U.S. DOL Employment Workshop

Transition from Military to Civilian Workforce

Participant Guide

April 2016 Edition

www.veterans.gov

Prerequisites 1
Transition Quiz 2
Section 1: Foundations of a Successful Transition 3
Succeeding in a civilian workplace 5
Inside the employer's mind 13
Paths to employment 21
Section 2: Identify Your Skills and Values 29
Transferable Skills Inventory 29
Update your ITP 36
Employment History Outline 38
Job Values 39
Section 3: Identify Employment Opportunities 45
Job search networking 45
Update your ITP 47
Social Media 48
Your Professional Introduction 52
Career, Occupation & Job Research 56
Update your ITP 65
Section 4: Focus Your Search 67
American Job Centers (AJCs): One-on-One Personalized Service in Your Local Community 67
Education and Training Assistance for the Job Search 70
Veteran unemployment and homelessness 72
Analyze job postings 76
Section 5: Market Yourself 79
Writing a Resume 80
Developing a Targeted Resume 88
Update your ITP 100
Cover Letters 101
Identify and prepare your professional references 104
Update your ITP 106
Section 6: Federal Hiring 109
Federal Hiring, Federal Resumes and Federal Programs 109

Veterans' Preference 111
Special Hiring Authorities for Veterans 116
Veterans Employment Initiative 121
Finding Jobs 122
Understanding the Vacancy Announcement 123
Federal Resume Writing Tips 127
Federal Interviewing 135
Getting the Offer 135
Update your ITP 137
Section 7: Creating Online Profiles 139
Section 8: Interviewing 143
Preparing for an Interview 143
Dress for success during an interview 147
Types of interviews 150
Common Interview Questions 153
Practice Answering Questions 156
Mock Interview 162
Section 9: Follow Up After the Interview 165
Follow Up after the Interview 165
Evaluate the interview—Continuous Improvement 167
Evaluate job offers 169
Components of a salary 173
Communicating your decision to the employer 175
Negotiate job offers 181
Appendices 183
Gold Card 183
Employment History Outline 188
Job Posting Example 189
Master Resume Example 190
Targeted Resume Example 193
Sample Resumes 195

Prerequisites

If you haven't met with your Preseparation counselor, you should schedule your appointment and acquire these documents:

- Career Interest Inventory Assessment
- VMET (Verification of Military Experience and Training, DD Form 2586)
- Performance evaluations
- Military and college transcripts

If you have followed the design of the DOD TAP, you have met with a Preseparation counselor and been familiarized with the Individualized Transition Plan form and the various sections included within that form. You have also completed the Career Interest Assessment tool and have discussed the results with your counselor.

You have attended the MOC (Military Occupational Codes) Crosswalk module, which gave you a summary of how your current military experience can be translated into a civilian occupation. You have your VMET, your performance evaluations, and your military transcripts.

In addition to meeting with your Preseparation counselor and attending the MOC Crosswalk, you have been briefed on your benefits from the VA and have created a 12-month budget as an outcome of attending the Personal Finance for Transitioning Military members.

If, due to various factors, including scheduling, you have not attended MOC Crosswalk, Personal Finance for Transitioning Service members, or the VA Benefits briefing, you are encouraged to get scheduled for these modules ASAP.

Bring the following to class each day:

- Career interest inventory assessment
- VMET
- Performance evaluations (to help you develop Situation Task Action Results or STAR statements)
- Military and college transcripts
- MOC Crosswalk results
- Laptop or notebook

Transition Quiz

Read each statement; indicate whether it is true or false.	True	False
1. Given two qualified job applicants, employers will usually hire a Veteran over a non-Veteran.		
2. The same job you had in the service will pay up to twice as much in private industry.		
3. Military skills transfer to civilian jobs without additional training.		
4. Civilian employers believe that members of the military do not deal with profit and loss.		
5. Most employers have had enough military experience to be able to understand military language.		
6. Most employers are skilled at selecting new employees.		
7. You may have to overcome an employer's negative reaction to Veterans in order to get a job.		
8. Veterans must build a network of job contacts as part of their job search.		
9. Collecting unemployment compensation can hurt your pride and self-respect.		
10. After military service, you may have to take a lower level job than someone of your age who has not been in the service.		
11. A good resume will get you a job.		
12. In a job interview, you should always address the interviewer as "sir" or "ma'am" just as you would do in the military.		

Section 1: Foundations of a Successful Transition

A successful transition and starting a new career with a good job takes time and diligent work.

You must approach it like any military operation:

1. Determine mission and objective(s)
2. Gather intelligence
3. Determine logistics and resource requirements
4. Identify resources and/or training shortfalls
5. Develop primary, alternate, and tertiary plans
6. Integrate assets and resources
7. Establish timelines
8. Conduct rehearsals

The principles of getting a job are fairly simple

1. You will need to think like employers and understand the factors that make them and their organizations successful. You will practice doing that in this section.
2. You will need to identify the skills you can offer that will contribute to the success of both the business you are targeting and the individual hiring decision makers who determine if it makes sense to offer you a job. You will have an opportunity to do this in Section 2 of this Guide.
3. You will need to discover, research, and connect with employment opportunities that are a good match for your skills and interests. Sections 3 and 4 will help you accomplish these tasks.
4. You will need to develop and deliver self-marketing messages that enable civilian hiring decision makers to recognize that they and their organizations will be more successful if they hire you. You will have opportunities to develop these messages in Sections 5 and 6.

Although the principles are simple, implementing them is not always easy. You will learn and employ tactics and techniques that you may not have been required to use since you joined the military.

The good news is, your military experience has provided you with rich opportunities to acquire an extensive set of technical skills, to strengthen an impressive array of traits, and to gain insights that will enable you to contribute to success in most civilian workplaces.

For the next three days, you will begin to master these four principles and acquire the tools that will help you launch your civilian career.

Learning objectives for this course include:

1. Completing your transferable skills inventory
2. Researching industries, occupations, and trends
3. Analyzing job postings
4. Developing an initial draft master resume
5. Understanding special appointing authorities for Veterans
6. Understanding different types of interviews
7. Evaluating job offers

Succeeding in a civilian workplace

Transitioning to a civilian work life may bring many unfamiliar challenges for you and your loved ones. Fortunately, you have learned to adapt to change and to make the most of the opportunities in new and unfamiliar situations. The following list describes some of the challenges you may face and differences you may experience during your reentry into the civilian world, as well as tactics for overcoming them.

In the military
Rarely do you have to interview, or create and send a resume, or fill out an application form for your next duty assignment.

When transitioning to a civilian workplace
Utilize the information throughout this guide to:

- Learn about civilian occupations
- Create and customize resumes
- Acquire interviewing skills
- Master the techniques of completing print or electronic application forms
- Master the informal or unwritten rules and etiquette related to job searching
- Get comfortable “bragging” about yourself
- Master the art of networking

In the military
There is no need to explain or translate the skills you possess; your MOS, Rating, or AFSC largely speaks for itself, as do the performance evaluations you have received in your current or previous position

When transitioning to a civilian workplace
Utilize the information throughout this guide to learn:

- How hiring decision makers think
- How to translate your military experience into terms that civilian hiring decision makers will understand and recognize as valuable to their business

You may have to dispel stereotypes that employers – many of whom have had no direct contact with Service members or Veterans – may have about Veterans, including:

- "Veterans will not fit into my less formal work culture."
- "Military personnel are rigid and lack creativity."
- "Their only leadership approach is giving orders."
- "Most Veterans suffer from PTSD/TBI."

Develop stories you can share during networking conversations and job interviews about how you have:

- Quickly integrated, and developed good working relationships with team members, when joining new units
- Improvised and innovated to meet unpredictable challenges
- Motivated, coached, guided, and supported team members using a collaborative leadership style
- Overcome injuries, disabilities, or personal setbacks

In the military
Reassignment to a new unit or duty location can be stressful, but it is a fairly predictable, structured experience.

When transitioning to a civilian workplace
A civilian job search is often loaded with uncertainty; you rarely know how long it will take to find a job, if you will find a job, or what kind of job you will be able to find and at what pay rate.

Consider temporary employment options or volunteering if you become stuck.

In the military
You are likely to have much in common with virtually anyone in your branch of service, including common training experiences, previous assignments and tours of duty in the same locations or military units, jargon, and even what constitutes appropriate humor.

There are clear rules for interacting with people above and below your rank.

You are used to giving and receiving respect, especially if you are in a leadership position.

You are frequently expected to exercise initiative and make decisions, especially in the face of fast-changing circumstances or a crisis situation.

In a civilian workplace
It may take time to understand and fit into the "culture" of a new civilian workplace, so make an effort to:

- Develop informal relationships with your co-workers, with whom you may have little in common
- Learn how and when you are expected or allowed to exercise initiative
- Discover the formal or unwritten rules for interacting with superiors or subordinates
- Adjust to not being in a position of authority and respect, if you have gone from being an NCO or officer to working in a position without any leadership responsibilities

In the military
Thanks to frequent moves and reassignments, teams or workgroups quickly welcome and integrate new members.

Teamwork and collaboration are a core element of your work.

When you transition to a civilian workplace
In some workplaces, you and your co-workers may be competing for a limited number of promotion opportunities. This can discourage cooperation or sharing of information and resources. You may need to model the behavior you would like to see in the workplace. Adopt a "give before I ask" approach with team mates, and routinely offer to lend a hand to assist them when they are struggling to complete their tasks.

In the military
If you are seeking to advance or acquire new skills, you can usually find someone willing and qualified to serve as a mentor.

When you transition to a civilian workplace

Mentoring and informal job coaching is rare in many workplaces, so you may need to:

- Take charge of your professional development.
- Let your supervisor know that you would like to be considered for any formal training opportunities

In the military
The "safety net" you enjoy extends into your work day. For example, you can usually go on "sick call," and often attend to other personnel-related matters during duty hours.

When you transition to a civilian workplace
You typically have to take paid or unpaid time off to visit a health care provider during normal working hours, so you may need to:

- Build up a supply of vacation, personal, or sick time for genuine emergencies before taking any for personal enjoyment or minor issues.
- Locate health care providers and other service providers who are accessible or offer appointments during non-working hours. Urgent Care facilities, for example, are typically open in the evenings and on weekends.

In the military
You have made a start on your military career, and may have already received one or more promotions and pay raises.

There is a clear path to promotion and advancement (in fact, it is an expectation that everyone will move up in rank over time).

You can count on periodic pay raises.

When you transition to a civilian workplace
You may be back at the starting line when transitioning to a civilian career, and may have to play "catch up" with civilian peers, since military service has delayed the start of your civilian career.

Many civilian jobs do not have a clear path to advancement, and automatic pay raises based on time in the position are rare. So you may need to:

- Ask about both vertical and lateral paths for advancement within the organizations you are considering joining during the job search process.
- Position yourself for advancement by maintaining a record of your accomplishments and being prepared to discuss the contributions you have made when meeting with your supervisor for formal or informal performance reviews.

In the military
Military pay and benefits are relatively generous. The pay rate for an E3 with between two and three years of service is equivalent to a wage of $11.00 / hour. Add the value of free housing and meals (or BAS and BAH) and health care, and the value of total compensation approaches $20 an hour.

When you transition to a civilian workplace
You may have to take a significant cut in pay and benefits, especially if you are starting over and find yourself entering the civilian job market in an entry level position, so you may need to:

- Attempt to become debt-free by the time you separate from service.
- Scale back your discretionary spending now to get used to life at a lower income, and to establish a nest egg for emergencies.

In the military
You typically have convenient access to a wide range of services (many of them free to yourself and family members): health care, personal and financial counseling, educational programs, legal advice, and others.

When you transition to a civilian workplace
You may have to learn how to locate and select (and pay for) these services.

Begin now to research service providers online and by consulting friends and family in the location you intend to move to after separating from service.

When you become employed, ask your new organization's Human Resources department for recommendations or lists of service providers.

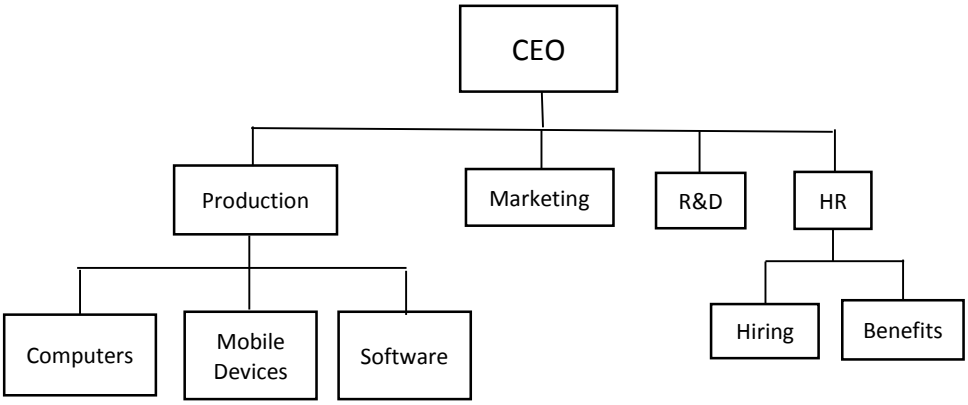
How civilian organizations may be structured

If you target a large civilian organization for employment as you transition from the military, you are likely to find that that they structured by **Functional** departments, by **Divisions**, or as a **Matrix.**

Each type of organization offers a different mix of opportunities for its employees, and the following information may come in handy when you are deciding if you want to work for a particular business as you make the transition to a civilian workplace.

In an organization structured along **Functional** lines, each function – for example, research and development, production, marketing, human resources, and finance – is housed in its own department.

The organizational chart for a technology products company structured by function might look like this:



Functional Organization

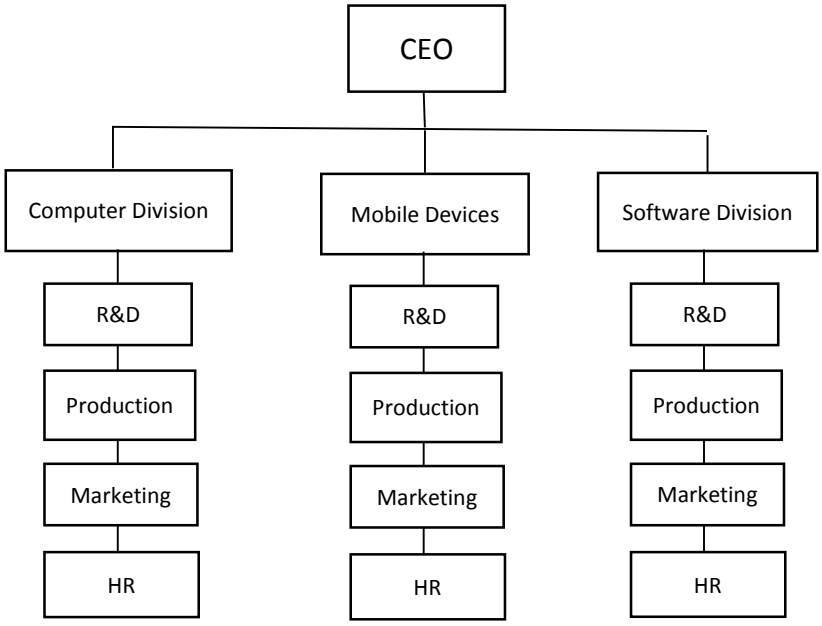
If you work in an organization structured by functions, your supervisors and co-workers in your department or work unit will probably share your occupational skills sets and interests. There is a good chance you will remain within your department for most or all of your career, and the path to promotions may be well-defined. A high value is placed on specialization, and you are likely to have many opportunities to learn and hone your functional skills.

However, when working within a functional department, there is a risk that you may unconsciously adopt an independent mindset and lose touch with the people in the other departments within the organization that you serve or rely upon. This can prevent you from adding as much value to the organization as you are capable

of delivering. Moreover, there may be fewer opportunities for promotion, especially as you near the top of the ladder.

In organizations that have adopted a **Divisional** structure, staff and resources are grouped into separate departments with that are responsible for different products, or different types of customers (businesses versus consumers, for example), or different geographic regions (North America, Europe, Asia, and so on).

If the same technology company was structured by divisions, its organizational chart might look like this.

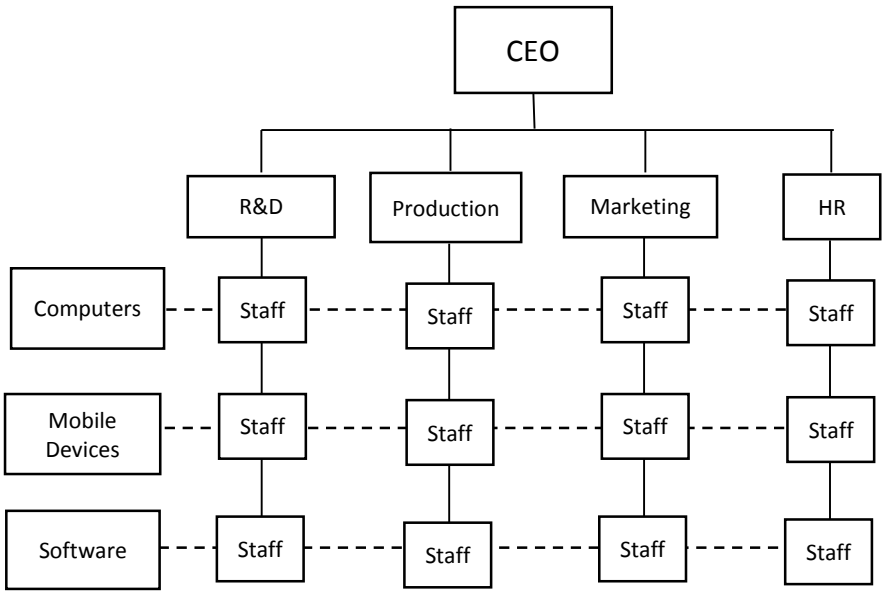


Divisional Organization

If you work for a company organized by divisions, you will have more opportunity to interact with and learn from co-workers outside of your occupational specialty and the paths to promotion may be widest for those who acquire the skills and experience needed to become a generalist.

A **Matrix** organization attempts to capture the advantages of both the Functional and Divisional approaches by assigning people from different functional departments to a single division, either temporarily (for the duration of a specific project, for example) or on a longer-term basis.

The primary drawback to working in a matrix organization is that you will have, in effect two bosses. Companies that have adopted the matrix approach attempt to ensure that employees are not given conflicting guidance or responsibilities by their functional supervisor and their divisional or operational supervisor. However, if you work in a matrix organization, you may need to take the initiative and routinely communicate with both of your "chains of command" to prevent or resolve confusion or conflicting guidance, and to clarify how your performance will be evaluated.



Matrix Organization

Inside the employer's mind

When it comes to getting a job, the most powerful thing you can do is to persuade prospective employers that you will add significant value to their organization.

To do this, you need to be able to translate your military skills, experiences, and accomplishments into terms so that a civilian hiring decision maker who is unfamiliar with the military, will easily understand and quickly recognize you as being valuable to his or her organization.

In order to make this translation, you need to appreciate how business decision makers think and the language that they speak.

The table below lists some of the key results or impacts that most business decision makers care about; organized into four broad areas that are critical to the success of most organizations:

- Attracting and retaining more customers
- Think about the expectations of others
- Increasing operational excellence
- Think about what it takes for your unit to become the best
- Boosting the performance of team members or employees
- Think about what it takes for those around you to be their best
- Improving the organization's strategy
- Think about what you have done that has helped other make decisions

Use this table to begin identifying ways you have made a difference in your previous military assignments or civilian jobs, and by extension how that experience will enable you to contribute to an employer's success in the future.

Review the examples on the next page for ideas on how to begin translating your past experience into a language employers care about.

Contribution Statement Examples

Impacts hiring decision makers care about	How you have delivered results in these areas in the past, and/or how you can deliver them in the future
Quickly solve problems, and then prevent them from occurring again	When conducting After Action Reviews I focus on the root causes of problems rather than searching for someone to blame. As a result, I ensure you only make a particular mistake one time, and that you can accurately identify and address any operational weaknesses.
Improve safety and reduce accidents	Having spent time on rifle ranges, handled hazardous materials, and worked around dangerous equipment, I understand how to develop, disseminate, and implement safety guidelines that virtually eliminate accidents or injuries.
Increase the reliable operation of equipment, reducing breakdowns and expensive repairs	By inspecting and maintaining equipment before, during, and after an operation, I eliminate unexpected breakdowns and prevent the need for expensive repairs.
Nurture teamwork and collaboration that allow staff to achieve things together that would be impossible for them to accomplish individually	I make sure all the members of my team understand how the tasks they perform will impact their coworkers and other units or departments that depend on us. Once they understand why and how their role is important, they stay motivated and collaborate more effectively with others.
Analyze and select from among competing courses of action	I have learned to quickly generate several possible courses of action, evaluate them to spot the strengths and advantages, as well as the weaknesses in each course of action, and then develop an action plan around the most promising one.

Exercise: Speaking an employer's language with contribution statements

Impacts hiring decision makers care about	How you have delivered results in these areas in the past, and/or how you can deliver them in the future
Attract and keep more customers	
Identify clients' or customers' unmet needs, poorly-met needs, and as-yet-unrecognized needs that represent opportunities for the business	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Expand or diversify the organization's client or customer base	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Ensure that current and prospective customers choose the company's products or services over those of its competitors	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Increase customer loyalty by consistently delivering customer interactions that are efficient, convenient, pleasant, and respectful	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Develop, test, and evaluate new products and services at least as quickly as competitors	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Impacts hiring decision makers care about	How you have delivered results in these areas in the past, and/or how you can deliver them in the future
Increase operational excellence	
Improve the ability to improvise and the capability to handle unexpected developments	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Identify and evaluate risks the company faces, and develop and implement measures to reduce, control, or manage those risks	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Improve safety and reduce accidents	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Increase the reliable operation of equipment, reducing breakdowns and expensive repairs	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Ensure compliance with legal, environmental, and other regulatory requirements	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Impacts hiring decision makers care about	How you have delivered results in these areas in the past, and/or how you can deliver them in the future
Boost team member performance	
Lead, manage, supervise, and support team members in ways that boost morale, motivation, and commitment, unlocking everyone's discretionary effort	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Cross-train employees so that they can pinch hit for each other when necessary	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Increase the effectiveness, focus, and application of formal training, self-directed learning opportunities, informal coaching, and mentoring	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Nurture team work and collaboration that allow teams to achieve things together that would be impossible for people to accomplish individually	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Impacts hiring decision makers care about	How you have delivered results in these areas in the past, and/or how you can deliver them in the future
Improve the Organization's Strategy	
Improve planning in terms of speed, accuracy, and comprehensiveness	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Analyze data, identify emerging trends, and understand those trends in order to turn them to the company's advantage	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Analyze and select from competing courses of action	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Develop and evaluate innovative approaches to performing essential tasks	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Evaluate and incorporate lessons learned into new rounds of strategic planning	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

The two *personal* priorities most hiring decision makers have

In addition to the *organizational* priorities listed above, the people involved in the hiring process also have *individual* needs that are at least as important as the organizational issues.

At some point during the hiring process, you should let hiring decision makers know that the answer to each of the following questions is **"Yes."**

- Will you reduce the number and severity of hassles they must deal with? Will you avoid being the reason that they lose sleep at night, or worry about problems at work over the weekend?
- Will you be reliable? Will you show up to work on time every day, in a condition to do your best? If you have an unexpected emergency or illness that prevents you from coming in, will you let them know as soon as possible?
- Will you be a team player? Will you treat co-workers, customers and the public fairly and with respect? Employers do not want to worry that you will be the cause of friction, disruption, discrimination or sexual harassment charges, customer complaints, or ethical issues.
- Are you willing and able to learn about the culture in the new workplace, and then do your best to fit in?
- Will you make them look good in front of their boss? Are you willing and able to understand the metrics by which your team or department is judged and then help your supervisor and your co-workers achieve them?

Some examples of ways you can reassure hiring decision makers that you will support their personal success agenda:

> "For the past three years I showed up every morning at 5 am for physical training; arriving at 6 am for the start of your 1st production shift will be a snap for me."
>
> "I transferred to new units five times in the past 7 years, and I learned how to quickly integrate myself with my new team mates."
>
> "Each time new supervisors were assigned to our unit, I sat down with them and discussed their expectations and priorities and how I could best support them."

Who are your customers?

At first glance, the notion that you have a "customer" may seem odd to many in the military, but there is always someone who benefits from the tasks you perform, from the products or services you provide, or the information you produce and deliver. Embracing a customer-oriented mindset is a key element of transitioning to a civilian workplace, since the purpose of virtually every job in a business is to satisfy a need of an external customer (someone who purchases or uses the company's products or services) or an internal customer (someone within the company who will benefit from the work you will perform).

It may take a little creative thinking on your part to identify the customers you have had in the military, but here are two questions that can help: *If you did NOT perform your assigned tasks, who would be negatively affected? Who does benefit when you perform your task?*

If you work in a mail room, a supply facility, or an ammunition depot, your customers are the people who receive the letters and packages you process, or the people who use the fuel, equipment, ammunition or other goods you issue.

If you work in a personnel or finance office, your customers are the Service members who get paid on time, whose files you maintain, and who contact you when they need help resolving a problem.

If you work in health care facilities, from a sick bay or medical clinic to a major hospital, your clients are patients and their family members.

If you work as assistants of any rank – from an enlisted chaplain's assistant to the Executive Officer of a major command or ship –your client is the superior officer or NCO whose success you support.

If you work in a maintenance shop, your customers are the Service members who drive, pilot, operate, utilize, or otherwise benefit from the vehicles, aircraft, weapons systems, or other equipment you maintain.

Your customers are also the people for whom you prepare reports, recommendations, intelligence updates, briefings, or budgets, and they are the people who use the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) you develop.

Sometimes, your customers are members of the public you interact with or protect.

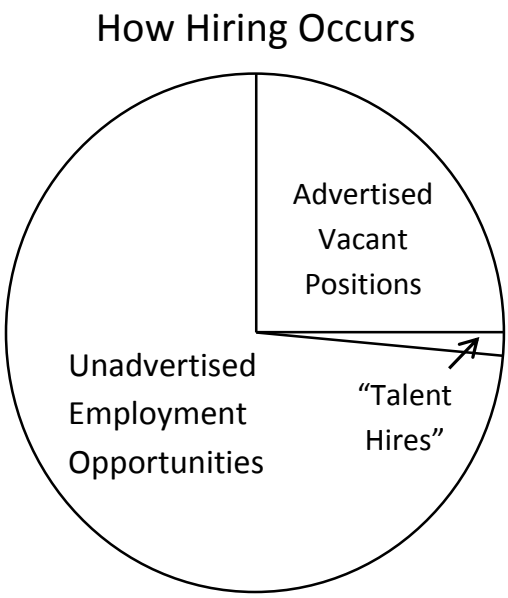
If you are a member of an infantry squad or the crew of a bomber or a ship, your "clients" also include your fellow Soldiers, Marines, Airmen, and Sailors who rely on you to do your job correctly every time, all the time.

