. La direction du parti a défendu la construction et le renforcement de divers mécanismes de sélection et de nomination.

Sous la direction du président Xi Jinping, le Parti communiste chinois a introduit des règles et des procédures plus détaillées et plus strictes concernant la sélection et la nomination des cadres. Le contrôle institutionnel sur la sélection des cadres a atteint des niveaux d'intensité sans précédent. Les rapports écrits à chaque étape du processus de sélection des cadres sont désormais plus complets et standardisés, ce qui facilite le traçage de la performance de tous les acteurs dans ce processus. Cela améliore la capacité des supérieurs au sein du système bureaucratique à diriger efficacement et à demander des comptes à leurs subordonnés.

Spanish:

PATRONES DE NOMBRAMIENTO Y PROMOCIÓN EN LA OFICIALIDAD CHINA

El poder de nombramiento de los funcionarios chinos durante la era Mao se concentró en manos de líderes de alto nivel, y los nombramientos oficiales estaban influenciados en gran medida por sus decisiones más que por procedimientos burocráticos formales. Desde la reforma y apertura, se han hecho esfuerzos para rectificar las deficiencias del sistema de cuadros, como la centralización excesiva del poder, el nepotismo, las redes guanxi personales y profesionales y la permanencia vitalicia de los cuadros dirigentes. La dirección del partido ha defendido la construcción y mejora de diversos mecanismos de selección y nombramiento.

Bajo el liderazgo del presidente Xi Jinping, el Partido Comunista Chino ha introducido reglas y procedimientos más detallados y estrictos para la selección y nombramiento de cuadros. La supervisión institucional sobre la selección de cuadros ha alcanzado niveles de intensidad sin precedentes. Los registros escritos en cada etapa del proceso de selección de cuadros son ahora más completos y estandarizados, lo que hace que el desempeño de todos los actores en este proceso sea más rastreable. Esto mejora la capacidad de los superiores dentro del sistema burocrático para supervisar eficazmente y responsabilizar a los subordinados.

Executive Summary

1. China's economic reforms in the post-Mao era have been aimed at rectifying the deficiencies of the cadre system, such as excessive centralisation of power, nepotism and the lifelong tenure of leading cadres. The institutionalisation of rules and regulations on cadre appointment and promotion has been a significant trend in this period.
2. Since the 18th Party Congress, the cadre selection system has increasingly shifted towards bureaucratisation while maintaining institutionalisation. This trend underscores the necessity of refining cadre selection criteria, streamlining the selection process and reinforcing supervision and oversight mechanisms from higher authorities to lower ranks.
3. Since the 1970s economic reforms, the establishment of “talent pools” has emerged as a prominent practice for filling key positions within party and government agencies, as well as state-owned enterprises. These reserve cadres are deployed to various party and government organisations across regions and departments to accumulate diverse experiences for future placement.
4. In addition to the institutionalised process of cadre selection through interviews, investigations and assessments, a quantitative approach has also been frequently introduced.
5. The “mass line” has been established as the guideline for cadre appointment and promotion through democratic recommendation and evaluation. “Public recognition” has become the principle implemented by the Chinese Communist Party to consolidate its legitimacy.
6. Despite the growing importance of institutionalised criteria such as education, work experience and job achievements in cadre appointment and promotion, politics still play a significant role in determining the career advancement of officials in China.

7. Although a “democratic process” in cadre appointment and promotion has been introduced, it has encountered significant challenges. These include lower public participation and a lack of transparency in the democratic process. The reluctance of party organisations to select cadres through open competition, along with paternalism and factionalism, has also played a significant role.