By Allah! We do not entrust this post to anyone who seeks it or is keen to attain it

Abu Mūsa al-Ashʻari (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: I and two of my paternal cousins entered upon the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). One of them said: "O Messenger of Allah, appoint us rulers over some of what Allah, the Almighty, has entrusted you with." The other said the same. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "By Allah! We do not entrust this post to anyone who seeks it or is keen to attain it.ʻ"

[Authentic hadith] [Narrated by Bukhari & Muslim]

The Hadīth contains a prohibition of giving authority to whoever seeks it or has greed for it. When the two men asked the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) to appoint them rulers over some of what Allah entrusted him with, he said: "By Allah! We do not entrust this affair to anyone who seeks it or is keen to attain it." i.e. we do not give authority to anyone who asks for it or is keen to have it. That is because perhaps the one who seeks it or has greed for it aims at giving himself authority, not at bringing reform. Since such a person could be liable to such an accusation, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) forbade giving authority to the one who seeks it, saying: "By Allah! We do not entrust this post to anyone who seeks it or is keen to attain it." The subject matter of this Hadīth was confirmed by the Hadīth of ʻAbdur-Rahmān ibn Samurah (may Allah be pleased with him) who reported that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Do not ask for a position of authority, for if you are granted this position without having asked for it, you will be helped in it, and if you are granted it as a result of your asking for it, you will be left alone to handle it." So, it is not befitting for a ruler to fulfill the request of someone who seeks authority over an area of land even if he is qualified for it. Likewise, if someone asks to be appointed a judge, saying for example to the person in charge of judiciary, like the minister of justice, for example: "Make me a judge over such-and-such land," he should not to be given such an authority. As for the case where someone asks to be moved from authority over one land to another, then it is not included in this Hadīth, because he has already been in a position of authority, but is asking to be moved to another location. This applies unless it is known that his intention and aim is to gain authority over the people of that land, in which case, he should be prevented, since actions are to be judged according to intentions. One may wonder about the statement of Yūsuf (peace be upon him) to the ruler: {Set me over the storehouses of the land; I will indeed guard them with full knowledge} [Sūrat Yūsuf: 55]. The answer to that is one of two things: 1. If the legislation of those who came before us contradict our own legislation, we should act upon our legislation, based on the well-known principle among the scholars of Islamic fundamentals: "We hold the legislation of those before us as our legislation, as long as there is nothing reported in our legislation that runs counter to it." In fact, there is something reported in our legislation that

disagrees with that, namely the Hadīth that reads: "We do not give authority to anyone who seeks to be given authority." 2. It could be said that Yūsuf (peace be upon him) saw that the wealth was being wasted, squandered, and tampered with, so he wished to save the country from this manipulation. In a situation like that, the aim is to remove the mismanagement and poor administration, so there is nothing wrong here. For example, if there is a commander over a section (of a land), who neglects the duties entailed by that authority and causes corruption, then the one suitable for this job – if he cannot find other than himself – must ask the ruler to give him authority over that section, saying to him: "Give me authority over this land in order to rid it of the bad state it is in," and this is alright, and is in accordance with the rules. There is also a Hadīth where ‘Uthmān ibn Abi al-‘Ās said to the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him): "Make me a leader of my people." i.e. in prayer. So he said: "You are their leader." Based upon this, some scholars said: “The Hadīth indicates the permissibility of seeking leadership in what is good.” In the supplication of the slaves of the Most Merciful – a description which Allah gave them – they say: {And make us leaders for the pious} [Sūrat al-Furqān: 74]. This is not included in the disliked pursuit of leadership which pertains to worldly leadership, whose seeker is not helped, nor does he deserve to be granted such leadership.

http://www.sunnah.global/hadeeth/en/show/3517