Paths to employment

The second thing you should learn about employers is how they prefer to hire new employees. Developing a successful job search strategy is easier if you can align your efforts to match each of these approaches.

Employers may:

- Formally advertise a vacant position, review job applications and/or resumes, interview a number of qualified candidates, and select the one they hope will be the successful employee.
- Search for talent *informally* to fill a vacant position, by asking people they know and trust if they can recommend anyone for a current or anticipated vacant position. By being open to meeting with and talking to job seekers who approach them directly, or by noticing outstanding people who currently work for another business and asking them to consider joining *their* company.



- Pursue "talent hiring," which involves hiring someone who impresses them even if they have not got a specific vacancy to fill.

Some organizations, including the federal and state governments and large corporations, do much or all of their hiring by advertising their vacancies, online or in print.

Many smaller businesses prefer to hire informally.

It is impossible to calculate the exact percentages of people hired using each of these three approaches, but most career specialists estimate that between 25 and 40 percent of jobs are filled through the formal process of advertising a vacancy. That means between 60 and 75 percent of successful job seekers travel the informal path to employment. Talent Hiring probably accounts for 3 to 5 percent of hiring.

Most job seekers spend the bulk of their time and energy searching and applying for the advertised job vacancies (and given today's technology, that usually means searching internet job boards or the "careers" pages of employers' websites), but

it is important to understand how to pursue job opportunities along all paths to employment.

Compete for advertised vacancies

At first glance, this seems like the most logical, the most efficient, and the easiest approach to job searching, and you will probably want to invest *some* of your time and energy pursuing this strategy. However:

- The supply of advertised positions is much smaller than the total supply of potential positions, typically no more than 25 to 40 percent of the total.
- The odds that a position within commuting range that closely matches your particular skill set or occupation will be advertised at the same time that you are launching your job search may be slim.
- There is often a great deal of competition for an advertised job, especially if it is an attractive position. The other job applicants may either a) match the listed requirements more closely or b) be more clever at writing resumes and cover letters, or c) be more polished when it comes to interviewing.
- A larger business that expects to attract many applicants will use software or an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to quickly screen out all but a handful of the resumes it receives, so your information may never be seen by a human.
- If you have been unemployed for more than six months, some employers will eliminate your application from the pool.

Key tasks when competing for advertised vacancies

a) Identify all of the advertised openings within commuting distance of the location you plan to move to when you transition from the military.
    - Search job boards, including the jobs bank available on your state **American Job Center** system, the job listings on the **Veterans Employment Center** and on **usajobs,gov.**
    - Search the *Careers* tab on employer websites.
    - Notice local *Now Hiring* or *Help Wanted* signs as you travel around town and scan newspaper help wanted ads.

b) Make a strong the case that you are the best candidate.
    - Learn as much as possible about the vacant position and company. Focus on the challenges related to both the position and the business.
    - Develop a compelling application package.
        - Customize your cover letter and resume. Emphasize position-related technical or task-related skills, knowledge, traits, and certifications.

    - Incorporate relevant Situation–Task–Action–Result (STAR) statements (covered later).
    - Stress what you can do in the future for the employer, and focus less on what you have done in the past.
- Deliver your cover letter and resume or equivalent information as instructed. Increasingly, this will mean submitting it electronically. You might be asked to:
    - Attach your resume as a Microsoft Word, Rich Text Format (RTF), or PDF file.
    - Copy and paste the resume into the body of an email.
    - Copy and paste portions of the resume into the appropriate sections of an online application form.
- Consider adding keywords that an Applicant Tracking System might screen for.
- Anticipate and practice answering interview questions. Incorporate relevant details, examples, and STAR statements when answering the most common interview questions.

Pursue unadvertised openings

Many employers, especially smaller businesses, try to fill vacancies without posting them on the internet or running a want ad in the newspaper. They may receive dozens or hundreds of applications or resumes when they advertise a position.

Reviewing the applications, selecting the most promising job candidates, and conducting interviews can absorb an enormous amount of time and distract owners or managers in small firms from running their business. Moreover, this conventional approach to hiring is not an especially accurate way to identify the person who will be most successful on the job, since writing resumes and interviewing normally involve a different set of skills than the job actually requires.

Therefore, employers will often try first to fill vacancies by tapping into their personal, social, business, or professional networks, or by asking their current employees and other people they know to recommend people for an opening.

There are several advantages to pursuing unadvertised vacancies:

- There is less competition for the opening.
- There is a greater likelihood that your application materials will be read and considered by a hiring decision maker.

- There is a greater likelihood of getting an interview, and this is where the real opportunity to sell yourself to an employer occurs.

There are several ways to find unadvertised jobs:

- You learn through your personal, social, or work-related networks that a business has an unadvertised vacancy. Ideally, the person who tells you about the opening can refer or recommend you to hiring decision makers in the business, and/or pass your cover letter and resume on to them.
- You visit, call, or email the right individual in a business, provide them with a targeted copy of your resume, or fill out an application, and hope they either have a vacancy now or soon will. Some firms, especially those with high turnover in positions that do not require specialized skills are in continuous hiring mode and are willing to interview and hire promising candidates on an ongoing basis.

Key tasks when pursuing unadvertised openings

a) Identify your existing personal, social and work-related networks, expand them, or build new ones, and then "deputize" everyone in your networks to help you find a job. On Day 2, we will explore ideas for building and leveraging your job search network, including suggestions on how to ask people for help.

b) Make an educated guess that a particular business might be seeking new hires. Look for companies that are busy, growing, or that seem to have high turnover, and that have positions for which you feel you would be qualified.

c) Learn as much as possible about the vacant position and company. Talk to any contacts who know about the position.

d) Try to arrange for informational interviews with one or more people inside the business.

e) Develop a compelling application package.

- Customize your cover letter and resume. Emphasize position-related technical or task-related skills, knowledge, traits, and certifications.
- Incorporate relevant Situation–Task–Action–Results (STAR) statements.
- Stress what you can do in the future, not what you have done in the past.

f) Identify one or more hiring decision makers in the business. Conduct research via your network, employer web sites, or a phone call to the business.

g) Get copies of your cover letter and resume into the hands of those individuals.

- Deliver it personally.
- Mail or email it.
- Ask someone trusted by the hiring decision makers to deliver it to them.

h) Follow up and prepare for further contact. Verify that the hiring decision makers have read your materials, and then ask for an informal conversation (not a formal job interview).

i) Anticipate and practice answering the questions the hiring decision maker is likely to ask with relevant details, examples, and accomplishment statements.

Pursue a "Talent Hire" opportunity

In some cases, you may be able to persuade a hiring decision maker who is not consciously seeking to fill a vacancy to hire you anyway, because you will add significant value to their business. This approach is used by job seekers when:

- They are unable to discover any acceptable advertised or unadvertised job vacancies.
- They have a good understanding of their skills and they know how they can apply their knowledge, skills, and traits to contribute to the business in a meaningful way.

There are several ways you can add value and make the business, and the individual hiring decision maker more successful:

Substitute

You may be able to perform the work currently being done by another employee who has unique or advanced skills, thus freeing that person up to do more of that work. A common example: A newly-hired administrative assistant who handles routine work, thus enabling sales people to spend more time calling on prospects and current customers, or supervisors and managers to spend more time leading, guiding, and motivating their teams.

Add new skills

Your skills and abilities may permit a business to improve operations in ways that boost productivity, reduce costs, or otherwise improve profitability and/or growth. For example, you may have the skills to help a company improve its safety record, train employees more quickly on new skills, or create or improve the functionality of the marketing portion of its website.

Upgrade the general quality of the employer's workforce

Your track record in areas such as reliability, teamwork, fast learning, leadership and problem-solving persuade the company to "Hire for attitude and aptitude; Train the skills." Many businesses are always on the lookout for people who will build their bench strength.

Key tasks when pursing talent hire opportunities

a) Expand and leverage your personal, social, and work-related networks. Use your contacts to learn as much as you can about local businesses and the challenges they face. These challenges include both the problems they are trying to solve and the opportunities they are pursuing.

b) Do online research and informational interviewing. Both will aid you in learning about employers that can use your skills.

c) Develop a cold contact system. Contact people who are not in your network to identify and arrange for some face time with hiring decision makers at each business you target.

d) Identify ways that the contributions you can make to the business will exceed the total costs of employing you.

Entrepreneurship as a path to employment

This is an option that many Veterans choose. The US Small Business Administration (SBA) estimates that 20 percent of Veterans are actively pursuing business ownership. The SBA notes that although Veterans comprise about 6 percent of the US population, they represent nearly 15 percent of business owners.

This makes sense when you consider that there is a significant overlap between the characteristics of a successful entrepreneur—leadership, resiliency, perseverance, and passion or commitment to achieving a mission—and the traits you may have acquired in the military.

Starting or purchasing a business or partnering in a small start-up can help you:

- Enjoy a greater degree of autonomy and control over your life, including the ability to balance work and life in ways that make most sense to you.
- Pursue an idea that is important to you, perhaps by creating a new product or service that meets an unmet need, or by targeting an underserved market.
- Pursue greater financial success than may be possible when working for someone else.

However, entrepreneurship also involves an array of challenges and risks, and you should be aware of these as you make a decision about pursuing this path.

To begin learning more about the opportunities and challenges of business ownership, ask your Transition Coordinator about the two-day **Entrepreneurship Track** of the Transition Assistance Program. Subject matter experts from the SBA and its network of partners will cover business fundamentals and techniques for evaluating the feasibility of business concepts you may be considering.

Impact of Education on Employment and Earning Potential

Generally, the employment rate is greater for those with higher levels of educational attainment. Adults with a bachelor's degree earned more than twice as much as those without a high school credential, 62 percent more than adult high school completers, and 29 percent more than associate's degree holders.

Transitioning Service members will have the option of learning more about expanding education opportunities by selecting one or more two-day individual Training Tracks aligned with their personal goals: Accessing Higher Education and Career Technical Training.

Accessing Higher Education Track

The Accessing Higher Education track is for those pursuing higher education. It assists Service members in identifying the education requirements that support their personal goals. This track focuses on topics such as how to achieve academic success, how to research and compare institutions, and how to finance higher education. After completing the Accessing Higher Education Track, Service members will be prepared to complete an application to an accredited institution, schedule a session with a counselor from an academic institution, or meet individually with education counselors, as needed.

Career Technical Training Track

Service members pursuing career technical training will receive guidance and help in selecting technical training schools and technical fields. After completing the Career Technical Training Track, Service members will be prepared to complete an application to an accredited career technical training institution, schedule a session with a counselor from a career technical training institution, or meet individually with career technical training experts and VA vocational education counselors, as applicable.

NOTES

Section 2: Identify Your Skills and Values

In this section you will have an opportunity to apply the second principle of getting a job: Identify the skills you can offer an employer.

Transferable Skills Inventory

Earlier you looked at the issues that hiring decision makers consider important when selecting employees. In this section you will have an opportunity to reflect on your past experience and identify the transferable skills that you can utilize in a variety of positions, occupations, and workplaces.

As you analyze your skills, do not just think about the job titles you have held; think about the specific tasks you did on each job.

When you are done, compare your skills with the skills required in the jobs that interest you. This will enable you to understand how well you qualify for a position. Also, you will learn what additional training or experience you need.

Exercise: Begin Your Transferable Skills Inventory

Step 1: Read the Skills column and rate all the skills that you possess.

Step 2: Skip over skills that you do not possess.

Step 3: If you have skills that are not listed, add them to the inventory.

Step 4: Select several skills on the list and create STAR statements for them.

Competency Rating:

1 = Very competent, 2 = Moderately competent, 3 = Somewhat competent; 4 = Not competent

Skills	Rating
Adapt to change	
Administer programs	
Advise people/peers/job seekers	
Arrange meetings/events/training programs	
Assemble apparatus/equipment	
Audit financial records/accounts payable	
Coach team members	
Communicate with others/groups	

Skills	Rating
Compile statistics/survey data	
Confront people/difficult issues	
Construct buildings	
Control costs	
Counsel subordinates	
Create new programs/internet sites/data system	
Delegate authority	
Develop or revise instructional materials	
Direct administrative staff/projects	
Dispense medication/information	
Establish objectives/guidelines/policies	
Evaluate programs/solutions/instructors/peers/students	
Illustrate storyboards/concepts/print	
Handle detailed work/data/complaints/toxins	
Improve maintenance schedule/systems	
Improvise action	
Implement registration system/new programs	
Install software/plumbing or electrical systems/parts	
Initiate production/changes/improvements	
Interpret languages/new laws/schematics/codes	
Interview people/new employees	
Investigate problems/violations/fraud	
Maintain transportation fleet/aircraft/diesel engines	
Manage an organization/a mail room/a retail store	
Market products/services/programs	
Negotiate contracts/sales/ disputes	
Operate vehicles or equipment	

Skills	Rating
Persuade others/customers	
Plan agendas/conferences	
Prepare reports/meals/presentations	
Program computers	
Protect property/people	
Purchase equipment/supplies/services	
Repair equipment items/mechanical devices	
Set goals/objectives	
Supervise others	
Train others	
Write or edit publications/proposals/technical documents/videos	

Select several of the skills for which you gave yourself a Very Competent rating and think of situations in which you used the skill to achieve significant results. The STAR Method helps you describe—in terms an employer will understand and appreciate— how you have used the skills to deliver results.

The STAR Method
S—Situation: The context you were operating in, include the challenge or opportunity you faced
T—Task: The mission or objective you were given, the objective or project you were assigned, or the idea you were trying to act on
A—Action: The steps you took or the approach you used to complete the tasks
R—Results: The impact you had, the difference you made, the benefits you generated, the before-and-after changes you created

Translating military terminology into civilian terms for STAR

One of the easiest ways to help employers understand your military experience is to substitute civilian equivalents for military terms, titles, ranks and acronyms in your STAR statements and later in resumes and interviewing. Here are examples and ideas for accomplishing this.

Terms and acronyms

Military:		**Possible Civilian Titles:**
NCOIC, Watch Captain, Petty Officer of the Watch	→	Supervisor, Manager, Coordinator
Commander, Chief	→	Division Head, Director, Senior Manager
Executive Officer (XO)	→	Deputy Director, Assistant Manager
Action Officer (AO)	→	Analyst (or Senior Analyst if applicable)
TDY/TAD	→	business travel
PCS	→	relocation
OER/NCOER	→	performance appraisal
MOS/MOC	→	career field
Commanded	→	supervised, directed

Battalion, Unit, Platoon	→	organization, agency, department
Mission	→	responsibility, task, objective, job
Combat/War	→	hazardous conditions, conflict
Headquarters	→	headquarters, corporate office
Subordinates	→	employees, co-workers
Service members	→	employees, co-workers, colleagues, personnel, individuals
Military Personnel Office (MILPO) Personnel Action Center (PAC)	→	personnel office
Regulations	→	guidance, policy, instructions
Reconnaissance	→	data collection, survey, analysis
TDA/MTOE	→	organizational structure, material resources, manpower

Sample STAR statement

Skill: Training

Situation: My unit received new portable generators

Task: I was tasked with ensuring team members were able to follow new maintenance procedures

Action: Conducted hands-on training

Result: Team members achieved 95% pass rate on first proficiency test. 100% on re-test.

STAR Statement: After my unit was issued a new model of portable generators, I was given the mission of ensuring team members were able maintain them. I trained team members on maintenance procedures. They achieved a 95% pass rate on the first proficiency test and 100% on the re-test.

STAR Statement converted to bullet point. Designed and delivered generator technical training, resulting in 100% mastery of skills by trainees.

Additional examples

When my unit was alerted for an overseas deployment, I was tasked with developing a load plan for all unit equipment. After intensive coordination over a two-month period with airlift and sealift staff, I developed a plan that enabled all of our equipment to arrive on schedule in operational condition.

STAR Statement converted to bullet point: Developed plans that ensured timely and damage-free transportation by air and sea.

Tasked with devising a solution to rising costs and errors that were negatively impacting our clients, I introduced a quality control program that enabled us to generate $10,000 in savings and reduced errors by 50%.

STAR Statement converted to bullet point: Implemented quality control program that generated $10,000 in savings and a 50% reduction in errors.

Your STAR Statements

1st Skill:

Situation:

Task:

Action:

Result:

STAR Statement:

STAR Statement converted to bullet point:

2nd Skill:

Situation:

Task:

Action:

Result:

STAR Statement:

STAR Statement converted to bullet point:

3rd Skill:

Situation:

Task:

Action:

Result:

STAR Statement:

STAR Statement converted to bullet point:

Update your ITP

In Section IV: Employment, use the Skills Inventory and the STAR statements you have begun to develop to update the subsections labeled

- Identify your professional skills
- Identify your personal strengths and attributes

Creating an Employment History Outline

In addition to understanding the paths to employment and your transferrable skills and accomplishments, you also need to have a comprehensive list of every job you have ever worked. This list, which is called your Employment History Outline, will be the basis of your master resume. We will discuss the master resume in Section 5.

In school when you write a research paper, you often begin with an outline. An outline can help you organize your thoughts before you spend hours writing the full document. With an outline, you can quickly see how your main ideas flow into one another and how you can logically group thoughts and ideas in order to make the most compelling case. Outlines are the ultimate organizational tool for writing anything from research papers to resumes. Your employment history outline is the document you will use as you create master resumes and targeted resumes. It will help you as you figure out the most effective way to discuss your work history and market yourself and your skills to a prospective employer.

The employment history outline is easy: you simply need a comprehensive list of all of your jobs, the employer and the dates. Over the next several weeks, you can refer to this outline to help you continue identifying skills and accomplishments. In Section 5, you will use this outline as you begin to write a targeted resume. It will be a helpful tool when you decide the most effective way to group your previous military positions in order to make the most compelling case for a prospective employer.

In your employment history outline, you need to capture each job or job title, the employer, and the dates (by month and year) that you held that job. Choose a format that works for you, but consider something like this:

Customer Service Representative, Advance Cellular, June 20xx-20xx

Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic, U.S. Army, 20xx-20xx, March 20xx – July 20xx

Executive Officer, U.S. Navy, November 20xx- September 20xx

Employment History Outline

Job Values

It is important in the early stages of a job search to identify work-related factors that are important to you. Studies have demonstrated that without a successful match, people are more likely to change jobs often or experience a less-than-optimal quality of life. This is problematic for employees as well as employers.

This section includes several techniques for identifying work-related values and preferences, including the main factors (job, location or money) that motivate you. Doing so will help you focus your job search on the positions and employers that will provide you with the most satisfying career.

Work Preferences

In addition to your skills and experience, your personal preferences about what you want to do are critical in your job search. If you think about what kind of work you prefer before beginning your job search, you will have a better idea of which jobs to pursue. You will also be better prepared for interviews, completing applications, and developing your resume.

The following questions will help you identify your work preferences. Read each question and mark the answer that best describes your preference.

1. **I enjoy working with:**
   - data (information, ideas, words, numbers)
   - people
   - things (machines, equipment, animals)

2. **I prefer working:**
   - indoors
   - outdoors
   - some inside and some outside

3. **I want to work for a company:**
   - with less than 100 employees
   - with 100 to 500 employees
   - with 500 or more employees

4. **I would like to work in a:**
   - large city
   - medium size city
   - town or suburban area
   - small town or rural area

5. **I prefer a job that involves:**
   - a lot of travel
   - some travel
   - no travel

6. Which of your past jobs did you like least? Why?

7. Which of your past jobs did you like best? Why?

8. What kind of job would you do if you could choose any job you wanted?

9. What kind of training would you like to have, if any?

10. Why did you choose your previous field of work?

11. What type of employer culture will align with your personality? (e.g. corporate responsibility, virtual teams, authoritative structure, flat structure)

Look over your responses on this survey. Write your work preferences below. This summary will help you clarify which work preferences are most important to you.

Example

I prefer a job where I work:

- With people
- Inside and outside
- Full time
- In a small city

I prefer a job where I: _____

Work Values

Having been in the military, you may be used to a structured environment and certain values in the workplace. You will need to make sure the values you have match the company and position you are pursuing.

Following is a list of work values for you to consider as you begin your job search. Rate each item on the scale below. Then review your list to see which items you feel most strongly about. Pay close attention to the list as you set your goals. Your values relate directly to the working conditions in each company or occupation you research. Your work-related values influence how you feel about your job.

Importance Rating

1=Not important, 2=Somewhat important, 3=Moderately important, 4=Very important

Work Value	1	2	3	4
Being around interesting people				
Benefits				
Blending of family and career				
Clear expectations				
Clear rules				
Competition				
Cultural diversity in the workplace				
Flexible work schedule				
Freedom from pressure/stress				
Independence				

Work Value	1	2	3	4
Involvement in decision-making				
Leisure time				
Mental challenge				
Power and influence				
Public contact				
Quality of product				
Recognition				
Regular 40-hour work week				
Salary				
Security				
Status and prestige				
Travel opportunities				
Variety and change in work				
Other:				

Now that you have identified the factors and values that matter to you, use this information when evaluating employment opportunities.

NOTES

Section 3: Identify Employment Opportunities

In the next two sections you will begin applying the third principle of getting a job: Discovering, researching, and connecting with employment opportunities.

Job search networking

No matter which of the paths to employment (advertised vacancies, unadvertised openings, or talent hiring) you take, a job search network will enable you to accelerate your search, find more opportunities, and conduct the critically important research that enables you to customize your resume, cover letter, online application and answers to interview questions to closely match an employer's needs and priorities.

Your Network

Sources are people who have inside information about particular businesses, including:

- The likelihood that a company is in hiring mode
- Who the hiring decision makers are within the company
- The types of skills that matter most to hiring decision makers
- The pay, prospects for advancement, workplace environment, and other information that enables you to decide if it makes sense for you to target that company

Recommenders are contacts who are willing and able to facilitate a meeting between you and a hiring decision maker, either directly or by passing along your resume and a recommendation. They may also be willing to write recommendation letters or serve as references.

Hiring Decision Makers include small business owners or others inside a company who are directly involved in the hiring process, including team leaders, supervisors or department heads.

Linkers can introduce you to Sources and Recommenders, and in some cases, to Hiring Decision Makers. There is a good chance that when you begin to develop a list of their network contacts, most of the people you initially identify will be Linkers. Some of these Linkers may only know other, better connected Linkers.

It is possible for a single person to play several roles. A Source, Recommender, or Hiring Decision Maker, for example, may also be able to link you to additional people or employers who could provide more information or assistance.

Exercise: Identify network contacts

Brainstorm to identify people you know. Be inclusive of people who do not know the work you do. The people on this list are your primary contacts. They do not have to be people who know about possible job leads they just might be people who know other people that have knowledge of job leads, occupational information, specific employer contacts, etc.

Use these categories to begin your brainstorm:

- Relatives (including in-laws, aunts, uncles, cousins, and distant relatives)
- Members of your military unit
- Local and out-of-town friends (including your unit members who have already separated from the military)
- Current and past neighbors
- Friends of your parents and parents of children's friends
- Informal or interest groups you belong to (hobbies, sports teams, health club, etc.)
- Members of your place of worship (including clergy and staff)
- Teachers
- Staff of your Military Transition Office
- Former co-workers, employers or supervisors

Use the diagram on the next page to list your contacts.

My
Network

Update your ITP

In Section IV: Employment, in the portion headed **Strengthen your employment prospects**, update the subsections labeled **Develop a job search network**

Social Media

You can strengthen your job search increase networking capacity by utilizing three of the leading social media tools: LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. Here are some general strategies and steps for leveraging these sites.

- Establish an online presence. This is the foundation for everything else you will do online. It is becoming common for employers you contact or people you meet in a face-to-face networking event to search for you online, and a complete absence of information about you may raise concerns in their mind.
- Ensure the information you provide on each site is accurate and up-to-date. If you have more than one site, make sure the information is aligned. The list of jobs you have held, the dates, titles, and responsibilities you provide on your LinkedIn profile, for example, should agree with the information on your Twitter or Facebook profiles.
- Build your networks, focusing on quality over quantity by identifying people who are likely to be Linkers, Sources, Recommenders, or Hiring Decision Makers (refer to the section on Networking for explanations of these four network roles) and then focusing your time and effort on communicating with the most promising contacts.
- Use your social networks to locate employment opportunities, including the unadvertised openings and "talent hire" situations discussed in the section on Paths to Employment.
- Take advantage of these three sites to learn more about companies you are targeting and about hiring decision makers in those companies. Many companies have links to their socials media sites on their primary websites, so keep an eye out for these links.
- Connect with hiring decision makers, either directly by using the messaging tools within a social media site, or by arranging for an introduction from one of the people in your network.
- Harness the power of recommendations from people who are familiar with your accomplishments.
- Create or strengthen your reputation (and thus the confidence of hiring decision makers in your ability to contribute to their success) by demonstrating your experience, knowledge, and enthusiasm when it comes to the companies and occupations you are targeting.

Here are some specific tactics for make the most of three key social media sites.

LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com)

- You will later create an account, and then upgrade to a premium account (free for Service members and Veterans) by following the steps in Section 7.
- Build your profile, using a career-appropriate photo (not in uniform) and including the information about your military and civilian work experience that is most relevant to the types of positions you are targeting.
- Locate and routinely visit the LinkedIn sites of companies you are targeting. Stay current on their announcements, news and other indicators that they may be hiring.
- Join LinkedIn groups related to your desired occupation or profession. Follow and contribute to discussions, and familiarize yourself with or contact experts and thought leaders who participate in those groups.
- Reach out to people you are connected with, directly or through others in your LinkedIn network, who work for companies you are targeting or who are in occupations you would like to learn more about.

Facebook (www.facebook.com)

- If you currently use Facebook primarily for keeping in touch with family and friends, realize that each of them—and all of the people each of your contacts knows—may have information that could help you identify employment opportunities and learn more about those opportunities.
- Do not keep your job search or upcoming transition from the military a secret. Let everyone you are connected with on Facebook know about the type of work you are looking for and the skills and knowledge you can offer an employer.
- Ensure the information in the "About" section of your Facebook page is accurate, up-to-date, and professional.
- Use the tips in the following pages to ensure your online presence, including your Facebook site, does not raise concerns in the minds of employers about your ability to fit in and succeed if you join their organization.
- Although you may want to restrict access to much of your Facebook profile to friends and family, consider making your employment information and education available to everyone, including employers who are researching you after they have received your resume or job application.
- Use Facebook's search feature to determine if a company you are targeting has a Facebook page. If so, "Like" the company and explore the content it has posted.

Twitter (www.twitter.com)

- Create a Twitter account at www.twitter.com/signup and select a professional user name.
- Create a profile that emphasizes your relevant experience.
- When you have identified companies or hiring decision makers you would like to know better, check to see if they have a Twitter presence (you may have to ask for their Twitter "handle" to locate them) and follow them.
- Demonstrate your professional interests and knowledge by periodically tweeting (sending brief messages) that include links to relevant articles or content you discover on the Internet.
- To strengthen relationships with specific people, reply to tweets they post, re-tweet their posts, or use the direct message tool to contact them.
- Participate in Twitter chats (online conversations) or online forums related to professional topics of interest to you.
- If you are going to attend a networking or professional development event or a job fair, and the event publicizes a hashtag (the # symbol is Twitter's way of identifying topics or keywords), use Twitter to connect with people online that you would like to meet face-to-face at the event.

Ensure your social media presence helps—not hurts—your job search

Before you begin applying for jobs, you have already done a lot of prep work, but one important factor you do not want to leave untouched is checking your online presence. It is a common practice for employers and hiring managers to research applicants online before they are hired.

What does your online presence say and show about you? Are you revealing things about your personal life that a potential employer might find offensive or distasteful? Remember what you post and share online can help or hurt the impression an employer has of you.

Try it for yourself and see what you find. Google your name and image and scan the first few pages of results. And do not forget to search yourself on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other social media sites in which you participate.

Here is where you need to view your personal pages with an employer's critical eye. Consider the following:

- Remove photographs of you and your friends drinking, smoking or engaging in any illegal or questionable activities. And yes, this does mean drug use, even marijuana, despite the fact that it may be legal in some states. These considerations also include conversations and discussions you participate in regarding these topics.

- Be mindful of the way you represent yourself in photos via what you are wearing. This extends to comments and photos you are tagged in and the comments left by others under your photos.
- Watch what you say and how you say it. Comments that may be discriminatory, inflammatory or interpreted negatively by others, especially racial or ethnic minorities, are a huge red flag for employers. Do not leave posts up that you think are "just a joke," because others may not feel the same.
- Do not vent or speak badly about past, current or prospective employers. Do not share any confidential or inside knowledge about these organizations or people.
- Take a close look at the people and sites you "like," include as friends or follow. If somehow the impression is negative, dump them.
- Cleaning up what others will see when they visit you online can provide a more positive impression of you. For the things you want to keep, changing the way others access your information will be helpful:
- Modifying the privacy settings in your profile will keep certain elements visible to only those people or groups you allow. Your private life will be kept private.
- Similarly, restricting access of your albums to friends only will ensure that those photographs are not visible to the general public.
- Adjust your privacy settings to restrict tagging of yourself in other people's photographs. You will not have total control of photos other people share of you, but you can limit how it will show up in your own profile.

Your Professional Introduction

Your professional introduction, also known as an elevator speech or 30-second introduction, sets the stage for productive conversations with prospective employers or members of you job search network.

It is also an excellent way to answer the "Tell me about yourself" question that will be asked in most formal or informal job interviews.

You may need multiple versions of your introduction, customized for different audiences and purposes.

For example, if you are speaking with people you think are sources of information about a company you wish to target, you would emphasize your interest in working for that organization and ask if they would be willing to answer your questions about the employer.

If you are talking with a potential hiring decision maker, you might want to emphasize two or three of your most relevant key skills and request an information interview.

Use this table to begin creating your own professional introduction.

Exercise: My Professional Introduction

Sample statements	My version
1. Set the stage I recently finished my enlistment in the Army… I just wrapped up a 20-year career in the Navy… I recently completed my service with the Marine Corps… I will be retiring from the Air Force in three months… I will be finishing my service with the Coast Guard in several weeks…	

Sample statements	My version
2. "No Brag" Disclaimer In my position: • I had to get really good at…. • It was absolutely essential that I got really good at…. I was fortunate; I had many opportunities to: • Acquire a number of skills, including…. • Develop some valuable insights, including…. • Recognize the importance of…. I was lucky to have had several remarkable leaders/supervisors who: • Made sure I acquired a broad range of skills, including…. • Provided me with opportunities to…. • Helped me learn the importance of…. • Taught me the importance of…. Thanks to a number of challenging experiences: • I learned to…. • I got really good at….	

Sample statements	My version
3. Skills and/or contributions I offer (Refer to your Master Resume and select up to three that you think will be most relevant to the person you are talking to.) Examples: • Strategic thinking • Leadership ability • Supervisory experience • Mechanical skills	
4. My goal I am looking for opportunities to apply the skills and knowledge I have acquired I am interested in working as a _____ (specific occupation or job position, if you have one in mind) I would like to explore a career in ____ (an industry, a career field, or a specific company, if you have targeted one) I am seeking a position with a local business where I can make a contribution using my _____ skills I am eager to connect with businesses that might benefit from the skills I offer / the contribution I can make	

In the space below, write at least one version of your entire professional introduction:

Career, Occupation & Job Research

The closer the match between a job and your work preferences, financial needs and transferable skills, the more likely you will be successful and happy in that job.

The following is a list of ways you can research careers.

- Library research
- Fact-finding calls
- Job shadow
- Volunteer
- Job share
- Employment counseling
- Internships
- Reading business magazines or the business section of newspapers
- Small Business Administration
- Attending training or apprenticeship programs
- Colleges and universities
- Temporary agencies/services
- Internet
- Social networking
- Talking to friends and relatives about work and careers

Explore Your Career Options

My Next Move for Veterans (http://www.mymextmove.org/vets and http://veterans.gov) is an interactive tool for new job seekers, students, and other career explorers to learn more about their career options.

Users can:

•Explore over 900 different careers and see important information including skills, tasks, salaries, and employment outlook on easy-to-read career reports.

•Look at related apprenticeships and training, and search actual job openings.

•Find careers through a keyword search; by browsing industries; or through the O*NET Interest Profiler, a tool that offers customized career suggestions based on a person's interests and level of education and work experience.

Career reports feature the most important knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the work, explained in language that's easy to understand. Outlook and education sections let users find salary info, job postings, and training opportunities. The visual design enables users to identify a career's key points, or explore a career in depth.

Visitors interested in specific careers can get exploring quickly with an intuitive keyword search; over 900 career options are only a few keystrokes away. Users looking for a broader range of opportunities can browse industries, exploring over a dozen; each featuring a range of careers to choose from, including those in the green economy and with a bright outlook for job opportunities.

Also at the site is a web-based version of the popular **O*NET Interest Profiler, a tool designed to assess an individual's vocational interests.** The web-based version of the tool features 60 items which, along with information about the user's education and work experience, guide users to careers they may enjoy.

Military Occupation Codes (MOC) Crosswalk helps you find a civilian career similar to your military job. This tool will assist you to translate military occupational codes (MOC) into civilian skill equivalents and learn about related civilian career paths. (http://www.onetonline.org/crosswalk/MOC)

Fact-finding Calls

Calling a company to obtain information can result in valuable insights as well as the possibility of speaking with a hiring manager. There are cold calls and referral calls (warm leads). Your networking efforts will help to create these warm leads. Being prepared for the call, taking notes, and even dressing for work are all great strategies while placing these types of calls. Preparedness and professionalism when on the phone, asking concise questions and being polite, go a long way towards building your network.

Here are some guidelines for calling a company for information.

- Research the company website and explore links on their site to gather information and formulate questions
- If you are asking for someone's time, be clear about your intention; you want to set an appointment for a phone conversation or meet in person
- Find out what it is like to work for the organization or company
- Find out how the managers manage their team
- Get a snapshot of the day-to-day business
- Identify the hiring manager

A process for making fact-finding calls

Prepare to make the call

There is no substitute for preparation—know what information you want to gather before you make the call. Being prepared will give you confidence and credibility.

- Identify companies where you might like to work. Make a list of places to call, including the company name, address, phone number and any facts about the company you may obtain from your contacts or research results. Use the template at the end of this section to make a company information form of your own.
- Find the name (and as much information as you can) about someone who has a connection to the position or works at the targeted company.
- Write an outline of what you are going to say on the phone. This will help you to be less nervous and to assure you get all the information you need. Additionally, you will be perceived as organized and professional. See the scripts at the end of this section.
- Set aside a dedicated two hours for the activity, it becomes easier to make these calls after you get into a rhythm.

- As you research companies, keep a record of the following information on your company information form. Keep this information organized and easily accessible:
    - Number of employees
    - What the company does (service and/or products)
    - Business volume, net worth, profit and loss, company stability, etc. (see the company's annual report if available)
    - Company competitors
    - Company history and future plans
    - Company locations (headquarters, branch offices, international offices, retail outlets, etc.)
    - Salary range or hourly rates paid for various positions
    - Contact names (department heads, human resource manager, people you know who work there, former employees, etc.)
    - Employment activity (recent hiring, firing, layoffs, etc.)
    - Titles of positions that interest you

During the call

- Introduce yourself.
- Begin the conversation using the name of the person who referred you (i.e., "Hello, Ms. Jones, John Doe suggested I call….)
- Give a brief description of your background.
- Mention you need only 10 minutes of the person's time.
- Ask the receptionist for the name of the person who you should contact; If calling human resources, that may be the head of a department, shop manager or foreman, etc. Write down the person's name. Then ask to speak to that person.
- Find out the position of the person you are talking to. Giving your speech to the wrong person can be a waste of time for both parties.
- Do not give too much information. If your purpose is to get a face-to-face appointment, tell enough to interest the person in your skills, set an appointment and get off the phone.
- Ask the employer how your skills can benefit the company and what additional skills would make you more employable.
- Smile when you talk. Use a friendly, conversational tone of voice.
- Your mood and physical condition show in your voice.
- Try to speak at the same rate as the person you are talking to. This will help you communicate clearly and effectively.
- Keep good records. Make notes about every call you make. You never know when you will have to refer back to a conversation.
- Try to obtain some sort of information from everyone you contact:
    - An informational interview appointment
    - A referral to another source
    - A job lead within or outside of the company
    - Information about experience or qualifications required for the field
    - Review and/or advice on your resume

After the call

- Persist. Make new contacts every day and follow up on every lead. This is not easy for everyone. You will hear "no" more often than you hear "yes."
- Send a follow-up thank you email when appropriate.
- Be sure to log each call on your Company Information form.
- Evaluate your process and performance after each call.

Using a Script

When making your phone calls, use a script if it makes you more comfortable. It may help to get the conversation started smoothly. When you are not sure what career you want to pursue and are in the initial stages of exploration, you want to speak with individuals who can look at long range projections and understand your field of interest. For example:

"I am seeking information about the (medical, aviation, electronics) field and I would like your advice. I know you are very busy, but I only need about 5-10 minutes of your time."

- What do you see as a growth area for this industry?
- What problems or issues do you see that will affect this area in the future?
- What job titles do you see as hard to fill in the future and why?

Sample scripts for calling for someone when you have the right name

Call the organization, and when someone answers, merely ask to be put through to the person you are trying to reach. If you are asked, "What is this call regarding?" avoid saying you are calling about a job. This reply will almost certainly get you redirected to human resources. You are better served by saying something such as the following:

"I am researching your organization, and I was told this person could help. Is he or she in?"

This follow-up question ("Is he or she in?") is a redirection technique used in sales to provide a suitable answer to the individual's question and immediately get the person thinking of the next task, which is to answer your question. Simply ask to be put through.

If the person who has answered the phone is not going to put your call through, remain polite and end the call without being difficult. Do not give up; just call back another day, preferably at a different time of day, even at lunch time. The backup person who answers the phone during a break may often connect you to the contact.

If you are transferred to the person's voice mail, leave a message similar to the email script provided. Your purpose is simple: a brief conversation about the work environment, company culture and what is required to work in specific occupations.

You want to make a good connection with them, so do not call too frequently or talk too long. It is a good idea to make a long list of people you can call to maximize your research.

Calling for someone when you do not have the name
Employer: "Thank you for calling XYZ Company; how may I help you?"

Applicant: "Hi. I hope you can help me. I would like to speak with the supervisor of the *[insert appropriate department]*.

Employer: "All right, I will connect the call."

Applicant: "Thank you. Can you tell me that person's direct number before you transfer me?"

Employer: "What is this in reference to?

Applicant: "I am interested in knowing more about the *[specific position]* in your company and hoped to get more information."

Sending an email to someone you do not know
An email that would be appropriate to send someone you do not know might read something like this:

Dear *[insert the person's name]*,

This is just a quick note to introduce myself. I am a *[insert your job title]* looking for work in your area. I am reaching out to you because I came across your profile while doing some research and thought we should speak. I am considering my next move, and want to know more about *[insert company/business/organization name]*. My hope is to connect with you for a few brief moments and get your opinion on what it is like to work there.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your thoughts. Best regards,

Your name
Your phone number
Your email address

Sample Script for Fact-finding Calls

Employer: “Thank you for calling XYZ Company; how may I help you?”

Applicant: “Hello, just a quick call to introduce myself. My name is *[insert your name here]*, may I have a few minutes of your time to ask you about your company?”

Employer: “No.”

Applicant: “I completely understand. Who else can I speak to?”

Employer: “xx.”

OR the employer may ask,

Employer “What is this about?”

Applicant: “Thank you. I am interested in learning about your company. I would like to get your opinion on what it is like to work there. What is the work culture? What is different about your company from your competitor’s company?”

Employer: “xx.”

Applicant: “Thank you for your time today. Who else should I speak with at your company? Will you introduce me through phone or email?”

Employer: “xx.”

Applicant: “You have been so helpful, thank you. Goodbye.”

Company Information Form

Date of call:

Company:

Name of contact

Address:

Phone #:

Position or Department of Interest:

Required Skills, Certification, Education, Work Experience:

Other information and remarks:

Researching Salaries

When researching and evaluating a position you wish to apply for, you should determine the typical salary range for that positon. This is especially true if the position announcement does not include salary information or if you are uncertain whether your salary expectations are realistic.

Where to Research

These websites provide average salaries or salary ranges for particular job titles and locations:

- Salary.com: **http://www.salary.com**
- Salary Expert: **http://www.salaryexpert.com**

In contrast, Glassdoor (http://www.glassdoor.com/index.htm) provides salary information for actual positions within local companies. You may have to register (for free) to use Glassdoor for detailed searches.

You can also research salaries by talking to someone in a position that is the same or similar to the one you are applying for, either in the same company you wish to work for or in a comparable business.

Bear in in mind that pay may vary depending on what a company can afford to pay, seniority or years of experience with a company, and how much the company values the role.

Update your ITP

In Section IV: Employment, in the portion headed **Strengthen your employment prospects,** update the subsections labeled:

- Seek additional education, technical training, licenses, and/or certification.
- Seek out and utilize additional resources such as registering with the local DOL Career One-Stop Center and obtain the DOL "Gold Card" certificate

NOTES

Section 4: Focus Your Search

Job Search Assistance

In this section you will continue discovering and researching employment opportunities.

American Job Centers (AJCs): One-on-One Personalized Service in Your Local Community

AJCs served nearly over 1 million Veterans last year. Veterans receive priority of service and recently separated Veterans are entitled to 6 months of intensive services through the Gold Card Program. You can work one-on-one with a specialist to improve your resume, develop networking and interviewing skills, and connect with training and meaningful employment. All of these services are available to you at no cost.

There are nearly 2,500 AJCs across the nation that are integrated with state work force agencies and local communities to facilitate Veteran hiring with large employers as well as local small and medium sized business that provide the vast majority of jobs nationwide. Each AJC is managed by a local Workforce Investment Board that consists of business leaders, elected officials and representatives from the chamber of commerce and community colleges to ensure an integrated approach to meet local employer skills requirements. A recent independent study "Accessing the Local Provision of Veteran's Employment Services" conducted by the Center for Naval Analysis stated that AJCs are "the centerpiece for high quality Veterans' employment services in local communities."

Service members have the opportunity to work with AJCs prior to separation. It is important for transitioning Service members to connect with their local AJC, or the AJC in the community in which they intend to move post-separation from the military. Every community has unique characteristics that are reflected in its local job market. The AJC staff will be able to provide valuable employment, training, and education information specific to the local community to assist in transition planning and facilitate rapid employment. Find your local AJC at http://veterans.gov or http://www.servicelocator.org.

Veterans enjoy **priority of service** at AJCs, meaning they go to the head of the line for most of the services and programs offered at the Centers. Services include Career and Training Services provided in the AJC. The first time you visit an AJC, an intake person will ask you several questions to determine your status as a Veteran and will refer you to the appropriate staff member who can assist you.

The Gold Card Initiative

Post-9/11 era Veterans are eligible to receive intensive assistance and six months of follow-up services at an AJC when they present a Gold Card at their local AJC.

These employment services include:

- Job readiness assessments, including interviews and testing
- Development of an Individual Development Plan (IDP)
- Career guidance through group or individual counseling that helps Veterans in making training and career decisions
- Provision of labor market, occupational, and skills transferability information that informs educational, training, and occupational decisions
- Referral to job banks, job portals, and job openings
- Referral to employers and registered apprenticeship sponsors
- Referral to training opportunities
- Monthly follow-up by an assigned case manager for up to six months

To download your Gold Card, visit
http://www.dol.gov/vets/goldcard/revisedgoldcard5.pdf

You will also find a copy of the Gold card in the Appendix of this Guide.

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

GOLD CARD

SERVICES FOR POST 9/11 ERA VETERANS

The One Stop Career Centers are ready to provide you intensive services for up to a six month period through an exciting array of career and supportive services to include:

- Case management
- Skills assessment and interest surveys
- Career guidance
- Job search assistance

HOW TO ACCESS GOLD CARD SERVICES?

- Information about Gold Card Services can be found at www.dol.gov/vets/goldcard.html.
- Locate your nearest One Stop Career Center by going to America's Service Locator www.servicelocator.org or by calling Toll-Free 1-877-USJ-JOBS (1-877-872-5627) TTY: 1-877-889-5627.
- Once a One-Stop Career Center has been located, go there and present this Card.
- Information about other services and benefits can be found at www.abenefits.va.gov and www.nrd.gov.

Dislocated Workers

Service members, who are being discharged from service, either voluntarily or involuntarily, are eligible for dislocated worker services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Additionally, a military spouse who is unable to continue employment due to the Service member's permanent change of military station, or a military spouse who loses employment as a result of the spouse's discharge from the military, may be also classified as a dislocated worker. Under this classification, a transitioning Service member and spouse are eligible for enhanced services and may be eligible for training and education opportunities through their local AJC.

Locate an American Job Center in the location you plan to relocate to after separating from the military:

1. Visit the **www.veterans.gov** homepage.
2. Click on the **Find a Job** button.
3. Click on Get One-On-One Assistance.
4. Click inside the *Location* box beneath *Find an American Job Center* and enter your city, state or zip.
5. Select link to nearest American Job Center and note the Center information. (Each state has a different naming convention for their AJCs)
6. Contact local AJC and
7. Register for Job Seeker Services.

Research a career field that interests you:

1. Visit the **www.veterans.gov** homepage.
2. Click on the **Find a Job** button.
3. Click on Explore Careers.
4. Type in the name of the career field, industry or keyword that you would like to explore.
5. Note the education required, the job outlook, and the education and training opportunities available.

Locate local businesses in the location you plan to locate to after separating from the military:

1. Visit the **www.veterans.gov** homepage.
2. Click on the **Find a Job** button.
3. Click on Get One-On-One Assistance.
4. Select the **Toolkit** tab.
5. Under the *Jobs* heading, click on **Business Finder**.
6. Search by name, industry or occupation
7. Next, search by city, state or zip.

Education and Training Assistance for the Job Search

DoD SkillBridge

The DoD SkillBridge initiative promotes the civilian job training authority available for transitioning military Service members. Service members meeting certain qualifications can participate in civilian job and employment training, including apprenticeships and internships.

Such training can take place starting up to six months prior to a Service member's separation. Additionally, the training must offer a high probability of employment and be provided to the Service member at little or no cost.

Through DoD SkillBridge, tremendous potential exists for Service members, companies, trade unions, and others to leverage this talent pipeline to meet state, regional, and industry workforce needs.

For more information and to find out if there are SkillBridge opportunities on your installation, visit http://www.dodskillbridge.com/.

Apprenticeships

There are over 400,000 registered Apprentices in nearly 1,200 occupations. Occupations include tradition trade “hardhat” careers such as pipe fitters and ironworkers, but also include “white collar” careers such as dental hygienists or bank managers.

Eighty-seven percent of apprentices are employed after completing their programs, with an average starting wage above $50,000.

Post-9/11 GI Bill Apprenticeship Program. Eligible Veterans pursuing training under an apprenticeship program will receive a monthly housing allowance (MHA) in addition to their apprenticeship wages. The MHA issued will be a percentage of the Department of Defense Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for an E-5 with dependents (based on the location of the employer) as follows:

- 100 percent of the applicable MHA during the first six months of training
- 80 percent of the applicable MHA during the second six months of training
- 60 percent of the applicable MHA during the third six months of training
- 40 percent of the applicable MHA during the fourth six months of training
- 20 percent of the applicable MHA during the remainder of the training

Additionally, Post-9/11 GI Bill recipients will receive up to $83 per month for books and supplies. The monthly housing allowance and books and supplies stipend will be further prorated based on the Veteran's eligibility percentage.

To find an Apprenticeship Program:

Visit **http://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-apprenticeships.aspx or http://www.doleta.gov/oa/veterans.cfm**

Short-Term Training Opportunities

Short-term training includes any class or program that lasts less than two years. All short-term training can help you find a job, get a promotion, or earn more money. Many programs lead to a credential, which can give you a helpful edge in the job market. A credential is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to gain employment or advance within an occupation to include **certificates, certifications, and licenses.**

People often confuse the terminology "certificates" and "certifications." An **educational certificate** is a credential awarded by an educational institution based on completion of all requirements for a program of study, including coursework and tests or other performance evaluations. A **certification** is a credential awarded by a certification body based on an individual demonstrating through an examination process that he or she has acquired the designated knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform a specific job. The examination can be written, oral, or performance-based. Certification is a time-limited credential that is renewed through a recertification process.

Licenses. Some occupations require workers to obtain a license in order to hold a job in that field. It's worth researching whether a field you're interested in may require a license. Examples of fields that often require licenses are:

- •Health care careers, such as dental assistants and emergency medical technicians
- •Jobs that provide personal care such as barbers and cosmetologists

Rules for occupational licenses are set by states, and they are different in each state. Learn about licensing requirements in your state at http://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-licenses.aspx.

You may be able to access many free or low-cost training options online or in your local community. Options range from brushing up on basic skills such as English, math, or computers, to mastering specialized skills such as software programs. Many community or technical college programs can lead to a certificate award in less than two years. Having a certificate in your field can help you qualify for a job, get a promotion, or earn more money.

To find short-term training opportunities, visit
http://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-local-training.aspx

Veteran unemployment and homelessness

This section is intended to provide resources, information and create awareness about how unemployment and veteran homelessness almost always are directly related.

Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members (UCX)
The Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members (UCX) program provides benefits for eligible ex-military personnel. In addition, former members of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are covered under the UCX program. The program is administered by the States as agents of the Federal government.

- If you were on active duty with a branch of the U.S. military, you may be entitled to benefits based on that service.
- You must have been separated under honorable conditions.

The law of the State (under which the claim is filed) determines benefit amounts, number of weeks benefits can be paid, and other eligibility conditions.

You should contact your **State Workforce Agency** at **http://www.servicelocator.org/OWSLinks.asp** as soon as possible after discharge. It may be helpful to have a copy of your service and discharge documents (DD-214 or similar form) when you open your claim. In many states, you may now file your claim by telephone and/or online.

The risk of homelessness

A complex set of factors can cause extreme issues for Veterans. Homelessness can occur quickly when someone is jobless or there is a shortage of affordable housing. Some displaced and at-risk Veterans live with lingering effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and substance abuse, which are compounded by a lack of family and social support networks. When options become limited, some individuals are exposed to circumstances that could lead to incarceration.

Here are a few statistics that illustrate this issue:

In 2015, the overall Veterans' unemployment rate was 4.6 percent. The rate for all male Veterans was 4.5 percent while the rate for female Veterans was 5.4 percent. Male and female Veterans who served during Gulf War era II had an unemployment rate of 5.8 percent.

On a single night in January 2015, 47,725 Veterans were experiencing homelessness in the United States.

Homeless Veterans were found in unsheltered locations at the same rate as all homeless adults, 36 percent.

Most Veterans experienced homelessness as individuals, 38,985 people or 96 percent. However, 1,708 Veterans, or 4 percent, were homeless as members of families with children.

Female homeless Veterans accounted for 10 percent of both the sheltered and unsheltered homeless Veteran populations.

Sources of assistance

Many local agencies will offer emergency assistance for food, housing, utilities, home repair, emergency shelter, clothing, legal aid, transportation, medical and dental care, and prescriptions. The following are websites that can help with your search:

- The United Way's search page at **www.211.org**
- The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans' list of Community-Based Organizations at **www.nchv.org/index.php/help/help/locate_organization.**
- The National Community Action Partnership site at **www.communityactionpartnership.com**. Click on the **Community Action Network** link at the top of the page; then click on **Find a Community Action Agency.**
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development Exchange site at **www.hudexchange.info/veterans/.** Resources for Homeless Veterans and Homeless Veteran Service Providers
- The Department of Health and Human Services Resources at www.hhs.gov/programs/social-services/homelessness/resources/index.html

HVRP

The **Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP)** helps Veterans experiencing homelessness gain meaningful employment via services that include job placement, career counseling, workshops, and resume writing assistance. They also work with Veterans to ensure that they can access benefits and supportive services – including temporary, transitional, and permanent housing, clothing, referrals to medical and substance abuse treatment, and transportation assistance—available to them from federal, state, and local sources.

For the most recent list of non-profit agencies that are collaborating with the HVRP program, visit **www.nvtac.org/grantees**

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program

- Provided to all Veterans receiving Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members (UCX)
- RESEA recipients spent 3.13 weeks less unemployment insurance, based on research conducted by IMPAQ International* (400% ROI)
- Provides in-person reemployment and eligibility assessments, reemployment services and referrals to training
- Assists Veterans in finding a job or connecting to services or training needed to prepare for one
- States are strongly encouraged to collaborate with the State's Job for Veterans State Grant program

http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2012_08_REA_Nevada_Follow_up_Report.pdf

Analyze job postings

Job postings, whether online, in a newspaper or other print publication, can provide insights into the skills, experience, and other selection criteria that an employer considers most important for a specific job vacancy.

Investing ten minutes in carefully analyzing a job posting can provide you with the details you need to customize your professional introduction, cover letter, and resume. The information in a job posting can help you create more relevant and powerful versions of the STAR Statements you may have developed on Day One.

Here are some tips for maximizing the information you can gain from job postings:

- Read through the entire job posting.
- Print out the job posting and highlight key words in the qualifications, skills, and experience sections.
- Job postings that promise a big paycheck with little experience required usually indicate sales positions that work on commission.
- If the contact for the job posting is an employment agency, find out if they will charge you a fee. Some agencies charge the employer a fee, some charge the job seeker a fee.
- Multiple position job postings usually indicate a new or expanding company.
- Some job postings use the word “preferred” (degree preferred, two years’ experience preferred, etc.). This usually means you can apply if you do not have that particular skill or ability as long as you have the other qualifications.
- When sending a resume in response to a job posting, be sure you meet the minimum requirements. If the job posting says certification, license, degree, experience, etc. required, you might be wasting your time if you do not have those qualifications. If it says “no phone calls,” do not call.
- Red flag warnings on online job postings include unclear, unrealistic opportunities or missing information such as no contact info.

Exercise: Analyze Job Postings for Keywords and Information

1. Create two columns, one for **Roles and Responsibilities** and the other for **Specific Skills**
2. Research online job postings and select a job descriptions
3. When reviewing a job description, copy each word, phrase or sentence that is an exact match for your individual skill sets into the Specific Skills column
4. Use the vocabulary from the **Roles and Responsibilities** section of a job posting and record them in the Roles and Responsibilities column
5. Separately, document any useful information for networking or interviews. For example, salary ranges, company history, current events etc.

Roles and Responsibilities	Specific Skills

NOTES

Section 5: Market Yourself

In this section you will begin practicing the fourth principle of getting a job: Developing and delivering self-marketing messages that make it easy for hiring decision makers to recognize that you will add significant value to their organization.

Resume Quiz

Read each statement and indicate whether it is true or false		True	False
1.	The number one rule for writing a good resume is: more is better.		
2.	The best resume makes judicious use of "white space" to make it easier to read.		
3.	Regardless of your age, the work history component of your resume should list all jobs going back to high school.		
4.	An objective statement at the beginning of your resume is optional.		
5.	Your resume should not be longer than two pages.		
6.	A good resume is flexible enough to cover various job options within your professional field of interest.		
7.	A good resume paints a clear picture of you, including your height, weight, race, age, sex, marital status and number of children.		
8.	Employers like to see that you are interested in things other than just your job, so include volunteer work, continued education and association involvements.		
9.	All resumes should contain the complete names, addresses and telephone numbers of your references.		
10.	To help your resume stand out from the hundreds an employer may receive, you should make it as unusual as possible by using a bright color paper or including a picture of yourself.		
11.	It is a good idea to ask your close friends to read your resume and help you improve it.		

Read each statement and indicate whether it is true or false	True	False
12. If you send your resume to an employer in response to a job posting, you do not need to send a cover letter.		
13. A cover letter is primarily intended to repeat the most important points of your resume.		
14. It may take a lot of hard work, but a well-written resume will, by itself, get you the job you want.		
15. It is always better to spend the money to have a professional resume writing service write your resume.		

Writing a Resume

A resume is a document which shows all of your relevant skills and experiences, and allows an employer to quickly see how you can contribute to their workplace. In effect, a resume is your application for an interview. It is often the first line of contact and establishes the employer's first impression of you. If the resume is well-written, the employer should have a positive impression and may consider you to be a good "fit" for the position or company. The goal of an effective resume is to highlight and summarize your qualifications so the employer will want to reach out and schedule an interview.

A great resume does what all good marketing tools do: it convinces the consumer (the employer) that this product (you) is a "must-have." The product you are "selling" is you, and it is important when developing your marketing messages that you remember to speak to the specific needs of each potential employer. You must convince that employer that you have the skills, you can fit in to the organization, and you can make a positive impact/contribution to the organization.

A Master Resume

In Section 2 you wrote an Employment History Outline. It is time to turn that outline into a useable document: your master resume.

A master resume is a document that lists and completely describes all your work experience, accomplishments, and training -- all in one place. A master resume can be many pages long, and can list every single job, internship, and volunteer

position that you have ever had. You should also include all of your training, degrees, and certifications, as well as any awards you have earned.

A well-written master resume will be an all-in-one document which sums up the length and breadth of your career. It highlights your STAR statements for all the different types of work that you have done.

Writing a master resume can be time consuming, but it is worth the effort and time upfront because of the long-term return on your investment.

A well-written master resume will:

- Make it much easier to create targeted resumes to use when applying for specific jobs. If you use your master resume as a resource, you can just cut and paste STAR statements, add a few keywords—and you are on your way!
- Make it easier on your memory. It is hard to have to recreate your work history time and time again. Time passes and you may forget certain aspects of your work. If you have a master resume, you have your chronological work history and skills listed all in one place.
- Allow you to figure out effective ways to group your military "jobs" so as to best position yourself for a specific employer or opportunity. You may have had very diverse work experiences in the military, and creating a master resume lets you see underlying themes in your work experience. It can be much easier to write a combination or functional resume if you begin with a master resume.
- Allow you to AVOID writing a generic resume. Sometime writing a targeted resume is difficult—and you may decide to write a generic resume which is "one-size-fits-all." The problem with this approach is that you are leaving the employer to do the work of figuring out if you can and will fit in to the organization. If you have a well-written master resume, you will have done most of the work in advance, and you can cut, paste and then tailor your resume in order to produce a specific, targeted resume.

In this workshop, there is not enough time to fully develop your master resume. But, you have the tools and knowledge to start the process immediately. The targeted resume which you will write during this workshop can be incorporated into a master resume document, and you can add a few STAR statements each week. After a few months, you will have a substantial master resume! Remember, resumes are living documents, so you will need to continue to improve and add to it as you utilize new skills and have new jobs.

Resume Styles

There are three different styles you can use to organize the information on your resume

- Chronological
- Functional
- Combination

Most employers prefer to receive a **Chronological** resume—one that lists the jobs you have held (starting with your current or most recent position/ job, and then proceeding in reverse chronological order) and describes your experiences and accomplishments in each of those jobs.

Functional resumes allow you to group your skills and accomplishments into one or more categories (for example, technical expertise with a particular type of equipment, providing administrative services, developing or delivering training, and time spent as a supervisor).

A **Combination** resume incorporates features of both the Chronological and Functional formats.

Which is the best style for your resume? It is the one which best positions you for the job you are seeking.

Regardless of the style you have chosen you should create a **Targeted** version of your resume when applying for a specific position.

Style	Advantages	Disadvantages	Best used by
Chronological	-Widely used format -Logical flow, easy to read -Showcases growth in skills and responsibility -Easiest to prepare	-Emphasizes gaps in employment -Not suitable if you have no work history -Highlights frequent job changes -Emphasizes lack of related experience and career changes	-Individuals with steady work record
Functional	-Emphasizes skills rather than employment -Organizes a variety of experiences (paid and unpaid work, other activities) -Disguises gaps in work record or a series of short-term jobs	-Viewed with suspicion by employers due to lack of information about specific employers and dates	-Individuals who have developed skills from non-work experience and who may be changing careers -Individuals with no previous employment -Individuals with gaps in employment -Frequent job changers
Combination	-Highlights most relevant skills and accomplishments -De-emphasizes employment history in less relevant jobs -Combines skills developed in a variety of jobs or other activities -Minimizes drawbacks such as employment gaps and absence of directly related experience	-Confusing if not well organized -De-emphasizes job tasks, responsibilities -Requires more effort and creativity to prepare	-Career changers or those in transition -Individuals reentering the job market after some absence -Individuals who have grown in skills and responsibility -Individuals pursuing the same or similar work as they have had in the past
Targeted	-Can be any of the three resume formats -Easy to simply identify the position and company in the objective statement -Impresses a business person	-Can limit your exposure to other opportunities -Has to be developed for each job for which you are applying	-Candidates who have done their research -Candidates who know the job they want to pursue -Candidates who have identified companies to pursue

Sample Chronological Resume

Lynn Green

2345 Brook Avenue, Englewood, Ohio 12345
(123) 456-7890
Lynn.Green@email.com

OBJECTIVE: Position as an armed security guard for Pinkerton Services

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

A dedicated and experienced security professional who balances the necessity of protecting people and property with the need to maintain good relationships with customers and the public. Equally capable of working alone or as a member of a team, and comfortable exercising initiative and solving problems. Qualifications include:

- Top Secret Clearance
- Bilingual (English and Spanish)
- Leadership experience
- Adept at conflict resolution
- Tech Savvy
- Training skills

EXPERIENCE

Security Specialist, U.S. Marine Corps, 20XX-Present

- Supervised security for $100 million of highly sensitive equipment resulting in zero loss over a 3-year period.
- Implemented new system security plan that led to increased lockdown protection for incarcerated personnel.
- Provided leadership of 25 personnel ensuring a 30% decrease in staff turnover and a 10% increase in promotions.
- Expertly managed development of investigative reports. Awarded Supervisor of the Year for efficiency and accuracy of written instructions and documents.
- Efficiently managed a diverse workforce and inmate population resulting in a 10% decrease in inmate violence.

Warehouse Supervisor Micro Chemical, Inc., Akron, OH, 20XX-20XX

- Supervised a crew of 15 in daily operations, including evaluation and discipline resulting in a company record for productivity.
- Monitored complex cataloging and ordering systems by implementing a fast-track procurement system decreasing supply turnaround time by 20%.
- Security Guard, Mayfield Mall, Akron, OH, 20XX-20XXCoordinated work assignments for a four-member security team by boosting morale and encouraging an innovative and safe working environment.

EDUCATION

- US Marine Corps Security Specialist Training, 120 hours
- State College, 42 Semester Units in Administration of Justice, Akron, OH

Sample Functional Resume

Lynn Green

2345 Brook Avenue, Englewood, Ohio 12345
(123) 456-7890
Lynn.Green@email.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

A dedicated and experienced security professional who balances the necessity of protecting people and property with the need to maintain good relationships with customers and the public. Equally capable of working alone or as a member of a team, and comfortable exercising initiative and solving problems. Qualifications include:

- Top Secret Clearance
- Bilingual (English and Spanish)
- Leadership experience
- Adept at conflict resolution
- Tech Savvy
- Training skills

EXPERIENCE

Security

- Supervised security for $100 million of highly sensitive equipment resulting in zero loss in a 3-year period.
- Implemented new system security plan that led to increased lockdown protection for incarcerated personnel.

Investigation

- Investigated security and safety violations and wrote detailed incident reports. Led to Mayfield Mall being recognized as the "Safest Shopping Facility in the Midwest."
- Expertly managed development of investigative reports. Awarded Supervisor of the Year for efficiency and accuracy of written instructions and documents.

Communication

- Efficiently managed a diverse workforce and inmate population resulting in a 10% decrease in inmate violence.

Supervision

- Provided leadership, instruction and supervision of 25 personnel.
- Decreased staff turnover by 30% and increased staff promotions by 10%.

EDUCATION

- US Marine Corps Security Specialist Training, 120 hours
- State College, 42 Semester Units in Administration of Justice, Akron, OH

Sample Combination Resume

Lynn Green

2345 Brook Avenue, Englewood, Ohio 12345
(123) 456-7890
Lynn.Green@email.com

OBJECTIVE: Position as an armed security guard for Pinkerton Services

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

A dedicated and experienced security professional who balances the necessity of protecting people and property with the need to maintain good relationships with customers and the public. Equally capable of working alone or as a member of a team, and comfortable exercising initiative and solving problems. Qualifications include:

- Top Secret Clearance
- Bilingual (English and Spanish)
- Leadership experience
- Adept at conflict resolution
- Tech Savvy
- Training skills

EXPERIENCE

Security

- Supervised security for $100 million of highly sensitive equipment resulting in zero loss in a 3-year period.
- Implemented new system security plan that led to increased lockdown protection for incarcerated personnel.

Investigation

- Investigated security violations and wrote detailed incident reports, leading to Mayfield Mall's reputation as the "Safest Shopping Facility in the Midwest."
- Expertly managed development of investigative reports. Awarded Supervisor of the Year for efficiency and accuracy of written instructions and documents.

Communication

- Efficiently managed a diverse workforce and inmate population resulting in a 10% decrease in inmate violence.

Supervision

- Provided leadership of 25 personnel ensuring in a 30% decrease in staff turnover and a 10% increase in promotions.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- Security Specialist U.S. Marine Corps, 20XX-20XX
- Warehouseman Supervisor Micro Chemical, Inc., Akron, OH, 20XX-20XX
- Security Guard, Mayfield Mall, Akron, OH, 20XX-20XX

EDUCATION

- US Marine Corps Security Specialist Training, 120 hours
- State College, 42 Semester Units in Administration of Justice, Akron, OH

Resume Format

Employers often spend less than 30-seconds looking at your resume on the first pass. At this point, the employer is deciding whether to keep the resume in the "look again" pile or to put the resume in the "discard" pile. In order to pass the initial screening, you should ensure that your resume format is simple and visually appealing, and that an employer can quickly and easily read and process the information.

The commonly included sections of a resume are:

- Contact Information
- Career/Job Objective Statement
- Summary of Qualifications
- Work Experience/Accomplishments
- Education/Training

There may be times when it is appropriate to use to use other headings, such as "Technical Skills Summary" or "Awards."

Keep your resume formatting professional and simple:

- Length: 1-2 pages (ensure your name is on each page of the resume)
- Alignment: Left-aligned, except for heading
- White space is important: ensure that you have a clear margin (recommend one inch all around)
- Chose a simple font: Times New Roman, Cambria, Arial
- Use bold, italics and underlines sparingly
- Font Size: 10-12 point
- Proofread and spell check

Remember, your resume will "introduce" you to a potential employer. Be sure that your resume, which is your main marketing document, makes an excellent first impression!

Developing a Targeted Resume

A targeted resume focuses on a specific job opening, and highlights the skills and experiences relevant to a particular position. The targeted resume does the work for the employer: making it easy to see how your specific skills/qualifications are a match to the job's requirements.

In order to write a targeted resume, you must know what position, career field or company you are targeting, and then spend a bit of time analyzing the requirements of the job posting and researching the company. What are the key skills or key words that this company cares about? The goal of your targeted resume is to tell the employer that you match the exact skills and qualifications that they are seeking.

Note: If you invest the time over the next several weeks to develop a master resume with information about the jobs you have held and the skills and experience you have acquired, you may find that you can speed up the process of creating targeted resumes in the future by drawing information from the master resume and incorporating it into the targeted resume. See the Appendix for an example of a master resume for Michael Cook and the targeted resume he created by referring to his master resume.

Contact Information

- Located at the top of the resume, but not in the header
- Be sure to include at least your name on each page of the resume (follow the specific instructions if provided by employer)

Janis Jenkins

123 Pearl Street

Rockville, Maryland 12345

(301)555-1111

Janis.Jenkins@email.com

<u>or</u>

Janis Jenkins

123 Pearl Street • Rockville, Maryland • 12345

(301) 555-1111 Janis.Jenkins@email.com

Activity: Complete the **Contact Information** section of your Targeted Resume worksheet located in the Appendix.

Career/Job Objective Statement

An objective statement may be the second section of a resume. It is most often used when you are targeting a specific job, occupation, career field, or company and wish to let an employer you are doing so.

Since you need a different resume for each opening, you will need to change the job objective and especially the specific company for each resume. Be sure that you know the actual title of the job when you apply. Make the objective short and to the point.

When applying online in response to a particular position, or preparing a general purpose resume, you may *not* need an objective statement on your resume.

Examples of clearly written targeted career objective statements:

- Seeking a position as an armed security guard for Pinkerton Services.
- Seeking a position as a Licensed Vocational Nurse for St. Mary's Hospital.
- Position as a Teacher for Brighton Elementary School.

If done correctly, the rest of the resume should speak directly to the qualifications and benefits inside the objective statement.

Activity: Complete the **Objective** section of your Targeted Resume worksheet located in the Appendix as you are targeting a specific job or occupation.

Summary of Qualifications

A section titled Summary, Professional Summary, Executive Summary, Experience Summary, etc. is used to highlight key words and your relevant technical and soft skills, your experience, and your successes. Your summary can combine a short introductory paragraph and a brief list of skills.

Example #1: Executive Summary for a Project Manager

Accomplished project manager (PMP Certified) with a proven ability to develop and implement strategies supporting business and financial objectives. Respected leader, able to build highly motivated teams focused on achieving goals. Key skills include:

- Management
- Microsoft Project
- User analysis
- Process Improvement
- Negotiation
- Building client relationships

Example #2: Professional Summary for a Law Enforcement Professional

Law enforcement professional with a degree in criminal justice and over 15 years' experience in international and homeland security. Key skills:

- Patrol procedures
- Search and rescue
- Surveillance
- Testifying in court
- Conducting investigations
- Interrogation

Activity: Complete the **Summary of Qualifications** section of your Targeted Resume worksheet located in the Appendix.

Experience/Accomplishments

The experience section of the resume provides the details of your professional experience. This is a section of the resume where you need to use company information and key words that relate directly to the position and/or company.

This section should:

- List your results and/or achievements from each job you have held that relate to the position or occupation you are targeting
- Use time, numbers, financial savings, percentages, statistics, and examples to illustrate your achievements in STAR statements
- Make sure that progression is visible in your current work history; do this by making any promotions stand out in your resume

One of the critical aspects in the resume writing process is to integrate keywords into your accomplishment statements. Each accomplishment statement should trigger a response from the hiring manager. The goal is to provide engaging details in order to make sure that your accomplishment statements are compelling. Be sure to review them with a knowledgeable resource. Do they want to know more? Does it sound interesting or important?

As you describe your experience and accomplishments:

- Refer to the Transferrable Skills Inventory you began yesterday and think of specific times you used your various skills
- Select the skills related to the job you are targeting
- Highlight your major accomplishments and achievements that relate to the job
- Answer the question: "What skills do you offer?"
- Use civilian terms and avoid acronyms
- Begin with an action verb or dynamic adjective
- Avoid use of "Responsible for"
- Write in past tense for all previous jobs
- Avoid use of personal pronouns (I, we, her or him)

Examples of Accomplishment Statements Using the STAR Method:

Situation: The context or scenario, can be implied for some statements

Task: What was being done?

Action: Demonstrable skill utilized

Result: Measurable impact on situation or task

These sample accomplishment statements are provided as examples only. You must craft your own accomplishment statements to reflect your actual work experience as appropriate for each of your targeted resumes. The most effective statements are those that are both targeted and results-oriented. Not every statement needs to be a STAR statement, but the majority should follow the STAR method.

FACILITIES

- Designed and maintained fiscal data and internal information files improving accuracy in retrieving files by 99%. Awarded the Army Commendation Medal.
- Coordinated with multiple officials for aircraft over-flight, landing and maritime visits with zero safety violations

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

- Conducted quality assurance of maintenance work performed increasing production by 26%
- Determined the number of mechanics needed and spare parts required to maintain equipment in safe operating order 100% of the time
- Reviewed 45 vehicles' service needs, scheduled maintenance and mechanics resulting in zero loss in operations down-time

TRAVEL

- Determined efficient routes, confirmed arrival dates, and verified cargo types resulting in a 20% increase in on-time arrivals
- Ensured vehicles are properly loaded, meeting required safety standards 100% of the time
- Checked engine oil, fuel, fluid levels and tire pressure for a 100% vehicle safety inspection-pass rate

MACHINERY TECHNICIAN

- Operated, maintained, and repaired internal combustion engines, boilers and main propulsion power transmission equipment with zero operational complaints
- Performed functions such as inventory, ordering supplies and completing required reports on time, every time

AIRCRAFT/POWERPLANT

- Assisted in the maintenance and movement of aircraft and support equipment saving over $1 million in a five-year period, earning the Air Force Achievement Medal
- Operated sophisticated aircraft communication radar equipment and hoist lifts with 95% safety record

PERSONNEL

- Organized, maintained, retrieved and reviewed 75 automated personnel records including pay documents to improve record accuracy by 20%
- Prepared and provided current information about personnel programs and procedures to employees and administrators decreasing personnel complaints/issues by 30%
- Supported personnel in records maintenance and benefits counseling for 40 embassy officials consistently operating under the $1.2 million budget

ENGINEER

- Conducted job analysis, provided suggestions for improvement, saving the company $300,000 over a 2-year period and saving 5 man-hours each week
- Directed daily operations for a large engineering department including supervision of 4 administrative personnel receiving department award for internal customer service
- Directed design, installation and testing of equipment ensuring satisfactory and timely completion of tasks on time and on budget

MEDICAL

- Organized and led emergency response drills for 25 personnel, decreasing response time by 7 minutes, and awarded most efficient and timely response team
- Ordered diagnostic X-ray and laboratory procedures, wrote patient consultations to specialty clinics, prescribed courses of treatment and medication to a client base of 3,500. Consistently recognized by clients for outstanding customer service.
- Taught and trained medical technicians, and performed as a medical supervisor for designated units of up to 125 personnel. Rated 4.8 on a 5.0 scale by peers.

SECURITY

- Led law enforcement activities including physical security, arrest procedures and criminal investigations reducing community crime and incident rates by 10%
- Planned, coordinated, directed and updated law enforcement procedures for assigned jurisdiction of 220 personnel saving over 180 man-hours annually
- Directed and supervised the administration and operation of correctional facilities and hospital prisoner wards for a large military installation recognized as “excellent” by Correctional Review Board

ADMINISTRATION

- Prepared data processing plans and budgets for an organization of 150 personnel with 98% accuracy
- Designed and maintained computer software and databases; translated specific objectives and needs into computer systems requirements improving efficiency by 12%
- Planned and supervised the installation of new office equipment, surpassing previously set efficiency record by 30%

Action verbs to describe accomplishments

The following verbs can be used to help you describe your skills and experience

Accomplished	Demonstrated	Informed
Activated	Designed	Initiated
Adapted	Developed	Inspected
Adjusted	Devised	Inspired
Administered	Directed	Installed
Advertised	Distributed	Integrated
Advised	Drafted	Interviewed
Analyzed	Edited	Invented
Arranged	Educated	Investigated
Assembled	Enlarged	Launched
Assisted	Established	Managed
Authored	Evaluated	Maintained
Calculated	Examined	Marketed
Catalogued	Exceeded	Maximized
Changed	Executed	Mentored
Coached	Expanded	Modified
Collaborated	Expedited	Monitored
Compiled	Facilitated	Motivated
Completed	Familiarized	Negotiated
Conceptualized	Formulated	Obtained
Conducted	Generated	Organized
Constructed	Guided	Performed
Consulted	Hired	Prepared
Contracted	Identified	Presented
Coordinated	Illustrated	Presided
Created	Implemented	Processed
Defined	Improved	Programmed
Delegated	Increased	Promoted

Proposed	Supervised
Publicized	Surveyed
Recruited	Synthesized
Revised	Trained
Skilled	Unparalleled
Specified	Wrote

Activity: Complete the **Accomplishments Statements** section of your Targeted Resume worksheet located in the Appendix. Be sure to refer to the STAR statements you wrote in Section 2.

Education and Training

The following are general guidelines:

1. List most recent first.
2. If you have not yet graduated, to prevent an employer from assuming that you have a degree use the word "Attended" and indicate the number of credit hours completed, or provide an expected graduation date (month and year or just the year).
3. Certifications should have the year certified or renewed (if relevant), discard irrelevant certifications. Do not list CPR unless it is used in the job.
4. List special honors you achieved such as: graduated Cum Laude, With Honors, or list your grade point average (GPA) if it is requested, recent, and above a 3.5.
5. Include licenses, course work, and military schools relevant to the job.
6. Include all degrees achieved beyond high school, highest to lowest.
7. List locations of colleges and universities, but it is not necessary to include dates attended.

Example of Education and Training

- Bachelor of Science, Health Care Management (Cum Laude), Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois
- Missouri State, Springfield, Missouri: 42 semester units in Administration of Justice
- U.S. Marine Corps: Specialized training in leadership, diversity, and communication

Activity: Complete the **Education and Training** section of your Targeted Resume worksheet located in the Appendix.

Translating military terminology into civilian terms

One of the easiest ways to help employers understand your military experience is to substitute civilian equivalents for military terms, titles, ranks and acronyms in cover letters, resumes, and conversations. Here are some examples and ideas for accomplishing this.

Terms and acronyms

Military:		Possible Civilian Titles:
NCOIC, Watch Captain, Petty Officer of the Watch	→	Supervisor, Manager, Coordinator
Commander, Chief	→	Division Head, Director, Senior Manager
Executive Officer (XO)	→	Deputy Director, Assistant Manager
Action Officer (AO)	→	Analyst (or Senior Analyst if applicable)
TDY/TAD	→	business travel
PCS	→	relocation
OER/NCOER	→	performance appraisal
MOS/MOC	→	career field
Commanded	→	supervised, directed
Battalion, Unit, Platoon	→	organization, agency, department
Mission	→	responsibility, task, objective, job
Combat/War	→	hazardous conditions, conflict
Headquarters	→	headquarters, corporate office
Subordinates	→	employees, co-workers
Service members	→	employees, co-workers, colleagues, personnel, individuals
Military Personnel Office (MILPO) Personnel Action Center (PAC)	→	personnel office
Regulations	→	guidance, policy, instructions
Reconnaissance	→	data collection, survey, analysis
TDA/MTOE	→	organizational structure, material resources, manpower

Additional Tips

Awards:

Veterans might have a laundry list of military awards/medals, and that is a positive thing. However, do not fill the resume with a laundry list. Simply mention the appropriate awards for outstanding job performance. If there is something critical to mention about a certain award, then elaborate on that particular award. List the *reason* for the award, not just the award or medal received.

Job Titles:

Do not get caught up in military titles (Captain, Major, Sergeant). Focus more on communicating the functional area of the job title (Communications Technician, Emergency Medical Technician, and Nurse). Here are some common translations that may be helpful:

Senior Field Grade Officer (O5-O7)	→	Chief Executing Officer (CEO), Director Chief Operating Officer (COO), Deputy Chief Administrator
Field Grade Officer (O4)	→	Executive Officer, Deputy Director, Assistant to the Director, Operations Manager
Company Grade Officer (O1-O3)	→	Operations Officer, Program Administrator Supervisor
Warrant Officer	→	Technical Manager/Specialist/Department Manager
Senior NCOs	→	First-Line Supervisor
Sergeant Major	→	Senior Advisor
First Sergeant	→	Personnel Supervisor
Squad Leader	→	Team Leader/Team Chief
Supply Sergeant	→	Supply Manager/Logistics Manager
Operations NCO	→	Operations Supervisor
Platoon Sergeant	→	Supervisor/ Instructor/Trainer

Military Schools

Make your classroom achievements easy to understand. Feel free to edit course titles for clarity's sake. Here are some common examples:

Basic Training →	Basic Skills Course
Advanced Individual Training (AIT) →	Advanced Skills Course (mention career field)
Warrior Leader Course (WLC) →	Basic Leadership Development Course
Advanced Leader Course (ALC) →	Advanced Leadership and Management Development Course
Senior Leader Course (SLC) →	Senior-level Leadership, Technical and Management Development Course
Officer Career Course →	Junior Officer Training Course
Combined Arms Staff College →	Senior Managerial Leadership School
Command and Staff College →	Senior Leaders Program
War College →	Executive Leadership School

Remember, it is not necessary to list all the training completed, just the most recent and relevant courses.

Update your ITP

In Section IV: Employment, update the subsection labeled **Provide employment history (military and/or civilian) for the last three positions you held.**

Cover Letters

A cover letter introduces you and convinces the employer how well your skills, abilities and attributes match the organization's needs.

In the same way that the professional introduction that you developed earlier makes an employer want to hear more about you, your cover letter should motivate an employer to read your resume. A cover letter can, in fact, include some of the same information as your professional introduction.

Cover letters should:

- Normally should be no more than one page long.
- Be customized for each position or employer you are targeting. Be relevant.
- Not repeat information in your resume.
- Utilize a professional letter format.

Template for Cover Letter

Your Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Date of Letter

Employer's Name
Employer's Title
Company Name
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear *[Employer's Name]:*

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH: You want to tell the reader why you are writing and name the position or department for which you are applying. You also want to capture the reader's attention. Mention how you heard about the organization or the opening. Name someone you and the reader know in common or someone in the company that knows you. Show you have done some research on the company by talking about new projects the company has taken on, the particular management philosophy they use, or citing something you have read about them.

BODY: In this section you want to build a connection between your background and the company's needs. If you have any directly related experience or education, summarize it here so the reader can be looking for it in your resume. If you have relevant skills or accomplishments related to the job, mention them here. You are effectively summarizing your skills as they relate to the company research you have done. Be sure to do this in a confident manner.

CONCLUDING INFORMATION: Indicate your interest in the job. State you look forward to being able to discuss your background in an interview. Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature

Your Name Typed

(101) 555-1234

Sample Cover Letter

10 Emerson Drive
Augusta, ME XXXXX

July 12, 20XX

Ms. Mary O'Hara
Personnel Director
Accounting Software International
5678 East Doral Street, Suite #1200
Lockridge, Tennessee 77777

Dear Ms. O'Hara,

I am drawn to Accounting Software International because of my interest in accounting software and the opportunity to use my skill sets in a more specialized career. I am applying to your ad posted on SimplyHired on July 8, 20XX for your Accounting Software Business Consultant position.

Mr. D.L. Brown is an acquaintance of mine who works in the sales department of your company. He has described a culture of customer commitment throughout your organization that aligns perfectly with the conviction I have that the most reliable route to success – for a company or an individual – is to focus on making clients more successful. With over 12 years showing clients how to improve their operations and their bottom line by utilizing all of the features and capabilities of accounting software programs, I am confident that I will be a valuable addition to your team.

I look forward to hearing from you to discuss this opportunity. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James Donaldson

(555) 555-5555

Identify and prepare your professional references

References are an important part of the job search process. You will need to identify people who respect you. Select the people you get along with best; or with whom you have had a successful working relationship. It is recommended that job seekers have four to six professional references ready to provide to the employer. These references should be rotated. Be careful not to overuse any one person. Most employers will ask for three references.

In addition, you should identify at least three personal references: These are friends or non-professional acquaintances who can speak to your character as a person.

Get permission to use someone as a reference

By talking to your potential references ahead of time, you are able to request their permission and ask them what they would say about you. It allows you to discuss your job goals and how your experiences qualify you for the position, as well as gathering updated contact information.

In addition, send a copy of your resume to your references so that they are aware of what information the potential employer has and will be able to intelligently discuss various aspects of your professional experience.

Contact Information

Ensure that you have an updated cell phone number and a professional email address the employer may use to contact them. Ask your references what time of day they prefer to be contacted and at which number.

Even though you are prepared with your references when you walk into the interview, wait until asked before providing them. Handing references to an interviewer too early in the process can inadvertently communicate an overbearing level of confidence, or lack thereof, and either of these misconceptions you want to avoid.

Brainstorm your references

Brainstorm people who might be able to provide a professional or personal reference for you. In the space below, record their names, title or position, the organization they belong to, and their phone/email information.

Professional References

Name #1:

Title/Position:

Organization:

Phone/Email:

Name #2:

Title/Position:

Organization:

Phone/Email:

Name #3:

Title/Position:

Organization:

Phone/Email:

Personal References

Name #1:

Title/Position:

Organization:

Phone/Email:

Name #2:

Title/Position:

Organization:

Phone/Email:

Name #3:

Title/Position:

Organization:

Phone/Email:

Update your ITP

In Section IV: Employment, update the subsections labeled

- Identify at least 3 professional references
- Identify at least 3 personal references

Sample Reference List

Michael Cook
135 Oak Street, Eastport, MD 21111
Phone: (301) 555-5555 Email: mnacook751@gmail.com

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Captain John Smith, U.S. Army

Building 125, Screaming Eagle Boulevard

Fort Campbell, KY 42223

US Army

Fort Campbell, KY

(270) 123-4567

john.l.smith@us.army.mil

Sergeant Jason McMurphey, U.S. Army

11 Market Street

Fort Drum, NY 13602

315-555-1212

jason.mcmurphey@us.army.mil

Jane Mitchell, Manager

6-12 Convenience Store

987 Main Street

East Port, MD 21403

301-987-6543

jmitchell@6to12.com

NOTES

Section 6: Federal Hiring

NOTE: As Federal employment can be complicated due to the various rules and regulations that must be adhered to, this section is designed to be a broad overview of the Federal Employment Process.

For those that wish to pursue a career with the Federal Government, we have collaborated with the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to offer a separate on-line training module, *Continuing Your Service through Federal Employment*, which will provide more information.

This self-paced learning program is available at **http://jko.jten.mil/courses/tap/TGPS%20Standalone%20Training/start.html**

You and your family members can also access the program via the FedsHireVets.gov website at **http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/edu/training/Continuing/menu.htm** and the Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and training Service (DOL VETS) Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Information page at **http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/tap.htm** . When you navigate to this page, click on the **Access the TAP Virtual Curriculum** button in the middle of the page.

Let's begin!

Federal Hiring, Federal Resumes and Federal Programs

Federal jobs offer stability unmatched by most private companies. Veterans are particularly valued by many government agencies due to their transferable skills. To better promote and facilitate hiring of Veterans into the federal workforce, the Veterans Employment Initiative established Veteran Employment Program Offices at federal agencies and created the Feds Hire Vets website. This Initiative will be covered later in this section

This section will provide you with knowledge about the following topics:

- Federal Civil Service
  - Competitive Service
  - Excepted Service
  - Senior Executive Service

- Veterans' Preference
- Special Hiring Authorities for Veterans
- Job Classification
- Veterans Employment Initiative
- Finding Jobs
- Understanding the Vacancy Announcement
- Application Procedures
- Federal Resume Writing Tips
- Federal Interviews
- Getting the Offer

Federal Civil Service
The Federal Civil Service is comprised of three distinct services:

- Competitive Service
- Excepted Service
- Senior Executive Service

Competitive Service
Competitive service jobs are under OPM's jurisdiction and subject to the civil service laws passed by Congress to ensure that applicants and employees receive fair and equal treatment in the hiring process. These laws give selecting officials broad authority to review more than one applicant source before determining the best-qualified candidate based on job-related criteria. A basic principle of federal employment is that all candidates must meet the qualification requirements for the position for which they receive an appointment. Competitive Service positions are by far, the vast majority of jobs in the Federal Civil Service.

Note: Veterans' preference applies to these federal job openings.

Excepted Service
Excepted service positions are excepted by law, by executive order, or by action of OPM placing a position or group of positions in excepted service Schedules A, B, or C. For example, certain entire agencies such as the Postal Service and the Central Intelligence Agency are excepted by law. In other cases, certain jobs or classes of jobs in an agency are excepted by OPM. This includes positions such as attorneys, chaplains, student trainees, and others.

NOTE: The excepted service is subject to the provisions of Veterans' preference unless otherwise exempted. Some Federal agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) have only *excepted service* positions. In other instances, certain organizations within an agency or even specific jobs may be excepted from civil service procedures.

Senior Executive Service (SES)
SES positions include positions classified above GS-15 that include duties involving one or more of the functional criteria (executive or managerial) identified in law. Veterans' preference does not apply

Applicants for SES positions will need to describe their Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs). These five qualifications, necessary for effective performance in any SES position, are Leading Change, Leading People, Results Driven, Business Acumen, and Building Coalitions.

The Guide to Senior Executive Service Qualifications, available at **https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/senior-executive-service/reference-materials/guidesesservices.pdf** provides detailed information about the ECQs and examples of how they can be described in a resume or an accomplishment record

An Executive Resources Board (ERB), a panel appointed by the head of each Federal agency, reviews the executive qualifications of each eligible candidate and makes recommendations about the candidates to an appointing official.

Before a candidate who is tentatively selected for an SES positon can be appointed, a Qualifications Review Board (QRB) administered by the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) must review and certify a candidate's Executive Core Qualifications.

Veterans' Preference

Veterans' preference gives eligible Veterans' preference in appointment over many other applicants. Veterans' preference applies, to virtually all new appointments in both the competitive and excepted service. Veterans' preference does not guarantee Veterans a job and it does not apply to internal agency actions such as promotions, transfers, reassignments and reinstatements.

Veterans' preference can be confusing. The law followed in Federal civilian employment can be found in Title 5, United States Code, Section 2108 (5 USC 2108). Veterans' preference eligibility is based on dates of active duty service, receipt of a campaign badge, Purple Heart, or a service-connected disability. Not

all Veterans are considered Veterans for the purpose of federal civilian employment, and not all active duty service is qualifying for Veterans' preference.

Only Veterans discharged or released from active duty in the armed forces under honorable conditions are eligible for Veterans' preference. This means you must have been discharged under an honorable or general discharge.

If you are a "retired member of the armed forces" you are not included in the definition of preference eligible unless you are a disabled Veteran OR you retired below the rank of major or its equivalent (O-4).

There are basically three types of preference eligibles, disabled (10 point preference eligible), non-disabled (5 point preference eligible) and sole survivorship preference (0 point preference eligible).

You are a 0-point Preference eligible - no points are added to the passing score or rating of a veteran who is the only surviving child in a family in which the father or mother or one or more siblings:

1. Served in the armed forces, and

2.Was killed, died as a result of wounds, accident, or disease, is in a captured or missing in action status, or is permanently 100 percent disabled or hospitalized on a continuing basis (and is not employed gainfully because of the disability or hospitalization), where

3. The death, status, or disability did not result from the intentional misconduct or willful neglect of the parent or sibling and was not incurred during a period of unauthorized absence.

You are a 5 point preference eligible if your active duty service meets any of the following:

1. For more than 180 consecutive days, other than for training, any part of which occurred during the period beginning September 11, 2001, and ending on August 31, 2010, the last day of Operation Iraqi Freedom, OR
2. Between August 2, 1990 and January 2, 1992, OR
3. For more than 180 consecutive days, other than for training, any part of which occurred after January 31, 1955 and before October 15, 1976.
4. In a war, campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized or between April 28, 1952 and July 1, 1955.

You are a 10 point preference eligible if you served at any time, and you:

1. have a service connected disability, OR
2. received a Purple Heart.

Now that we have discussed your preference eligibility and the associated points, let's discuss preference groups. Preference eligibles are divided into five basic groups as follows:

- CPS - Disability rating of 30% or more (10 points)
- CP - Disability rating of at least 10% but less than 30% (10 points)
- XP - Disability rating less than 10% (10 points)
- TP - Preference eligibles with no disability rating (5 points)
- SSP – Sole Survivorship Preference (0 points)

NOTE: Disabled Veterans receive 10 points regardless of their disability rating. When agencies use a numerical rating and ranking system to determine the best qualified applicants for a position, an additional 5 or 10 points are added to the numerical score of qualified preference eligible Veterans.

When an agency does not use a numerical rating system, preference eligibles who have a compensable service-connected disability of 10 percent or more (CPS, CP) are placed at the top of the highest category on the referral list (except for scientific or professional positions at the GS-9 level or higher). XP and TP preference eligibles are placed above non-preference eligibles within their assigned category.

You must provide acceptable documentation of your preference or appointment eligibility. Acceptable documentation may be:

- The member 4 copy of your DD214, "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty," is preferable.
- A "certification" that is a written document from the armed forces that certifies the service member is expected to be discharged or released from active duty service in the armed forces under honorable conditions not later than 120 days after the date the certification is signed.

If claiming 10 point preference, you will need to submit a Standard Form (SF-15) "Application for 10-point Veterans' Preference."

Rating and Ranking Applicants in the Competitive Service

Applicants for competitive service positions (the majority of Federal jobs) are rated and ranked using a category ranking system.

Names of all eligible candidates in the highest quality category are referred on the Certificate of Eligibles to the selecting official for consideration.

- Selecting official selects from among candidates in highest quality category
- Preference eligibles are listed ahead of non-preference eligibles within each quality category
- Absolute Veterans' preference is within each quality category

Qualified preference eligibles with a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more (CPS) and those with a compensable service-connected disability of more than 10% but less than 30% (CP) are placed at the top of the highest quality category (excluding scientific or professional positions at GS-9 level or higher).

For scientific and professional positions at the GS-9 or higher, place qualified CPS and CP preference eligibles above non-preference eligibles within the same quality category for which they are assessed (CPS and CP eligibles do not "float" to the highest quality category).

To determine candidates' placement in a quality category, qualified applicants are still evaluated and relatively ranked based on the KSAs and competencies identified for the position through a job analysis. The rating method takes into account their relative possession of job-related experience, education, training, special projects or accomplishments and other job-related behavioral evidence. Based on this assessment, candidates are placed into one of two or more quality categories that are defined by the agency.

Although Veterans' preference applies under category rating, preference eligibles do not get additional points added to their score.

Selection must be made from the highest quality category in which three or more candidates exist. Within a quality category, a Veterans' preference eligible cannot be passed over to select a non-preference eligible unless an objection is sustained. If there are fewer than 3 candidates in the highest category, the selecting official may ask to combine it with the next lower category. In this case, any preference eligibles in the lower category would move to the top of the combined category.

Note that category-based rating procedures still preserve and protect the rights of Veterans when filling jobs through open competitive examining methods (all U.S. citizens may apply) by incorporating rules for giving them significant special priority in referral and selection as described above.

EXAMPLE OF A CATEGORY-BASED REFERRAL SELECTION CERTIFICATE:

Example: HR Specialist, Series 201, Grade 11

- Three quality categories (Highest-Qualified, Well-Qualified, Qualified) were established for the position.
- Applicants who meet basic qualification requirements established for the position and whose job-related competencies or Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) have been assessed are ranked by being placed in one of the three quality categories.
- A preference eligible with 5-point preference (TP) who meets the requirements for the Well-Qualified category is identified and is placed at the top of the Well-Qualified category.
- A preference eligible with a service-connected disability of 30% (CPS) who meets the requirements for the Qualified category is identified. Because of the series and grade in this example, the qualified preference eligible must be placed at the top of the Highest-Qualified category.

NOTE: An agency may not select a non-preference eligible if there is a preference eligible in the same category unless the agency receives approval to pass over the preference eligible.

Eligibles Ranked by Quality Category Based on Review of Qualifications & Assessment Tool(s)	**Identify Preference Eligibles**	**Apply Veterans' Preference for Certificate of Eligibles**
Highest-Qualified Ben Franklin Thomas Jefferson	**Highest-Qualified** Ben Franklin Thomas Jefferson	**Highest-Qualified** Cameron Rules (CPS) Ben Franklin Thomas Jefferson
Well-Qualified Joyce Rogers George Washington	**Well-Qualified** Joyce Rogers George Washington (TP)	**Well-Qualified** George Washington (TP) Joyce Rogers
Qualified Preston Foster Cameron Rules	**Qualified** Preston Foster Cameron Rules (CPS)	**Qualified** Preston Foster

A Note on Rating and Ranking in the Excepted Service
Each agency establishes definite rules regarding the acceptance of applications for employment in positions covered under the excepted service and applies those rules uniformly to all applicants.

Special Hiring Authorities for Veterans

Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA)
Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA) is an excepted authority that allows agencies, to appoint eligible Veterans without competition. If you:

- are in receipt of a campaign badge for service during a war or in a campaign or expedition; OR
- are a disabled Veteran, OR
- are in receipt of an Armed Forces Service Medal for participation in a military operation, OR
- are a recently separated Veteran (within the last 3 years), AND
- separated under honorable conditions (this means an honorable or general discharge), you are VRA eligible.

You can be appointed under this authority at any grade level up to and including a GS-11 or equivalent. This is an excepted service appointment. After successfully completing 2 years, you will be converted to the competitive service. Veterans' preference applies when using the VRA authority.

Agencies can also use VRA to fill temporary (not to exceed 1 year) or term (more than 1 year but not to exceed 4 years) positions. If you are employed in a temporary or term position under VRA, you will not be converted to the competitive service after 2 years.

There is no limit to the number of times you can apply under VRA.

You must provide acceptable documentation of your preference or appointment eligibility. The member 4 copy of your DD214, "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty," is preferable. If claiming 10 point preference, you will need to submit a Standard Form (SF-15), "Application for 10-point Veterans' Preference."

Veterans Employment Opportunity Act (VEOA)
The VEOA is a competitive service appointing authority that can only be used when filling permanent, competitive service positions. It cannot be used to fill excepted service positions. It allows Veterans to apply to announcements that are

only open to so called "status" candidates, which means "current competitive service employees."

To be eligible for a VEOA appointment, your latest discharge must be issued under honorable conditions (this means an honorable or general discharge), AND you must be either:

- a preference eligible (defined in title 5 U.S.C. 2108(3)), OR
- a Veteran who substantially completed 3 or more years of active service.

When agencies recruit from outside their own workforce under merit promotion (internal) procedures, announcements must state VEOA is applicable. As a VEOA eligible you are not subject to geographic area of consideration limitations. When applying under VEOA, you must rate and rank among the best qualified when compared to current employee applicants in order to be considered for appointment. Veterans' preference does not apply to internal agency actions such as promotions, transfers, reassignments and reinstatements.

Current or former federal employees meeting VEOA eligibility can apply. However, current employees applying under VEOA are subject to time-in-grade restrictions like any other General Schedule employee.

"Active Service" under VEOA means active duty in a uniformed service and includes full- time training duty, annual training duty, full-time National Guard duty, and attendance, while in the active service, at a school designated as a service school by law or by the Secretary concerned.

"Preference eligible" under VEOA includes those family members entitled to derived preference.

NOTE: If you want to find out more about derived preference in federal employment, the online Transition GPS course includes a module on federal hiring. This self-paced learning program is available at **http://jko.jten.mil/courses/tap/TGPS%20Standalone%20Training/start.html**

You and your family members can also access training module via the FedsHireVets.gov website at **http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/edu/training/Continuing/menu.htm** and the Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL VETS) Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Information page at **http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/tap.htm** . When you navigate to this page, click on the **Access the TAP Virtual Curriculum** button in the middle of the page.

You must provide acceptable documentation of your preference or appointment eligibility. The member 4 copy of your DD214, “Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty,” is preferable. If claiming 10 point preference, you will need to submit a Standard Form (SF-15), “Application for 10-point Veterans’ Preference.”

30% or More Disabled Veteran Appointment

30% or More Disabled Veteran allows any Veteran with a 30% or more service-connected disability to be non-competitively appointed.

You are eligible if you:

- retired from active military service with a service-connected disability rating of 30% or more; OR
- have a rating by the Department of Veteran Affairs showing a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more.

This authority can be used to make permanent, temporary (not to exceed 1 year) or term (more than 1 year, but not more than 4) appointments in the competitive service. There is no grade level restriction.

When using this authority to appoint on a permanent basis, you are first placed on a time limited appointment of at least 60 days and then converted to a permanent appointment at management's discretion. When the authority is used for temporary or term appointments, you will not be converted to a permanent appointment. You must provide acceptable documentation of your preference or appointment eligibility. The member 4 copy of your DD214, “Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty,” is preferable. If claiming 10 point preference, you will need to submit a Standard Form (SF-15), “Application for 10-point Veterans’ Preference.”

Disabled Veterans Enrolled in a VA Training Program

Disabled Veterans eligible for training under the VA vocational rehabilitation program may enroll for training or work experience at an agency under the terms of an agreement between the agency and VA. While enrolled in the VA program, the Veteran is not a federal employee for most purposes but is a beneficiary of the VA.

Training is tailored to the individual's needs and goals, so there is no set length. If the training is intended to prepare the individual for eventual appointment in the agency rather than just provide work experience, the agency must ensure that the training will enable the Veteran to meet the qualification requirements for the position.

Upon successful completion, the host agency and VA give the Veteran a Certificate of Training showing the occupational series and grade level of the position for which trained. The Certificate of Training allows any agency to appoint the Veteran noncompetitively under a status quo appointment which may be converted to career or career-conditional at any time.

Schedule A - Appointing Authority for People with Disabilities

Though not specifically for Veterans, the Schedule A authority for people with disabilities, is an excepted authority that agencies can use to appoint eligible Veterans who have a severe physical, psychological, or intellectual disability. Veterans' preference applies when agencies hire individuals under this authority.

If claiming veterans' preference you must provide acceptable documentation of your preference or appointment eligibility. The member 4 copy of your DD214, "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty," is preferable. If eligible to claim10 point preference, you will need to submit a Standard Form (SF-15), "Application for 10-point Veterans' Preference."

To be eligible for the Schedule A Appointing Authority for People with Disabilities you must:

Show eligibility for the appointing authority and proof of your disability. Documentation may be from any licensed medical professional (e.g., a physician or other medical professional certified by a state, the District of Columbia, or a US territory to practice medicine), a licensed vocational rehabilitation specialist (i.e., State or private), or any federal or state agency, or agency of the District of Columbia or a US territory that issues or provides disability benefits. Your medical documentation should distinguish between disabilities that are temporary, or transient, versus disabilities, which are chronic, permanent, on-going, or unresolved with no end in sight.

The above documentation may be combined in one letter or you can provide it in separate letters.

Sample Schedule A letters can be found on the OPM's website:
https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/disability-employment/getting-a-job/sampleschedaletters.pdf

Agencies use this authority, at their discretion, to appoint individuals at any grade level and for any job (time-limited or permanent) for which they qualify. Veterans' preference applies when agencies hire individuals under this authority. After two years of satisfactory service, the agency may convert the individual, without competition, to the competitive service.

There is no limit to the number of times you can apply under this authority.

OPM encourages job-seeking Veterans to ask for consideration under as many hiring authorities as they are eligible, in addition to claiming their preference under the competitive examining process (if applicable).

NOTE: The US Office of Personnel Management has created a one-stop resource for federal employment information for Veterans. **www.fedshirevets.gov**

This site will be your most valuable resource in learning about special hiring authorities specifically, and overall Federal employment for Veterans.

Job Classifications within the Federal Government

Wage Grade (WG 1-15)

- Hourly employees
- Considered blue-collared jobs
- Positions come with benefits

General Schedule (1-15)

- Salaried positions with benefits
- Considered White Collar Jobs
- Positions have grades 1-15

Education and Experience Requirement for Administrative and Management Positions:

GRADE	EDUCATION	GENERAL EXPERIENCE	SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE
GS-5	4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree	3 years, 1 year of which was equivalent to at least GS-4	None
GS-7	1 full year of graduate level education *or* superior academic achievement	None	1 year equivalent to at least GS-5
GS-9	Master's or equivalent graduate degree *or* 2 full years of progressively higher level graduate education leading to such a degree *or* LL.B. or J.D., if related	None	1 year equivalent to at least GS-7

GRADE	EDUCATION	GENERAL EXPERIENCE	SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE
GS-11	Ph.D. or equivalent doctoral degree *or* 3 full years of progressively higher level graduate education leading to such a degree *or* LL.M., if related	None	1 year equivalent to at least GS-9
GS-12 and above	None	None	1 year equivalent to at least next lower grade level

NOTE: Equivalent combinations of education and experience are qualifying for all grade levels for which both education and experience are acceptable.

For experience and education requirement for other General Schedule positions view the OPM Qualification Standards at: **https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-standards**

By way of background, all federal civilian employees occupy positions in the competitive service, the excepted service, or the senior executive service. The main differences between the three employment systems are in the manner that candidates apply for jobs and in the opportunity for appointees to move within the federal service. Each employment system is covered by different laws and regulations**.**

Veterans Employment Initiative

On November 9, 2009, President Barack Obama signed Executive Order 13518, *Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government*, which established the Veterans Employment Initiative. The Initiative is a strategic, straightforward approach to helping the men and women who have served our country in the military find employment in the federal government. It also underscores the importance of aligning the talents of these individuals with key positions so the government is better positioned to meet mission objectives and citizens are better served. The President noted:

“As one of the nation’s leading employers, the federal government is in need of highly skilled individuals to meet agency staffing needs and to support mission objectives. Our Veterans, who have benefited from training and development during their military service, possess a wide variety of skills and experiences, as well as the motivation for public service that will help fulfill federal agencies’ staffing needs. It is therefore the policy of my administration to enhance recruitment of and promote employment opportunities for Veterans within the executive branch, consistent with merit system principles and Veterans’ preferences prescribed by law. The federal government will thereby help lead by example in promoting Veterans’ employment.”

This initiative:

- Established Veteran Employment Program Offices in the 24 federal agencies responsible for promoting Veterans' recruitment, employment, training and development, and retention within their respective agencies. Veterans are encouraged to contact these individuals for specific information on employment opportunities in those agencies.
- Created the Feds Hire Vets Website to provide a single-point for Veterans employment information to Veterans, their families, hiring managers, and an information gateway on federal employment for Veterans.

There are many advantages for Veterans in the federal job market. The federal government is focused on hiring Veterans. Your success as a Veteran seeking federal employment depends on your knowledge of the federal employment process.

Learn more of what the Veterans Employment Initiative has to offer you at www.fedshirevets.gov and its associated social media sites.

Finding Jobs

What are the types of jobs you are seeking?

Where could you go to find listings of openings?

Our focus will be on **USAJOBS.gov**, the Federal Government’s official source for federal job listings.

When seeking federal employment, it is important to have a targeted position in mind to help you navigate the system.

Most federal jobs today you can apply for with a resume. Resumes must be targeted and tailored to the position. Applicants are encouraged to use the resume builder on USAJOBS to ensure their resume is in the federal format. Federal

resumes could be several pages in length as opposed to a preferred one or two pages by the private sector.

There are many federal agencies and on any given day, USAJOBS lists thousands of jobs available with most of these agencies.

Just like in any type of job search, start by knowing what type of job you want and then narrow your search for that job.

The most effective method to find a federal job as a Veteran is to search the USAJOBS website. Twenty four agencies have a Veteran Employment Program Office responsible for promoting Veteran recruitment, employment, training and development, and retention within their respective agencies. Veterans are encouraged to contact these individuals for specific information on employment opportunities in those agencies. A complete listing of these individuals and contact information can be found at **www.fedshirevets.gov** under Agency Directory tab.

If you are eligible for one of the special hiring authorities for Veterans, be sure to mention it. Here is a quick tour of **USAJOBS.gov** and another great site, **FedsHireVets.gov** that can help you in your job search.

You do not need an account on USAJOBS in order to search for a job. To apply for a job, however, you must register. Also make sure to check out the link **www.fedshirevets.gov.** This is the Federal Government's one-stop resource for Federal employment information for Veterans.

Understanding the Vacancy Announcement

The most important component of a successful federal job search is a clear understanding of the requirements outlined in the vacancy announcement. A Vacancy Announcement is what the federal government calls a job description. Note that there is a difference between being eligible and qualified for federal positions. In order to be selected, a candidate must meet both criteria

Eligible

Being eligible for a position means meeting basic criteria such as being a US federal employee. Make sure to review the criteria listed in the Vacancy Announcement.

Qualified

To be qualified for a position, you must meet the skills, specific experience and other criteria outlined in the Vacancy Announcement.

Vacancy Announcements

- **Announcement Number**: Used to identify the position listed on the vacancy announcement.
- **Series and Grade**: Reflects the entry grade level (corresponds to the salary) for this position. It also identifies the position within its occupational category.
- **Promotion Potential**: The highest possible grade level that a person can achieve within this position.
- **Opening/Closing Dates**: Applications must be submitted to the appropriate location by 11:59 pm on the closing date.
- **Areas of Consideration/Who May Apply**: Some positions are not opened to everyone. Sometimes they are limited to current federal employees, employees of a specific agency, displaced employees or VEOA eligibles.
- **Job Responsibilities/Duties**: Information under experience should highlight successes in addition to the description of position duties. Use key words from this portion of the Vacancy Announcement to create responses for the KSA section.
- **Qualifications and Evaluations**: Outlines all of the required experience and education for candidacy. Pay special attention to because it is what is considered to be the most important qualifier for the position. Also a great place to find and select key words and specific skills. This is where the bulk of your analysis of the vacancy announcement will take place. Make sure you have all of these requirements before submitting or you are wasting your time. Ensure that you follow the directions in the evaluation criteria.
- **Benefits and Other Information** : Clear cut and tells you what you are going to receive as an employee
- Occasionally there are some special considerations; these are position-specific.
- If you need reasonable accommodation for your disability for the interview, the vacancy announcement will usually tell you how to obtain it.

Example Announcement

Job Title: Accountant

Department: Department Of Agriculture
Agency: Rural Housing Service
Job Announcement Number: 10-RD-167-DEU

SALARY RANGE: $38,790.00 - $89,450.00 /year
OPEN PERIOD: August 06, 2010 to September 07, 2010
SERIES & GRADE: GS-0510-7/12

Qualifications Required
A. Degree: accounting; or a degree in a related field such as business administration, finance, or public administration that included or was supplemented by 24 semester hours in accounting. The 24 hours may include up to 6 hours of credit in business law.
OR
B. Combination of education and experience -- at least 4 years of experience in accounting, or an equivalent combination of accounting experience, college-level education, and training that provided professional accounting knowledge. The applicant's background must also include *one* of the following:

For the GS-12 level:
Applicants must possess 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-11; or its non-federal equivalent. There is not substitution of education for specialized experience at the GS-12 level.

Examples of specialized experience at this grade level include but are not limited to: professional accounting work experience in preparing, analyzing, interpreting and presenting accounting data; operating, maintaining, and modifying accounting systems; using accounting information to recommend solutions to management problems and structuring of organization programs; managing, operating, and analyzing cost accounting systems in connection with other business activities; designing, implementing, and assessing internal control processes and systems.

For the GS-11 level:
Applicants must possess 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-09; or its non-federal equivalent OR 3 years of progressively higher level graduate education leading to a Ph.D. degree *or* Ph.D. or equivalent doctoral degree.

Examples of specialized experience at this grade level include but are not limited to: professional accounting work experience in preparing accounting and financial reports for use by others; analyzing and reconciling reports to

reflect an organization's financial activities and status of funds; designing, developing, examining and interpreting accounting data, statements and reports for management's use; and reviewing and financial statements and reports for the purpose of maintaining integrity of financial information and monitoring program effectiveness.

For the GS-09 level:
Applicants must possess 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-07; or its non-federal equivalent OR 2 years of progressively higher level graduate education leading to a master's degree *or* master's or equivalent graduate degree.

For the GS-07 level:
Applicants must possess 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-05; or its non-federal equivalent OR 1 year of graduate-level education *or* superior academic achievement.

Qualification and Experience Rules for Success:

- Always check the qualifications first before applying for the position. If the applicant cannot demonstrate having performed the qualifications in the past, they will not qualify.
- The qualification experience cited **MUST** be listed on the application as well, regardless of how long ago or whether it was volunteer experience.
- Read the job announcement *carefully!* Try to understand the needs of the job in order to *weave* personal experience into the qualifications.
- As a separate bullet or paragraph, enter pertinent training, awards, recognition, etc.
- Do not to be afraid to toot your own horn. This is your chance…no one else will do it for you.

REMEMBER…..keep copies of your qualifications! After spending so much time creating them, they will not have to recreate them for another position. These qualifications are used over and over again in federal job announcements.

Application Procedures

Pay particular attention to the specific directions in this section as each is different.

Points of Contact
Applicants could be notified by the government five times. If you are not notified of these steps in a timely manner, follow up by calling or emailing the point of contact on the vacancy announcement. If you know someone within the agency who is mentoring you, ask him or her for advice on the best way to follow up. Keep in mind that each agency has delegation of authority so not every hiring authority follows the same procedures. You may not hear anything if you are not eligible, not qualified, or both.

The five possible points of contact are:

1. When the application is received—usually receive this electronically
2. When it has been reviewed and referred or not to a selection official
3. When you are going to be interviewed—receive a notification to set a day and time
4. When you are being considered for the position—getting the job is not guaranteed at this stage
5. When you receive an offer for the position

Federal Resume Writing Tips

Use the USAJOBS Resume Builder
USAJOBS Resume Builder is a tool that allows you to build a resume within USAJOBS, and is formatted to ensure that you have all of the basic information required by Federal agencies for your application. USAJOBS also allows you to upload your own document to your account.

This is the preferred method of developing a resume for a Federal job application.

For more information and for a tutorial on the USAJOBS Resume Builder, visit **https://help.usajobs.gov/index.php/Main_Page**

Here are more tips:

- This is your best marketing tool, emphasize your strengths.
- Highlight relevant knowledge, skills, and attributes where you may not have directly relevant experience.
- State the facts. Avoid belief or judgment statements.
- Customize your resume to each job.

- Focus on areas where your previous experience or education overlaps with the experience or education described in the Job Opportunity Announcement.
- Provide sufficient detail but use concise language. Avoid information that does not add substance.
- Use headings to guide the reader.
- Use all available space if appropriate as Federal resumes are not limited to 1-2 pages

Steps for writing an effective resume

1. Understand the Job

Know the job you are applying for. Understand the type of work you would perform, if selected. Understand what hiring managers consider when determining whether candidates are qualified for a job.

Gather job information

Obtain the Job Opportunity Announcement at **www.USAJOBS.gov** and analyze the Duties, Requirements, and Qualifications sections; the locations, security clearances, physical demands, and the organization's website

Pay Attention to Keywords

Before beginning to write a resume, think about which keywords best describe your chosen career field. You could be the most qualified person for the job, but you could be lost in a sea of applicants without the right keywords.

Study Job Opportunity Announcements to determine important keywords. Review several job announcements and their questions for your ideal job. Find knowledge, skills, experience, education and other credentials important in your career field.

2. Consider your Qualifications

Getting started writing a resume can be challenging. It is common for people to get caught up in resume format before they have really considered the content. One of the first things you should do before you start writing a resume is to think about all of the things that might make you qualified for a job.

Look to Sources	Think Outside the Box
Former job descriptions	Leadership roles in social organizations
Supervisory reviews and feedback	Volunteer experiences
Transcripts	Projects
Course feedback	Professional/academic
Military honors	Challenges/successes
Awards and Recognition	Special assignments
Customer acknowledgements	Travel experiences
Survey results	

Your qualifications are evaluated in three primary ways:

- Your previous experience (paid and unpaid)
- Your level of education
- Training

3. Create a Chronological Resume

Chronological Resumes show the most recent experience listed first, followed by each previous job.

4. Create the Basic Outline and Write Job and Personal Information

The federal resume template on USAJOBS.gov is an excellent tool that will guide you through this process.

Write the Job Information section and Personal Information section.

5. Write your Experience

The experience section should demonstrate the quality of your experience, the complexity of work you performed, how independently you worked, the extent your experience is related to the target job, and any outcomes, awards and recognition you received.

The goal is to write your experience as clearly and simply as possible. Make it easy to understand exactly what you did. Focus on quality and substantive content, rather than length. Below are some best practices and pitfalls to avoid when writing your experience.

Best Practice	Pitfall
Use outline with headings	Text blocks with Semicolons
Show specialization	Generic task list
Include accomplishments	Too short/too long
Highlight special projects	Acronyms
Use plain language	Complex sentence structure
Focus on quality	Focus on quantity

Writing your experience can be a little challenging. Break it down into simple steps. Think in terms of outlining your major work activities and then get more specific. The process is broken down into three steps:

Step 1: Outline the major work activities

Step 2: Fill in tasks and skills associated with each work activity to show what you did, keeping it simple and to the point

Step 3: Integrate accomplishments to show results

- Who was impacted as a result?
- How significant was the impact?
- What were the cost savings?
- Did you exceed deadlines?
- Did you receive awards or recognition?
- What changed?
- What improved?

6. Write your Education

Several considerations influence how you present your education on a resume:

- How important is education to your career field or the target job?
- What is the major or field of study and highest level of education required?
- Are you a new graduate or do you have many years of work experience?
- Is your experience closely related to the target job?
- Is your education closely related to the target job?

Job seekers with minimal education beyond high school:

- Emphasize the courses completed, specialized training, on-the-job training
- List high school coursework that is relevant to the job
- List any courses completed through community college, technical or vocational schools
- Include education, training, professional development, or continuing education in the education section and consider organizing by topic area

Example Education Section 1: Minimal Education Beyond High School

This example shows coursework by topic area.

Education and Training

Information Technology and Management

Spreadsheet Skills Course, Harrisburg Community College	Spring 2006
Information Management Course, University of Phoenix Online	Fall 2005

General Business

Corporate Financial Analysis, Business Series Webinar	Fall 2005
Basic Accounting Course, Harrisburg Community College	Spring 2004

Chesapeake High School, Anytown, USA May 2001

Elective Coursework Business Concentration: Business Finance, Economics, Accounting, Management, Data Management

Job seekers with some college completed:

- Emphasize coursework completed toward a degree and number of credits completed
- Include honors, significant courses, major papers
- Consider listing other training in the education section

Example Education Section 2: Some College and Specialized Training Completed

This example highlights some more recent job-related training over the college coursework completed. Depending on the relevance of additional training (e.g., if this person is applying to a job requiring project management), it may make sense to list it first.

Education and Training

GovGrad School
Project Management, 3 CE credits Spring 2005
Managing People and Work Teams, 3 CE credits Spring 2004

Fargo Community College, Fargo, ND 58102 2001 - 2003
Completed 45 semester hours toward Associate of Arts in Business Administration GPA: 3.10
Significant coursework: Business Finance, Economics, Accounting, Management, Data Management

Job Seekers who are college graduates

- Emphasize your college degree
- Include honors, awards, scholarships, GPA, significant courses, major papers or thesis, and assistantships
- Separate formal education from professional development or continuing education

College graduates with experience should balance education and experience emphasis. Consider what is most related to the target job.

> Q. Should I put my education or experience first on my resume?
>
> A. It depends. Some resume building software, like the USAJOBS, Resume Builder, automatically list education after experience. If you are creating your own resume, consider what you want to emphasize.

Example Education Section 3: College Graduate with Specialized Training Completed

This example shows a college degree with relevant coursework listed. It also highlights specialized job-related training, but was placed in an additional section labeled Specialized Experience and Professional Development.

Education

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Graduated May 2003
University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA Major, Finance
Graduated Cum Laude, GPA 3.65
Fulbright Scholar

Relevant Coursework:
General Business: Business Communications, Business Law
Finance and Accounting: General Finance, Global Finance, Accounting
Economics: Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Economic Analysis, Money and Banking, Econometrics
Human Resources: Personnel Management, Performance Appraisal, Compensation, Organizational Design

Specialized Training and Professional Development:

GovGrad School
Administrative Information Management, 3 CE credits Spring 2005
Software and Spreadsheet, 3 CE credits Spring 2004

7. Write an Optional Cover Letter

Cover letters are optional, but can be value-added if written effectively. You can upload a cover letter during the application process. Use it to highlight strengths above and beyond what is in your resume. Below is a basic template for a cover letter.

Tips for cover letter writing:

- Be concise, yet sufficiently detailed to stress the points important to the target job.

- Personalize to each job; consider how your credentials relate to the target job
- Emphasize your strongest credentials
- Keep it simple
- Inform reviewers of material enclosed (e.g., resume, transcripts)

Basic Cover Letter Template

June 30, 2012

Office of Human Capital
Address

Dear :

Enclosed please find my (describe material(s) you have included) for the job of _____

My relevant experience for the job includes (3-5)

_____

_____

_____

I believe I would be an asset to your organization because (3-5)

_____

_____

_____

Federal Interviewing

There are a few things that you should know about interviewing with the federal government before you attend your first interview:

- Most interviews are behavioral.
- Many agencies use panel interviews. A panel interview means that several people will be asking you questions at the same time.
- It is important to review the vacancy announcement and your resume prior to the interview and to bring them with you.
- Practice answers to anticipated questions based on the content in the vacancy announcement.
- The government uses competency-based structured interviews, which means that everyone who is interviewed will be asked the same questions so that interviewers can compare notes on candidates.
- The interviewers will need to document their decisions, so they may take extensive notes. You may find that you are speaking to a group of people who are not looking at you, but are writing down their responses. Do not let that worry you.
- If you take notes during your interview, the interviewers may take your notes and make them part of the interview record. This is done to ensure fairness in the interview process and prevent the leaking of interview questions to other candidates.
- The agency may interview some, all, or none of the qualified applicants.

Following Up

If you are interviewed and not selected for the position, make sure to follow up. Six weeks after the job closes, be proactive and reach out to the Human Resources (HR) person to learn the results of the position. The contact person's name will be at the end of the vacancy announcement.

Getting the Offer

How the government extends an offer of employment.

If all goes well, you should receive a call notifying you of an offer to begin work with the federal government. First, you will receive the call from a HR professional extending you an offer based on the grade level as described in the vacancy announcement.

What You Can Negotiate
When you are offered a federal job, there are several compensation-related items you negotiate. Negotiate with whoever offers you the job, and ensure all the items you have successfully negotiated are written into the formal job offer. Items that can be negotiated include:

Salary
Your Leave and Earning Statement may be used a basis for comparing what you made in the military and your new federal pay. A new GS employee is usually hired at step one of the applicable GS grade. However, in special circumstances, agencies may authorize a higher step rate for a newly-appointed Federal employee based on a special need of the agency or superior qualifications of the prospective employee.

Leave/Vacation
For non-retired members, full credit for uniformed service (including active duty and active duty for training) performed under honorable conditions is given for annual leave accrual purposes.

For retirees, annual leave accrual credit is given only for:

- Actual service during a war declared by Congress (includes World War II covering the period December 7, 1941, to April 28, 1952) or while participating in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is authorized. (See Vets Guide -- War Service Creditable for Veterans Preference (external link).)

  or

- All active duty when retirement was based on a disability received as a direct result of armed conflict or caused by an instrumentality of war and incurred in the line of duty during a period of war

If you are being hired into a GS position, your applicable work experience may count toward years needed to move to the next higher leave allocation. However, the amount of service credit that may be granted to an employee is determined at the sole and exclusive discretion of the head of the agency, or his or her designee. (SES positions provide 8 hours per pay period.)

Your Starting Date
The Federal Government offers a variety of Recruitment, Relocation & Retention Incentives. Learn more at: **https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/recruitment-relocation-retention-incentives/#url=Fact-Sheets**

Learn more about Federal Hiring

If you want to find out more about federal employment, the online Transition GPS course includes a module on federal hiring. This self-paced learning program is available at **http://jko.jten.mil/courses/tap/TGPS%20Standalone%20Training/start.html**

You can also access the program via the FedsHireVets.gov website at **http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/edu/training/Continuing/menu.htm** and the Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and training Service (DOL VETS) Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Information page at **http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/tap.htm** . When you navigate to this page, click on the **Access the TAP Virtual Curriculum** button in the middle of the page.

Update your ITP

In Section IV: Employment, update the subsection labeled **Establish a USAJobs account and research potential federal employment opportunities**

NOTES

Section 7: Creating Online Profiles

In section 3 you learned about the role of social media in your job search. In this section you will learn how to create a profile in LinkedIn.

Create a LinkedIn Account

- Go to www.linkedin.com
- On the front page, fill out the form with your first/last name and e-mail address. Please utilize a non-governmental e-mail address to avoid interruption of services following your transition from the military.
- Choose a password. Pick something that is easy for you to remember and difficult for others to guess. Use lowercase and uppercase letters, numbers, and special characters for the most security.
- Click Join Now.
- LinkedIn will now guide you through the rest of the registration process and profile creation. Enter information about your location and click **Next**.
- Indicate whether or not you are a student. If you currently have a job, enter that information now. Otherwise, enter the position you most recently held. After you enter your company, another drop-down box will appear asking you to select what industry you work in. Select the one that most closely matches your current or most recent position.
- Click Create your profile.
- Next, LinkedIn will ask you what the main reason is for you creating a profile. Select **Finding a job**.
- LinkedIn will ask you to confirm your e-mail address in order to import any contacts that you have entered into your e-mail account so that you can connect with them via LinkedIn if they also have accounts. If you have contacts in your e-mail account you would like to import, click **Continue**. Otherwise, click Skip.
- Next, LinkedIn will ask you to confirm that your e-mail address is correct. In order to do this, they will send an e-mail to the account you provided. Log into your e-mail account, find the message, and click the yellow button in the e-mail to confirm the account.
- When you click the button, it will automatically take you to the next step in the registration process. LinkedIn will provide a list of companies. If you see any that interest you, select them and click **Add companies**. LinkedIn will add these to your ‘following’ list, so that you will receive notifications when they post updates or jobs to their account.

- LinkedIn will then suggest jobs for you. If they sound interesting, you can choose to follow them so that you can receive updates on the status of those jobs, as well as updates if similar positions are posted. Click '**Follow Jobs**' to continue.
- Next, LinkedIn offers to text you a link to download their mobile app. If you have a smartphone and are interested, enter your phone number and click **Get the app**.

Take advantage of the free one-year LinkedIn upgrade for Veterans
LinkedIn offers free premium Job Seeker accounts for individuals who have served in the Armed Forces. The Job Seeker account includes:

Applicant Insights: When you find a job posting you want to apply to, you can use Applicant Insights to see how you compare to other applicants by education, top skills, and other criteria.

Featured Applicant: When you submit an application, you will appear at the top of the list of applicant in the job poster's inbox.

The ability to know when someone has viewed your profile: You are able to see who has viewed your profile in the last 90 days; this lets you know if any recruiters or HR staff are checking you out. (Free members only see the last 5 viewers).

InMail: This feature allows you to contact anyone on LinkedIn, including the people who have been viewing your profile, or a hiring manager you have identified at a company you would like to target.

Full profile visible to all: With a Premium account, you have the option of allowing any LinkedIn member to see your full profile and contact you for free.

At the end of the one free year, you will no longer receive the Job Seeker benefits and you will return to a standard account. It will cost you $29.99 to continue with the Job Seeker account.

You must first create a standard LinkedIn account. To ensure you have your account properly created to receive the free job seeker account, add the following to the Experience section of your Profile:

- Military Branch
- Time of Service
- Position
- After you have done this, go to https://veterans.linkedin.com/ and click on the link to **"Free Job Seeker Account"**

You will then need to provide several pieces of information, including your name, email account, current LinkedIn account URL, and military status information.

Please be patient, as the Job Seeker upgrade will take 7-10 days to approve and go live.

LinkedIn is also offering Veterans a free one-year subscription to Lynda.com, an online library of instructional videos on software programs and business skills. You can redeem this offer at the same website: https://veterans.linkedin.com/.

Simply click "Free Course on Lynda.com and complete the same process outline above. Once again, approval takes 7-10 days and, upon approval, you will receive a product key to access Lynda.com in your e-mail associated with your LinkedIn account. Please use a non-governmental e-mail to ensure you receive your product key.

Lastly, at https://veterans.linkedin.com/, please take advantage of the "LinkedIn for Veterans" course to learn everything that you need to know about harnessing the power of LinkedIn as a military veteran (course goes live in March 2016).

Building and editing your profile in LinkedIn

Before you apply for any postings, you should complete your LinkedIn profile.

- Navigate to the black bar at the top, mouse over **Profile**, and click **Edit Profile** in the drop-down menu that appears.
- Once you are at your Profile, you can answer the questions that pop up in the blue box at the top of the page, and LinkedIn will guide you through the process, adding your education, work history, and other details. The Profile Strength Meter at the top right will give you an idea of how completely you have filled out your profile.
- When you get to the section about adding a photo, make sure you upload a professional photograph. Look at other LinkedIn photos for inspiration.
- You can also manually modify each section individually, adding new information or editing previously created entries. When you mouse over any section, a pencil icon will appear next to a field that you can update. You can also click the Plus sign to add a new entry.

Using LinkedIn to search for jobs

- Click **Jobs** on the black bar at the top of the page.
- The primary method of searching is by keyword and location. For more control over your search click **Advanced Search**. Using the Advanced Search option you can zero in on jobs:
    - **Country/Zip Code** search allows you to find jobs in specific locations.

    - **Industry** search allows you to look for jobs with certain kinds of businesses.
    - **Functions** search allows you to select the kind of work you want to perform in your job.
- **More Options** will allow you to search using other factors such as posting date or keyword.

Leverage the synergy between LinkedIn and the Veterans Employment Center

The Veterans Employment Center (VEC) at https://www.vets.gov/veterans-employment-center is the single federal portal for connecting Veterans to meaningful career opportunities. It incorporates a number of Department of Labor tools and the National Labor Exchange (NLX) jobs database that allows you to search for both private and public jobs.

The VEC provides employers with access to a targeted pool of resumes from veterans and transitioning service members, allowing them to search resumes to identify veterans with skill sets applicable to civilian employment at their organization, and to track progress towards reaching their veteran hiring goals.

The VEC contains, or links to, a broad set of other informational resources designed to help employers recruit and retain talented transitioning service members, veterans and their families.

The VEC includes a resume builder that enables you to import information in your LinkedIn profile by using the 'Auto-fill' option. This will populate sections of your resume with information from your LinkedIn profile and download to MS Word.

Other tools in the VEC allow you to translate your military skills and view employer commitments to hire Veterans

Tip for registering on the VEC:

- Register on the VEC webpage. This allows you to edit and save your resume.
- Utilize the skills translator before you start building your resume
- Review your resume by selecting Preview Your Veteran Profile and Resume Content, downloading your resume, and reviewing it for accuracy and correct formatting.

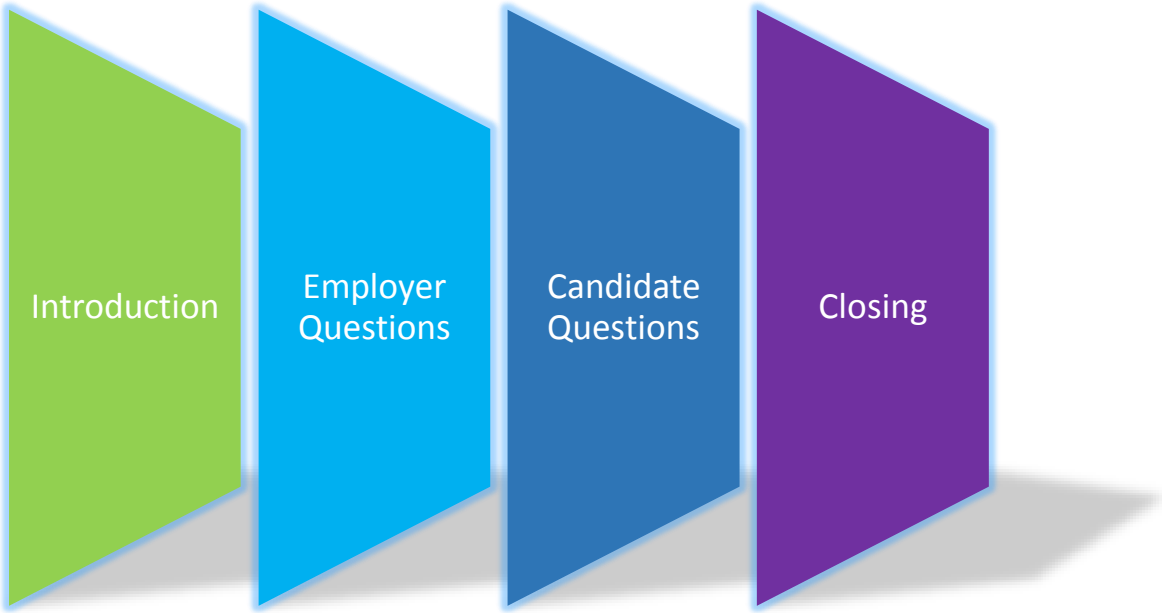
Section 8: Interviewing

In this section you will continue applying the fourth principle of getting a job, developing and delivering marketing messages.

Preparing for an Interview

All of the activities that have been completed in the preceding sections create a foundation for meeting with potential employers. This section will introduce the four typical stages of an interview and provide tips for acing each stage.

Interview Stages



Most interviews break into four stages. The more you understand each stage, and what is expected of you, the better your chances of being selected.

1. Introductory Stage

The interviewer forms an initial impression that can contribute to acceptance or rejection. The decision to hire is not made at this stage, but it begins here.

Build rapport

This is the stage where you introduce yourself to the employer and find common ground. Remember research you have done and be aware of your surroundings. Notice items in the office or conference room to identify related interests or other subjects for small talk to break the ice. Smile, offer a firm handshake and do not sit until the interviewer does or until he or she asks.

When meeting someone for the first time, note their name and job title. Make small talk, but stay away from controversial subjects.

Project Enthusiasm, Confidence and Respect

The goal is to project enthusiasm, confidence and an attitude of respect—no matter who you are meeting. From the gate guard to the executives, everyone is important to your success.

2. Answer Employer Questions

Most interviewers use a standard set of interview questions. These questions relate to how your skills, knowledge, training, and work experience fit the job and the company. Unfortunately, many job hunters do not prepare answers to these typical questions. As a result, candidates may not present their strongest skills and qualifications.

Best Practices

- Keep your answers brief, but be certain you answer the questions thoroughly. Do not volunteer information that is not asked. You might talk yourself out of a job.
- Use the STAR method for responding to interview questions. Incorporate evidence, specific examples, data and anecdotes to illustrate your points.
- Think about your answer before you start to speak. It is okay to pause and collect your thoughts and then give your answer. Try to relate your response to the position for which you are applying by using keywords from the job posting.
- As you develop your answers, think about the match between your skills and the company's needs.
- Every chance you get, explain how you would go about doing a job rather than just saying you can do it.
- Emphasize you want the job and are willing to make a commitment

3. Candidate Questions

The interviewer is trying to determine your level of interest in the job and your degree of knowledge about the company. Interviewers also learn about you, and remember you, by the questions you ask. Interviewers respect candidates who think about their choices carefully, and they appreciate knowing you have done your homework.

During the interview you will also be deciding if the company is a good place to work. Based on the answers to your questions, you will learn about the employer. Look for a match between the company and your goals, needs, and attitudes. The best questions show that you have done research about the company and, at the same time, get you information you really want to know.

This is the point when you have the opportunity to ask two to three questions to gauge the organization's fit to your standards and criteria.

4. Closing Stage

If you are sure you want the job, make your intentions clear at this time. For example you could say: "This sounds like a great place to work and I believe I can help your department exceed expectations. I would really like to have this job."

This is also the point where, normally, you are informed that the interviewer appreciated you coming in and outlines what happens next. If the interviewer does not offer this information it is appropriate for you to ask:

- What are the next steps?
- Is it okay if I follow up on the position next week?
- When do you plan to fill the position?

Usually the hiring authorities for the position will confer before anyone is offered a job. So, do not expect a decision to be made about the position immediately.

Make a gracious exit. Thank the interviewer for his or her time. On your way out, say goodbye to anyone you see who may have helped you. Smile and be pleasant.

Best Practices to Remember During Any Interview

- Be positive and enthusiastic. Your face conveys your attitude, and reinforces what you say.
- Remain attentive and eager to listen. Reinforce the interviewer's comments with nods.
- Listen more than you talk; do not interrupt
- Research the company/industry in advance so you can ask informed questions about the job and the company.
- Offer a firm whole-hand handshake. Shake hands with both men and women the same way.
- Make eye contact with the interviewer. Many interviewers use your eye contact to look for enthusiasm, sincerity, and for possible inconsistencies in your responses.
- Sit up straight and lean forward toward the interviewer slightly. Good posture will help you listen and make you look interested.
- Use natural gestures. If you normally use your hands to gesture as you talk, do so in the interview. Gestures help you relax and convey enthusiasm.
- Speak clearly and not too fast. Use good grammar and pronunciation, and think before you speak. The interviewer will assess your communication skills based on how you express yourself.
- Notice the nonverbal cues of the interviewer. The interviewer's facial expressions will let you know how well they are listening. If the interviewer is not attentive, shorten your answers, use an example, or ask a question.

Dress for success during an interview

First impressions matter, whether meeting someone at a social event or interviewing for a job.

You should look your best when you go to a job interview. Dress one step above the dress required for the job. You only get one chance to make a first impression, so make it a good one. Remember, first impressions are formed when the interviewer first sees and greets you. You need to look professional, confident, and competent.

To help you decide what to wear to an interview, visit the company and notice what people are wearing. Make sure your interview clothes are appropriate for the job you are applying for and the location of the interview. Do not wear a suit to an interview at a construction site, and do not wear jeans and a sport shirt to an office setting. You will find differences in the way people dress depending on the industry they work in and/or geographic locations. It is always better to be over-dressed than under-dressed for any interview.

Think ahead to the interview. If there is a possibility you will be required to perform a task, make sure you are prepared. For instance, if you are applying for a job as a welder, you may be asked to demonstrate your skills on the spot. You should have your work clothes and tools available at the interview.

The moment an individual sees you, he or she evaluates:

- Clothing
- Hairstyle
- Grooming habits

Dress for Interview—Men

Use the following list to check yourself prior to an interview. You may want to seek an opinion from someone in the field in which you are interviewing.

Hair should be trimmed above ears. Have a clean shave. If you have a beard or a mustache, be sure to trim neatly.

Wear glasses with up-to-date frames and clear lenses. Do not wear sunglasses with dark tints or mirrors.

Wear no more than one ring on each hand and a watch. Do not wear any other jewelry such as bracelets, necklaces or earrings.

Depending on the position you are applying for, wear:

- Dark suit, black, navy blue or gray, single breasted; white or pinstripe dress shirt and conservative patterned tie
- Navy blue or gray jacket; coordinated gray, tan, or charcoal slacks; white or pinstripe dress shirt and conservative tie
- White, pastel, or pinstripe dress shirt and conservative tie; coordinated navy blue, gray, charcoal, or brown slacks
- Plain sports shirt; coordinated navy blue, gray, charcoal, or brown slacks.
- Clean sports shirt and clean casual pants
- Tip of the tie should come to the top or center of belt buckle
- Belt should show no signs of wear or weight gain/loss; should match shoes
- Nails should be cut short, filed and clean
- Wear black or brown shined shoes with dark socks. Work boots may be appropriate for some job interviews. No loafers or tennis shoes.
- No aftershave, cologne, or strong smelling deodorants, and no smoking
- Carry a good leather or leather-like portfolio or slim briefcase
- Visible facial piercings and tattoos still carry a stigma; you may choose to remove jewelry/hardware from piercings and cover tattoos for the interview

Dress for Interview—Women

Use the following list to check yourself prior to an interview. You may even want to seek an opinion from someone in the field in which you are interviewing.

- Clean hair, styled or tied back and professional
- Makeup should be simple. Avoid bright colors or too heavy an application
- Wear glasses with up-to-date frames and clear lenses. Do not wear sunglasses with dark tints or mirrors
- Simple earrings, a pin or a necklace and a watch; no more than one ring per hand; no more than one bracelet
- Depending on the position you are applying for, wear:
  - A seasonal dark business suit in solid color or conservative pattern with tailored skirt; blouse in a complimentary solid color such as white, cream or pastel; skirt should cover the knee when seated
  - Jacket in solid color or pinstripe; coordinating blouse and tailored pants in appropriate length
  - Tailored dress in solid color or conservative print; appropriate length
  - Tailored blouse, preferably with long sleeves, in white, cream or pastel; coordinating tailored skirt in solid color or conservative print or pattern and appropriate length
- Nails should be short to medium length; manicured with light or clear polish
- Medium heel pumps, no open toe or backs; no nicks in heels; no flats
- Stockings or panty hose in nude or beige always, even in the summer
- No perfume, cologne, or strong-smelling deodorant, and no smoking
- Any bags or briefcases brought should be black or brown, professional in nature (no backpacks), clean and orderly. Carry either a purse or a briefcase, not both
- Avoid any clothing that may reveal cleavage
- Visible facial piercings and tattoos still carry a stigma. You may choose to remove jewelry from piercings and cover tattoos for the interview

Keep in mind that appropriate dressing and grooming are critical to making a good first impression. These guidelines will help you make a good first impression not just in the interview but also during networking and after you are hired.

Types of interviews

The purpose of all interviews is to find the right person for the job and conversely for individuals to find the appropriate company and job fit.

Companies use various methods to conduct interviews. Throughout this process you may complete several rounds of interviews, so be prepared to meet and interview with any company more than once. A brief description of common interviewing methods is below:

Face-to-Face/One-on-One
With this method you will meet with one person at a time. The interviewer may be the person who will be your supervisor or manager.

Panel or Committee
This type has two or more interviewers sitting on a panel or committee and may include HR, the hiring manager, the supervisor, and/or a team lead. This type of interview involves answering questions from multiple people. This could add significant pressure.

Meal Interview
Whether breakfast, lunch, dinner, coffee or drinks, these interviews are a little more intimate. These interviews are meant to observe you outside of the formal work environment. Due to the seemingly casual environment, it is easy to get comfortable, so sure to answer questions in a professional way. Should you find yourself in one of these interviews, be mindful of the foods you order (not too pricey or messy), and avoid ordering alcohol, even if the interviewer orders a drink first.

Group
This method brings in many applicants at once and can be more of a presentation about the company and the types of challenges you will encounter on the job. You may be called for a face-to-face or panel interview after the group session.

Stress

The goal of this type of interview is to put you in a stressful situation and see how you perform under pressure. Positions that may use this tactic include:

- Law Enforcement
- Air traffic controllers
- Intelligence jobs
- Positions in high-pressure work environments or those who deal with highly sensitive information
- Sales

Phone Interview

A phone interview or screening can occur unscheduled or scheduled. Many times this interview happens before the next stage; it will verify your basic qualifications for the position. Below is a list of suggestions to prepare for success when you have a phone interview:

- Be in a quiet place where you can concentrate
- Have all of your company, industry, and job research materials handy
- Mention your research during the interview to demonstrate your understanding of the business
- Get dressed for work, as it creates a professional attitude that is not visible but comes through in your manner over the phone
- Have questions prepared and be prepared to take notes
- Smile—your smile will impact your voice inflections

If you are driving, be sure to stop and give full attention to the call.

Video/Teleconference Interviews

Video, Skype and teleconference interviews are becoming more common. This is especially true if you are in a remote location or geographically distant from the company. Here are some things to remember if you are doing this type of interview.

- Look at the camera, so it appears you are addressing the interviewer
- If you have control of your environment, here are some considerations:
  - Be sure that you have a professional and uncluttered background
  - Be sure the lighting is appropriate; do not sit in front of a window
  - Be sure you are in a quiet room with no distractions, such as cell phones, pets, children, etc.
  - Dress for interview!

Common Interview Questions

By asking questions, the interviewer tries to determine how well your attitude and skills fit with the job, the company image, and the work culture. The candidate's success or failure is determined by their ability to communicate clearly and openly. In general, employers are looking for the answers to three questions:

- Does the candidate have the skills and abilities to perform the job?
- Does the candidate possess the attitude and work ethic the employer expects?
- Will the candidate be a team player and fit into the organization?

There are a few types of interview questions you will encounter during your job search. These questions will be the basis of your preparation for interviewing.

Traditional Interview Questions

Traditional interview questions are broad-based. Here is a list of several traditional interview questions. To find more examples of questions, simply type "interview questions" into your favorite search engine. It is in your best interest to practice answering these questions, as you will be expected to answer in a professional manner.

- What do you know about our company?
- Where do you see yourself in five or ten years?
- What motivates you to do a good job?
- Why did you decide to interview for this position?
- Why should I hire you?
- Are you a team player?
- What do you know about our organization?
- What do you look for in a job?
- Do you have any questions?

Behavioral Interview Questions

These questions request descriptions about how you have behaved in past situations and are considered to be predictors of how you might behave on the job. Behavioral questions are more probing and more specific than traditional interview questions.

- Provide an example of a goal you reached and tell me how you achieved it.
- Have you had to convince a team to work on a project that members did not want to? How did you handle it?
- How have you handled a conflict situation with a co-worker?

Hypothetical or Situational Interview Questions

Hypothetical/situational questions present you with a scenario that could happen. Example questions are:

- If you were busy meeting a deadline and a co-worker asked you to help make copies, what would you say?
- If one of your supervisors tells you to enter more sales contacts than you actually made, what would you do?

Smart questions to ask during the interview

Throughout the interview process, the interviewer is trying to gauge how committed and capable you will be in terms of helping the company succeed. At the same time, you should be trying to determine if the company and position is a good fit with you and your goals, needs, values, and skills.

Normally, as the interview is drawing to a close, the interviewer will ask you if you have questions. You will typically have time to ask two or three.

Here are some questions that will both telegraph your commitment to the employer's success and provide you with information that will help you decide if the job is a good fit for you.

1. After hearing my answers to the questions you have asked, do you have any concerns about my ability to do the job?
2. If I get this position, what will be the most important part of my job, in terms of ensuring you and the team I will be joining are successful?
3. What would be the most valuable new skills for me to develop, in terms of being able to add more value to the department I will be joining? What opportunities will I have to learn those skills?

4. What are the next steps in the selection process? How soon do you plan to fill this position? Is it okay if I follow up with you next week?
5. What are the greatest challenges of this position?
6. Would you describe what a typical day on the job consists of?
7. Are there any questions to which I did not adequately respond?
8. Where will I fit into the overall organizational structure?
9. Who is the supervisor for the position?
10. What do you expect me to accomplish in the first six months?
11. What training is provided?
12. What other positions would I interface with in the job?
13. How would you describe the work environment?
14. Do your employees work individually or as a team?
15. What career opportunities exist in the company?
16. What further education or training does the company consider important for my future progress?
17. Is this a newly created position or has it existed for some time? What happened to the last person in this position?
18. What are the department's goals for the year?

As you conclude the interview, let the interviewer know that you are enthusiastic and confident about joining their company, using language similar to this: *This sounds like a great position and a great place to work. I am confident that I will make a significant contribution here.*

Practice Answering Questions

You can improve your chances for success if you practice answering questions. Read the following questions and the coaching guidelines in parentheses. Write down your own personal answers, using the STAR method—Situation Task Action Result—as much as possible. Practice answering these questions with a partner.

1. Tell me about yourself. (Talk for approximately two minutes. Be logical. Be positive. Relate what you say about yourself to the job. Show some of your personality.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Why are you leaving your current position? Why did you decide to leave the military? (This is a critical question. Do not bad mouth your former employer, service branch, or previous supervisors. Remember, the person you are talking to may have served in the military or may have a child, spouse or sibling currently on active duty. It is good to state that after long personal consideration you and your family have decided it was time to consider opportunities in the civilian workforce.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What do you consider your most significant accomplishment? (This can get you the job. Prepare extensively. Tell a short story, which includes details and your professional involvement. Describe an accomplishment that was truly worth achieving. Include hard work, deadlines, overcoming obstacles, important company issues and relations with coworkers.)

4. Why do you believe you are qualified for this position? (Pick two or three main factors about the job and about you that are most relevant. Discuss, with specific details. Select a technical skill, a specific management skill (organizing, staffing, planning) and a personal success story.)

5. Have you ever accomplished something you did not think you could? (Show you are goal orientated and have a strong work ethic. Provide a good example of when you overcame difficulties to succeed.)

6. What do you like or dislike about your current position? (Interviewer may be trying to determine your compatibility with the open position. Avoid complaining about your dislikes and keep the answer positive.)

7. How do you handle pressure? Do you like or dislike these situations? (High achievers tend to perform well in high pressure situations. Conversely, this question also could imply that the position is pressure packed. If you perform well under stress, provide a good example with details, giving an overview of the stress situation. Try to relay the situation as a challenge rather than focusing on your ability to handle pressure. The interviewer will see you turn a negative into a positive situation.)

8. Good employees can take the initiative and get the job done. Can you describe yourself in terms of this statement? (A proactive, results-oriented person does not need constant supervision. To convince the interviewer you know how to take initiative you must describe a situation in which you were self-motivated. Try to discuss at least one example in-depth. Demonstrate a strong work ethic and creativity.)

9. What is the most difficult aspect about your career? How would you have done things differently in hindsight? (This is a question to find out if you are introspective and if you learn from your mistakes. The right answer indicates an open, flexible personality. Do not be afraid to talk about negative results or problem issues, particularly if you have learned from them. Dynamic, high-performance individuals learn from mistakes. End your story on a positive note.)

10. How have you grown or changed over the past few years? (This is a question to find out if you are a well-balanced, intelligent individual with technical skills. Overcoming personal obstacles or recognizing manageable challenges can make you an approachable and desirable employee.)

11. What do you consider your most significant strengths? (Know four or five key strengths. Be able to discuss each with a specific example. Select those attributes that are most compatible with the job opening. Most people mention management ability or good interpersonal skills in response to this question. If you cannot describe the specific characteristics of management, such as planning, organizing, budgeting, staffing, etc., do not say you have strong management skills. If you mention interpersonal skills you should be able to clearly explain what you mean.)

12. What do you consider your most significant challenge? (Show by example how a weakness can be a learning opportunity. Balance any negative with a positive statement identifying how you are overcoming this weakness.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Additional Questions

- What goals have you set recently?
- What do you think of your current/past supervisor?
- What do your supervisors/subordinates think of you?
- What is your management style (democratic, team player, etc.)?
- Why should I hire you?
- What jobs have you held? Why did you leave?
- Why did you choose this field of work?
- How do you spend your spare time?
- What personal characteristics do you feel are necessary for success in this field?
- Do you prefer working with others or by yourself?
- What kind of boss do you prefer?
- How do you respond to negative feedback?

The more you practice answering interview questions, the better you become.

Guidelines for salary questions

- Do not mention money or benefits until the interviewer brings it up, or until an offer has been made.
- Give the amount as a range, for example "$40,000 to $45,000 depending on the benefits" rather than saying $42,000. A range gives room to negotiate.
- You can find out a realistic salary from researching the occupation. One resource for information might be the local American Job Center.
- Sometimes an employer will bring up salary early in an interview. If you are not ready to discuss this question, here is an example of what you could say: *"Before I can give an answer to the salary question, I would like to know more about the position."*
- If possible, wait until you find out about the benefits offered before you answer questions about salary.

Here are some ways you can answer the question about minimum salary:

"What is the range for this position?"

"I am comfortable negotiating within the posted salary range should I receive an offer."

Mock Interview

Practice all stages of the interview process.

1. Observer role: Use the Observer Sheet on the next page and provide feedback to the Candidate when they have finished their mock interview.
2. Employer role: Choose five questions to ask the candidate.
3. Candidate role: Practice interviewing with the employer from introduction to closing.

Mock Interview Observer Sheet

Build Rapport
Did the candidate introduce him or herself and shake hands professionally?

Did the candidate make eye contact?

Did the candidate make appropriate small talk?

Employer Questions
Did the candidate answer employer questions appropriately?

Did the candidate use the STAR method?

Did the candidate stumble or pause for too long?

Did the candidate adequately answer the questions?

Candidate Questions
Did the candidate ask appropriate questions?

Did the candidate ask about follow-up?

Closing Stage:
Did the candidate ask for the job?

Did the candidate thank the interviewer? Did the candidate graciously exit?

Legal Protections

Two laws provide Service members and Veterans, including those with disabilities with protection as they search for jobs and after they are hired.

1. The **Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act** of 1994 (USERRA) helps ensure Service members and Veterans:

- are not disadvantaged in their civilian careers because of their military service
- are promptly reemployed in their civilian jobs upon their return from duty; and
- are not discriminated against in employment based on past, current or future military service.

For much more information on USERRA go to **www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/index.htm**

2. **The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** ensures equal opportunity during the application process and on the job by:

- Prohibiting employers from discriminating against disabled job seekers who are able to perform the essential functions of a job with or without reasonable accommodations
- Requiring an employer to provide reasonable accommodations to employees so that they are able to perform the essential functions of a job.

For more information, see **Understanding Your Employment Rights Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A Guide for Veterans** at **http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/ada_Veterans.cfm**

Section 9: Follow Up After the Interview

Follow Up after the Interview

Thank You Notes

Write a thank you note soon after the interview, the same day is best. You can hand write this note. It is a good way to briefly add anything you forgot, or wish you had said in the interview. You can reinforce important information you provided in the interview, state your interest in the job, and let the employer know you appreciate their time. Thank you notes should be brief and to the point. Two sample thank you notes follow:

Sample Thank You Letter #1

February 2, 20XX

Mr. Thomas Williams, President
Main Street Bank
1111 Washington Street
Los Angeles, CA 95999

Dear Mr. Williams:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview with you yesterday. The information you shared with me about Washington Mutual Bank is helpful in understanding the impact of loan officers to your overall mission. I am excited about the possibility of applying my education and experience to this position with your bank. The expansion and public lending plans are especially intriguing and I look forward to helping the bank enter the new market.

If I can provide you with any additional information, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Charles Henderson
1111 E. Hollywood Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 95999
(916) 999-9999

Sample Thank You Letter #2

February 2, 20XX

Judy R. Smith
110 Logan Street
Denver, CO 80211 (916) 999-9999

Ms. Martha Anderson, President
Carrington Cable Corporation
5555 Cable Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 95999

Dear Ms. Anderson:

Thank you for the interview this afternoon. I appreciate your time and consideration.

The Cable Installer position we discussed sounds like a good fit with my skills and experience. I feel that I could make a valuable contribution to CCC.

I look forward to hearing from you next Thursday.

Sincerely,

Judy R. Smith

Evaluate the interview—Continuous Improvement

Every interview is an opportunity to improve your interviewing skills and to maximize your potential for success. To help learn from your experience and to increase chances for success, complete the Post Interview Checklist.

Post Interview Checklist	Date of Interview
Company Name:	Date to Call Back:
Interviewers Name:	Date of Decision:
Was I on time (15minutes early)?	Yes ___ No ___
Did I dress appropriately?	Yes ___ No ___
Do I need to send additional information?	
• Resume or application	Yes ___ No ___
• Reference list/letters of recommendations	Yes ___ No ___
• Work samples	Yes ___ No ___
Did I give a positive indication of my interest in the job?	Yes ___ No ___
Did I ask for the job?	Yes ___ No ___
Did I mention who referred me?	Yes ___ No ___
What was the interviewer's general impression of my resume?	
What did the employer seem particularly interested in?	

What questions did I have the most difficulty answering?	
What questions did I answer most effectively?	
What further information did I obtain about the company?	
What can I do to improve my performance?	

Evaluate job offers

There are several ways to evaluate job offers. Perhaps the simplest is to list all of the pros and cons. As you evaluate the offer, keep in mind the aspects that are important to you about your lifestyle. On Day 1 you identified your work preferences and values. Referring to this section may help you make a decision. Compare how well the job matches your preferences and values.

Keep in mind that your family is affected by job decisions, so include them in the decision- making process. Remember that “no” is part of the process and that is why we continually evaluate and improve When you are successful and you do get a job offer, here are things to consider:

Factors	Job Evaluation Checklist	Acceptable	Unacceptable
The Industry	Interest in the industry (Is this a field where I would like to build a career?)		
	Potential for long-term growth (Is this an industry that is growing?)		
The Position	Work duties (Do the duties of the job interest me and use my skills?)		
	Potential for advancement (What opportunities are available?)		
	Position level (Where is the job in the organization? To whom do I report?)		
	Wages/benefits (Do they meet my needs?)		
	Hours (Do I consider them reasonable?)		
	Working conditions (What are the company's expectations and work style?)		
	Quality of job (How long has the position been open and why is it open?)		

Factors	Job Evaluation Checklist	Acceptable	Unacceptable
	Travel requirements (How much would I have to travel?)		
The Company	Growth potential (How has the company performed over the last several years?)		
	Planned expansion (What plans exist and how do they fit with the economy?)		
	Success (What are the company's debt/profit ratio and other indicators of success?)		
	Reputation (What is the company's reputation in the industry and with its employees?)		
	Management team (What is the tenure, growth, and origin of the management team?)		
Your Supervisors	Skills (What are the supervisor's training and previous work experience?)		
	Organizational position (Who do the supervisors report to and how long have they been in their jobs?)		
	Interaction/expectation (How well do I think I can work with the supervisor?)		
Environmental Concerns	Geographic location (Is the job someplace I would like to live?)		
	Area factors (Am I comfortable with the traffic, growth, cost of living, crime rate, etc.?)		
	Housing (Is affordable housing available and to my liking?)		

Factors	Job Evaluation Checklist	Acceptable	Unacceptable
	Recreation (Are recreation opportunities available and within reason?)		
	Schools (Are good schools available for my children, spouse, and self?)		
Company Benefits Available	Paid Vacations: How many days after a year of employment? After five years of employment?		
Health Insurance	Fully or partially paid by employer? Dependent coverage fully or partially paid by employer? Does coverage include: Vision care? Dental care? Alcoholism and/or Drug abuse treatment?		
Paid Sick Leave	Provided? Carry-over of unused days permitted?		
Paid Life Insurance	At least two times annual salary (for coverage based on earnings)? At least $15,000 (for coverage based on flat dollar amount)?		
Savings and Profit Sharing	Savings/thrift plans? Cash profit sharing? Deferred profit sharing?		
Qualified Plans	Pension Plan (Defined Benefit) Provided? 401K, 403B or other tax deferred retirement savings plans? Association, professional or union plans? Mutual fund retirement plans?		

Factors	Job Evaluation Checklist	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Other Benefits	Full or partial relocation allowance? Full or partial reimbursement for education expenses? Financial or legal counseling plan? Child care? Long-term incentive plans (stock options or other type of performance award)? Cars or transportation allowance provided for executives, sales people or managers who must travel?		

Components of a salary

Below is a summary of the various categories that make up a total compensation package. Each of these should be evaluated for its worth to you and your family. These may or may not be available at the company you are considering and these may or may not be negotiable. Many times an employee would rather have an increase in salary rather than specific benefits. However, company plans rarely offer this choice.

Pay

The primary means of compensation for most employers is earnings. Whether working as a salaried employee or an hourly worker, dollars are the primary means for compensation in most cases.

Benefits

The category of benefits is a vital one that many people do not consider when reviewing the entirety of their employment offer. A benefits package can offer a wide range of services.

Here is a list of some of the most common benefits. Keep in mind this list is not comprehensive, and there are many other types of compensation available in an employee/employer relationship. These are simply examples of the most common types of compensation found in today's workforce. When you get into negotiating for compensation, keep in mind that, for the employer, there is a dollar figure attached to any benefit offered and that value should be considered as you evaluate your total compensation offer.

Medical Insurance

Insurance for health-related costs is highly coveted in today's society, and many employers offer some type of health insurance coverage as a benefit. For full-time employees, a typical employer will cover the majority of costs for health insurance, often 70 percent employer responsibility and 30 percent employee responsibility. Other organizations offer different health packages, including 100 percent coverage by some employers, while others offer no health insurance at all. Health insurance plans vary in their offerings; be sure to read the terms of any plan offered.

Dental Insurance
Many employers who offer a health insurance plan will also have some type of dental insurance. Dental insurance packages often offer preventive care at little to no cost. For work beyond that, the employee assumes approximately 50 percent of any costs.

Vision Insurance
Similar in nature to dental insurance, vision insurance often offers preventive care at little to no cost, as well as some assistance on costs for glasses, contacts, etc.

Tuition Assistance
Many employers offer some type of benefit to compensate the worker for investing in education. The scope of this type of benefit can provide tuition assistance ranging from a few hundred dollars to graduate and doctoral degrees and may have requisite conditions for payment of benefits. Some companies will require a certain amount of tenure before and/or after expenses are reimbursed and may require a repayment of the benefit if the worker leaves before a predetermined amount of time after completing the education.

401(K) or Retirement Contributions
Most employers value workers who contribute to their organization over time. As a result, they offer contributions to retirement plans. The amount of compensation the employer will contribute to an individual's account varies greatly from one to four percent or more. Most of the time these contributions must vest, which means those dollars contributed to the individual retirement accounts are not immediately available to the individual. Instead, availability is based on a vesting schedule tied to a defined number of years or months of service to the employer. Once the worker is vested, those contributions transfer ownership to the individual.

Stock or Equity
Some companies offer individual workers an opportunity for ownership in the organization. This ownership may take the form of stocks or, in some cases, a percentage of ownership in the company for many small businesses in "startup" mode.

Often any stock or equity opportunity typically carries a caveat that outlines a "vesting" period similar to what was discussed a moment ago.

Profit Sharing
There are some companies who have set aside a predetermined percentage of profits for distribution to employees who qualify under the terms of the benefit. Each of these terms varies from employer to employer.

Transportation Allowance
Some employers subsidize your transportation expenses. This compensation can take the form of:

- A monthly car allowance
- A vehicle leased for the individual by the employer
- Contributions for public transportation, parking and/or other fees associated with travel or commute to work.

Communicating your decision to the employer

There are several choices you can make when you receive a job offer. You can:

- Accept the offer
- Reject the offer
- Request delay of the decision

Whatever your decision, communicate immediately either verbally or in writing. If the offer was made verbally, a verbal response is sufficient. If the offer was made in writing, a written response is required. Usually the written offer from the employer will include a second copy for you to sign and return. It is a good idea to request a written job offer, particularly if you are relocating for the job or if there is a time delay before actually starting work. If you are requesting to delay the decision, the request should be made verbally and then followed with a letter.

If you are accepting the position, be sure to verify the:

- Salary
- Benefits
- Position
- Starting date

Following are samples of various types of letters that correspond with your decision about offers. Use the examples to draft your own letters.

Sample #1: Offer Letter

January 14, 20xx

Lynn Green

2345 Brook Avenue

Englewood, Ohio 12345

Dear Ms. Green:

It is my pleasure to extend the following offer of employment to you on behalf of Pinkerton Services. This offer is contingent upon your passing our mandatory drug screen, our receipt of your college transcripts, and completion of criminal background check.

Title: Security Services - Uniformed Guard

The salary for this position will be paid in bi-weekly installments of $1,109.42, which is equivalent to $26,626 on an annual basis, and subject to deductions for taxes and other withholdings as required by law or the policies of the company.

Benefits: The current, standard company health, life, disability and dental insurance coverage are generally supplied per company policy. Eligibility for other benefits, including the 401(k) and tuition reimbursement, will generally take place per company policy. Employee contribution to payment for benefit plans is determined annually.

Vacation is accrued at 4 hours per pay period, which is equivalent to approximately two weeks on an annual basis.

Start Date: February 1, 20xx

If you are in agreement with the above outline, please sign below. This offer is in effect for (generally, five business days).

Signatures:

_____

(For the Company: Name)

_____

Date

_____

(Candidate's Name)

_____

Date

Sample #2: Acceptance Letter

David Sternz
600 Middletown Pike
Baltimore, MD 21201

February 1, 20XX

Ms. Peterson, Human Resource Manager
ABC Company
5555 ABC Drive
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Ms. Peterson:

Thank you for the offer for the position as accounting specialist. I accept the position with pleasure and look forward to making my contribution to ABC.

It is my understanding that the conditions of my employment are as follows:

- My initial salary will be $35,500 per year, paid in equal increments every two weeks.
- Benefits include accident, health, and life insurance, effective upon starting work.
- My probationary period lasts six months, with an initial performance and salary review after that time.
- Salary reviews are scheduled for every 6 months after completing probation.
- Written performance reviews occur each year on the anniversary of my initial employment.
- Vacation and sick leave accrue at a rate of one day per month and are cumulative.

As we agreed, my starting date will be February 15, 20XX. I enjoyed meeting you and look forward to working at ABC. If there are materials I should read or complete prior to the 15th, please send them to me. I can be reached at (777) 777-0000 any evening for additional information.

Sincerely,

David Sternz

Sample #3: Acceptance Letter

James Wilmore
158 N. Lincoln
San Diego, CA 92109

October 15, 20XX

Mr. Robert Garcia, President
ABC Industries
3000 Long Beach Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 91111

Dear Mr. Garcia:

Thank you for the confidence demonstrated in me as reflected in your offer as the Vice-President of Finance.

It is my understanding that the position reports directly to you and is responsible for legal, human resources, data processing, administrative services and long range planning.

The employment package includes:

- Annual Base Salary of $95,000.
- A bonus with a minimum range of 20% and a maximum of 50% of compensation
- Stock options (based on performance)
- Club membership at Golf International
- Company funded pension plan
- All relocation costs including purchase and sales costs of housing and mortgage assistance
- A review at six months

I look forward to starting with you January 1, 20XX.

Sincerely,

James Wilmore

Sample #4: Refusal Letter

Jonathan Riddle
600 Middletown Pike
Baltimore, MD 21201

February 1, 20XX

Ms. Chambers, Human Resource Manager
ABC Company
5555 ABC Drive
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Ms. Chambers:

Thank you for your offer of the position of accounting clerk. Unfortunately, I must decline. After serious consideration, I have concluded that the negotiated salary of $20,500 per year does not adequately compensate me for my skills and qualifications. Therefore, I will continue looking for work which falls into my expected salary range.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I wish you success in finding a suitable employee.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Riddle

Sample #5: Extension Letter

Peter Davis
600 Middletown Pike
Baltimore, MD 21201

February 1, 20XX

Ms. Katz, Human Resource Manager
ABC Company
5555 ABC Drive
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Ms. Katz:

Thank you for your offer of the accounting clerk position. I am very interested in the position. As I mentioned on the phone, I will need an additional two business days to make my decision.

I will call to inform you of my decision by February 5.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter Davis

Negotiate job offers

Sometimes you receive an offer that includes a mix of desirable and undesirable elements. Rather than turning down the offer, you may want to consider negotiating the terms of the offer with the employer. However, for the most part, employers will only enter into serious negotiations for upper level management and executive positions.

Before you decide to negotiate, you have to make some decisions.

- Be sure the issue is so serious you would not take the job unless it were changed.
- When you ask to negotiate, the employer may withdraw the offer. The employer may have other candidates who would be willing to take the job as offered. In some cases the employer may not be able to change the offer due to contract or budget limitations.
- If money is the issue, be sure you research and know the salary range you will accept. Having a range allows for compromise. For example, it may be easier for an employer to provide more in benefits than in salary by providing perks, like free parking or tuition assistance.

Following are some general suggestions and guidelines on negotiating.

1. Always keep a positive attitude.
2. Look at the total package (compensation, location, position, etc.)
3. Do not ignore job progression. You can compromise by accepting the job at the salary offered and asking for a review sooner than the company normally allows.

Negotiate in Person

A discussion offers the advantage of allowing you to deal with the employer's objection on the spot. If the job you are applying for is one where an offer may be made at the end of the interview, you should be prepared to negotiate at that point.

Negotiate in Writing

It is always preferable to negotiate in person, however, in some situations you may have no choice but to negotiate in writing. It can give you the opportunity to word your remarks carefully. It gives the employer a chance to evaluate your ideas, talk them over with others, and to make a counter offer. It avoids instant refusal. Remember to keep the letter positive and factual.

NOTES

Appendices

Gold Card

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

GOLD CARD

SERVICES FOR POST 9/11 ERA VETERANS

The One Stop Career Centers are ready to provide you intensive services for up to a six month period through an exciting array of career and supportive services to include:

- Case management
- Skills assessment and interest surveys
- Career guidance
- Job search assistance

HOW TO ACCESS GOLD CARD SERVICES?

- Information about Gold Card Services can be found at www.dol.gov/vets/goldcard.html.
- Locate your nearest One Stop Career Center by going to America's Service Locator www.servicelocator.org or by calling Toll-Free 1-877-US2-JOBS (1-877-872-5627) TTY: 1-877-889-5627.
- Once a One-Stop Career Center has been located, go there and present this Card.
- Information about other services and benefits can be found at www.ebenefits.va.gov and www.nrd.gov.

Eligible Veterans will receive priority of service in all Department of Labor funded employment and training programs

November, 2011

Your Name
Your Address
City, State Zip code
Phone - Email

OBJECTIVE *or* **SUMMARY**

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS *(Hint: Pull keywords and qualifications from job announcement and from company/industry research)*

- • •
- • •
- • •

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE *(Hint: Describe your role and accomplishments. Begin each bullet/sentence with an action verb. There is not a fixed number of STAR statements/bullet points. Write as many as you need to effectively target the job you are seeking.)*

Company Name, *City State* _____to _____

Job Title/Position

-
-

Company Name, *City State* _____to _____

Job Title/Position

-
-

Company Name, *City State* _____to _____

Job Title/Position

-
-

EDUCATION AND TRAINING (*Hint: Include all post-secondary degrees/diplomas. Include certifications, licenses, and training RELEVANT to the position*)

Employment History Outline

Michael Cook
135 Oak Street, Eastport, MD 21111
(301) 555-5555 michael.n.cook@gmail.com

U.S. Army, December 20XX – Present

- March 20XX – Present: Fort Campbell, KY
  - Team leader
  - Expert Infantry Instructor and Test Evaluator
  - Conventional warfare training with 5th Special Forces Group

- March 20XX – March 20XX: deployed to Afghanistan
  - Team leader
  - Expert Infantry instructor and test evaluator
  - Sniper
  - Ammunition Supply Point (2 months)

- March 20XX – April 20XX: Company A, 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, NY
  - Earned Expert Infantry Badge
  - Vehicle maintenance certifications
  - CBRN equipment

- December 20XX – February 20XX: Basic Training, Fort Benning, GA
  - Basic
  - AIT

August 20XX – December 20XX

- Retail Associate, 6-12 Convenience, Eastport, MD

Job Posting Example

Marketing Representative Needed – SUPER Home Remodeling Products, Baltimore, Maryland

Getting more out of your life and career starts now.

You're at the beginning of your career. You're motivated. Driven. Confident. You just need an opportunity to show someone what you can do. Here's your opportunity.

When you join the SUPER team — more than 1,300 strong and growing — you'll experience a shared dedication to a greater goal, and an opportunity to be part of a future-focused team of innovative leaders as we expand nationwide.

We're currently looking for future leaders to eventually oversee ongoing national expansion. If you have drive, a passion for marketing and the commitment to win at every level of your career, today is the day you make the decision to earn more, give more, and grow more.

Marketing Representative
As a full-time marketing representative you'll be trained on all of our products with the opportunity to generate business through the delivery of interactive presentations to prospective and existing clients. The gateway to several other career opportunities at SUPER, this outside marketing position will fine tune your communication skills, negotiation tactics, and strategic planning.

Primary job responsibilities include:

- Interface with decision makers on a daily basis
- Work in outside business development position in various settings including retail and event marketing
- Promotion of SUPER's products and services to prospective and existing clients
- Working knowledge of eco-friendly, green remodeling products and its benefits to the consumer
- Participation in ongoing training camps on a weekly basis

Qualifications:

- Highly developed interpersonal, organizational and communication skills
- Ability to speak publicly with confidence and poise
- Strong sense of ambition, self-motivation and self-discipline
- Resourceful problem solver
- Open-minded with a passion for learning a wide-range of skills that will carry through a variety of career paths
- Naturally outgoing and articulate individual who thrives in social settings
- Desire to mentor other colleagues after refining your skill set
- Language skills in English and Spanish
- BA/BS preferred but not required
- Ability to work Mon – Fri: 11 am to 7 pm & two Saturday's per month: 9 am to 3 pm

Salary and Benefits:

- $26,000-$35,000 base salary
- Full medical, dental, life and disability insurance plans.
- Paid vacation and holidays.
- A competitive 401(k) retirement savings program, matched by SUPER

About SUPER Home Remodeling

SUPER Home Remodeling Group is the most trusted name in replacement windows, siding, roofing, and entry doors. Trusted because we care about our products being energy efficient and cost effective. Trusted because we value integrity, honesty and true craftsmanship. Trusted because we believe in total customer satisfaction without compromise. Due to these commitments...we have been trusted by 200,000 homeowners nationwide.

Throughout our 50-year history, it's never just been about windows. It's been about delivering on our promises — to our customers and to our employees. When you join the SUPER team — more than 1,300 strong and growing — you'll experience a shared dedication to a greater goal.

With locations in eight major cities and aggressive plans to expand across the country, a career at SUPER is the 'more' you've been looking for

Master Resume Example

Michael Cook

135 Oak Street, Eastport, MD 21111
(301) 555-5555 michael.n.cook@gmail.com

Summary of Qualifications

Astute military professional with 8 years comprehensive ground combat experience that includes extensive training and simulation participation to ensure maximum readiness. Extensive knowledge of ground surveillance protocol, mine detection techniques and explosives removal procedures. Proven ability to adapt to new surroundings while remaining continuously observant, physically capable and mentally alert under pressure.

- Active secret security clearance
- Experienced with patrols, security, and conducting safety investigations
- Expert weapons qualifications on automatic and semi-automatic weapons
- Able to operate, troubleshoot and repair radios and other electronic equipment
- Effective manager and team player
- Instructor and test evaluator for numerous Soldiers on a variety of subjects
- 3 years' experience in the U.S. Army serving at stations in the US and overseas
- Fluent in Spanish and English

Work Experience

Infantryman, Fort Campbell, KY, U.S. Army, March 20xx-Present

Served as Team Leader for four-person team. Duties included:

- Supervised, trained and ensured the safety and welfare of a 4-person team, maintaining a 100% safety record.
- Ensured work areas were safe and hazardous materials were stored according to OSHA, EPA and DOD regulations, resulting in 0 workplace accidents.
- Consistently scored in the top 10% of a 100-person organization during the semi-annual physical fitness training. Received an Ironman designation. Performed daily regimen of physical fitness to include running, push-ups, sit-ups, road marches and lightweight training.
- Trained with 5th Special Forces Group in conventional warfare.

Served as Expert Infantryman instructor for unit and test evaluator for adjacent units. Skills taught and tested included:

- Protection from chemical and biological contamination.
- Preparation of a light anti-tank weapon for safe operation.
- Performance of corrective misfire procedures.

Infantryman, 12 month deployment to Afghanistan, March 20xx - March 20xx

Served as Team Leader for six-person team. Duties included:

- Inspecting team members' weapons and equipment for proper operation and 100% serviceability prior to deployment.
- Supervised, trained and ensured the safety and welfare of all assigned personnel and sustained a 100% safety record.
- Conducted more than 80 foot patrols in Afghanistan, and ensured safety of Soldiers and civilians; resulted in the identification and confiscation of over 700 pounds of explosive devices.
- Selected above 150 personnel in the unit and appointed to the distinguished position of Company Sniper.
- Successfully completed more than 15 sniper missions, enhanced overall safety of military patrol missions.
- Recognized by supervisors for excellent performance and awarded an Army Commendation medal during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Served as Expert Infantryman instructor for unit and test evaluator for adjacent units. Skills taught and tested included:

- Protection from chemical and biological contamination.
- Decontaminate personal individual equipment using chemical decontamination kits.
- Apply pneumatic splints to casualties with fractures.
- Insert Nasopharyngeal and Oropharyngeal Airways.
- Preparation of a light anti-tank weapon for safe operation.

Assigned to Post Ammunition Supply Point for 2 months. Duties included:

- Loaded, secured, and unloaded high explosive artillery rounds in vehicles.
- Conducted daily safety inspections throughout the facility.
- Implemented access control measures to ensure only authorized personnel entered the facility.
- Conducted hundreds of searches of vehicles and personnel entering the facility with zero breaches of security.
- Conducted weekly inventories of ammunition.

Infantryman, Ft. Drum, NY, March 20xx - April 20xx

- Operated and maintained 100% accountability for over $100,000 of equipment, including night vision goggles, multiband radios, laser target locator, and mine detection equipment.
- Certified to operate wheeled and tracked vehicles.
- Performed preventive maintenance checks and services before and after each trip.
- Logged over 400 hours and 8,000 accident-free hours as an operator.

- Inspected, issued and maintained 100% accountability for unit's chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense equipment, including personal protective gear and hazard detection devices.
- Earned Expert Infantry Badge

Basic and Infantry Training, Fort Benning, GA, December 20xx - February 20xx
Key skills acquired:

- Safe operation and maintenance of weapons
- Teamwork
- Safe handling of explosives
- Land navigation
- Operation of radios and other electronic equipment
- Emergency medical aid

Retail Associate, 6-12 Convenience Store, Eastport, MD, August 20xx - December 20xx

- Oversaw a team of four, ensuring full schedule coverage for weekend daytime shifts.
- Trained new employees on computers including point of sale system.
- Stocked display shelves and conducted weekly inventory reviews, ensured adequate stock and resupply.
- Fostered customer loyalty by providing friendly and efficient service.

Education
12 credit hours, University of Maryland University College, ongoing
5 credits, Columbia Community College, Baltimore, MD, 20xx
High School Diploma, Columbia High School, Columbia, MD 20xx

Military Training
Basic Combat Training, Infantry School, Fort Benning, GA 20xx
Advanced Individual Training: Infantry School, Fort Benning, GA 20xx
Combat Sniper Course, US Army 20xx
Combat Lifesaver Course, US Army 20xx
Infantry Drivers' Academy Course, US Army 20xx
Management Development Course
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Training (yearly)
Sexual Harassment Training (yearly)

Targeted Resume Example

Michael Cook

135 Oak Street, Eastport, MD 21111
Phone: (301) 555-5555 Email: michael.n.cook@gmail.com

Objective: Marketing Representative on the future-focused team at SUPER Home Remodeling

Summary of Qualifications:

Astute, results-oriented, self-motived professional, with a passion for excellence. Proven ability to adapt to new surroundings while remaining observant and accurately assessing what needs to be done in order to close a deal. Able to employ creative approaches and meet or exceed all designated objectives. Ability to distill complicated information into clear and concise messages for diverse audiences, and ensure that all parties reach mutually desired goals. Bilingual in Spanish and English. Relevant skills include:

- Troubleshooting
- Training and mentoring
- Inspecting and maintaining equipment
- Organizational and communication skills
- Scheduling meetings
- Interfacing with customers

Work Experience

Mentoring and Training

- Conducted training for 25+ members of the military on a variety of subjects. Ensured that all military members met training standards.
- Oversaw small groups of military members, ensuring each person was prepared and trained for the mission.
- Conducted inspections and patrols in the U.S. and overseas, ensuring safety and security. Maintained 100% accountability of all professional equipment.
- Trained newly hired employees at a retail store on shift responsibilities and point of sale system. Ensured 100% schedule coverage of weekend shifts.

Communication Skills and Customer-Facing Experience

- Conducted searches on hundreds of individuals and vehicles entering controlled space. Ensured zero security breaches and 100% understanding of and compliance with the government security regulations.
- Fostered customer loyalty by providing friendly and efficient service to hundreds of customers each week.
- Troubleshot electrical equipment which required speedy diagnosis through visual assessment and verbal reports. Correctly identified issues with electronics and repaired equipment ensuring that any nonoperational equipment was back in service within 24 hours.
- Utilize computers, communication equipment and personal navigation devices to complete tasks quickly and accurately.
- Communicated weekly status reports of ongoing projects and problem resolution through verbal and written presentations to leadership and stake holders.

Continuous Professional Development and Dedication to Quality

- Selected above 150 peers to serve in a distinguished role in the U.S. Army. Recognized by supervisors for excellent performance and awarded a commendation medal.
- Maintained 100% accountability over a 3-year period for over $25,000 of sensitive government equipment.
- Served as an instructor and test evaluator in five different subject areas. Provided instruction, testing and certification for more than 20 military members preparing for work in a war zone. Recognized by leadership for resourceful problem solving techniques.
- Scored in the top 10% of a 100 person organization during physical fitness training, resulting in a designation as Ironman.

Work History

December 20XX – Present, Infantryman, U.S. Army, various locations in the US and overseas
August 20XX –December 20XX – Retail Associate, 6-12 Convenience Store, Eastport, MD

Education & Training

Associate Degree, Business Administration, University of Maryland University College, anticipated completion June 20XX

Sample Resumes

Resume for William Hensvelt

Navy Corpsman (E4) transitioning after 4 years in the military

William Hensvelt

5223 Washington Avenue • Staten Island, NY 12345
(123) 456-7890 • bill.hensvelt@email.com

OBJECTIVE: A position as a Health Care Technician with Metropolitan Medical Services

KEY QUALIFICATIONS

Secret Clearance	Health Technologies	Leadership
Management	Bilingual	Customer Care
Electronic Medical Records	Microsoft Office	Administrative

EXPERIENCE

Naval Hospital, Jacksonville, FL 20xx – Present
Hospital Corpsmen 3rd Class
Carry out patient care and clinical services using an excellent bedside manner, strong communication skills, medical knowledge and technical skill. Perform medical administrative procedures, maintenance and repairs on equipment, and educational training on preventative care. Provide nursing care to over 400 patients annually.

- Admit, transfer, and discharge patients, ensuring all paperwork (electronic and paper) is completed accurately and correctly
- Conduct classes on disease prevention and wellness to several hundred Sailors each year
- Inspect and perform basic operator maintenance on equipment in patient rooms

USS Iwo Jima, Mayport, FL 20xx –20xx
Hospital Corpsmen 3rd Class
Experienced in the prevention and treatment of disease and injury, and assisting health care professionals. Served as battlefield corpsmen, rendering emergency medical treatment to include initial treatment in a combat environment.

- Provided emergency trauma care to over 100 wounded or injured Marines
- Administered immunizations and started intravenous infusions under challenging field conditions
- Led an evacuation team with four vehicles and eight Marines; conducted over 50 evacuation missions with more than 75 injured persons saving dozens of lives
- Taught CPR, combat first aid, and other emergency medical procedures to 400 Marines and Sailors

EDUCATION and TRAINING

- U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman Technical Training, San Antonio TX, 20xx
- EMT – Basic, National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians, 20xx
- 41 credits completed in Health Information Technology, Tampa College, 20xx

Resume for Boyd Linton

Navy Machinist's Mate (E5) separating after two enlistment terms

Boyd Linton
2341 McFarland St
NAS Jacksonville, FL 32212
(123) 456-7890
boyd.linton@email.com

OBJECTIVE: A position as a helicopter mechanic with the City of Los Angeles

SUMMARY

- Experience maintaining three models of helicopters
- FAA certified Airframe and Power Plant (A & P) Mechanic
- Active Secret Clearance (Sep 20XX)

EXPERIENCE

U.S. Naval Air Station, Jacksonville FL 20xx– Present
Aviation Machinist's Mate Second Class/Journeymen

- Maintained $584M fleet of 18 Sikorsky helicopters assigned to 3 squadrons; acquired diverse expertise on engines/related systems—passed FAA's rigorous commercial A & P evaluation.
- Selected as Quality Assurance evaluator; inspected 317 engine exhaust systems and identified potential no-fly discrepancies—rallied quick response maintenance crews…salvaged 43 sorties.
- During hurricane relief launch, detected engine start anomaly; isolated malfunction as cracked rotor head—expedited aircraft swap to spare; enabled search and rescue mission to continue unimpeded.
- During analysis of fuel systems, discovered out-of-tolerance test results; repeat testing validated find—traced to contaminated fuel truck; resulted in government receiving reimbursement of $75K for bad fuel.

USS Theodore Roosevelt, Norfolk VA 20xx –20xx
Aviation Machinist's Mate Third Class/Apprentice

- Completed challenging on-the-job training practicum 2 months ahead of schedule; gained MH60S and MH60R maintenance systems certifications—achieved 96% on complex knowledge exam.
- Inspected and installed fuel tanks on multiple aircraft types; identified faulty release on external tank during F-18 pre-launch—eliminated catastrophic safety hazard for $30M aircraft.
- Maintained shipboard MH-60 fleet's starter systems; removed and installed ignition units—facilitated 83 flights and execution of 350+ hours of carrier's $18M flying hour program.

SPECIALTY TRAINING

- Aviation Machinists Mate Core Training, Pensacola FL, 20xx
- H-60 Power Plants & Systems Maintenance, Jacksonville FL, 20xx

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Equal Employment and Opportunity Training 20XX
- Sexual Harassment Prevention Training 20XX
- Advanced First Aid/CPR Training 20XX
- Suicide Prevention Training 20XX
- Operational Risk Management Training 20XX
- Occupational Safety and Health Standards Training 20XX
- Information Security Training 20XX
- Disaster Preparedness Training 20XX

Resume for Bradley Patel

Army E-7 retiring after 20 years in uniform

Bradley Patel

1222 Javelin Court Fort Drum, NY 13602
(123) 456-7890 bradley.patel@email.com

Objective Supervisor position with Advanced Manufacturing Corporation

Professional Summary

Over 20 years of experience supervising, training, and motivating team members in the most challenging work environments.

Experience

Senior Manager *(U.S. Army Platoon Sergeant)*, Fort Drum, NY Sep 20xx– Present

- Supervised 40 team members in 150+ operational missions; identified vulnerabilities and overcame shortfalls with specialized training–success confirmed with Meritorious Unit Commendation Award
- By-name request to support compliance inspection preparation team; devised program review strategy for 58 inspection areas–achieved "Outstanding" rating during major command evaluation
- Led unit's inventory control and preventative maintenance processes for $250K vehicle fleet equipped with classified communication gear–eliminated downtime; sustained 100% accountability

Mid-level Manager *(U.S. Army Squad Leader)*, Fort Lewis, WA Jun 20xx –Aug 20xx

- Conducted 72 team-focused quality assurance inspections; validated standards compliance with a 97% pass rate–maximized operational readiness and elevated team competency in key processes
- Managed supply/equipment distribution of $1.2M high-value inventory; devised new re-utilization program underpinned with in-house vice contract repair–accelerated re-issue; saved $70K annually
- Developed revised curriculum for satellite communications system upgrade training; simplified complex vendor guidance with scaffold modules; raised end-of-course evaluation scores by 15%
- Expedited integration; improved multi-functional interoperability with end-users in the field

Front-line Supervisor *(U.S. Army Team Leader, Sergeant)*, Fort Carson, CO Jul 20xx – May 20xx

- Prepared 123 unit personnel for overseas deployment; validated passport/visa documentation, confirmed medical status, evaluated training records–eliminated processing readiness errors
- Established fitness competition with associate units; measured weight, strength, agility and speed factors–inspired teamwork; unit won 10 of 12 competitions; raised morale and physical readiness

Education

• A.S., Management, University of Massachusetts-Lowell		20XX
• Leadership and Management School ((Senior Leader Course)	12 Weeks	20XX
• Team Leadership Training (Advanced Leader Course)	8 Weeks	20XX
• First-line Supervisor Training (Basic Leader Course)	3 Weeks	19XX

Training

• Equal Employment and Opportunity Training	20XX
• Sexual Harassment Prevention Training	20XX
• Advanced First Aid/CPR Training	20XX
• Suicide Prevention Training	20XX
• Operational Risk Management Training	20XX
• Occupational Safety and Health Standards Training	20XX
• Information Security Training	20XX
• Disaster Preparedness Training	20XX

Combination Resume for Leonardo M. Ramirez
Air Force E-8 retiring after 26 years in the military

Leonardo M. Ramirez

4415 Elm Drive Salem, OR 93012
(555) 555-7777 laamirez@yyy.com

Objective

Assistant Warehouse Manager with National Logistics Corporation

Summary

Hands-on logistician with twenty years' experience improving the productivity and reliability of supply facilities. Trained, supervised, and supported hundreds of team members. Lean Six Sigma Certified (Green Belt). Areas of expertise include:

- Supply Chain Management
- Team Building
- Training and Mentoring
- Safety & Security
- Warehouse Automation
- Inventory Control

Professional Skills

Leadership and Supervision

- Supervised 120 military and civilian team members who handle over 1,450 parts and equipment worth $33M with a consistent no-loss record
- Monitored daily operations at three locations that provide logistics support for over 1,000 pilots, air crew members, and ground support technicians who operate and maintain nearly 400 aircraft
- Led a team of staff of eight Quality Assurance Evaluators who have performed over 460 technical inspections to verify that supply facilities meet or exceed operational and environmental requirements

Logistics and Distribution

- Managed warehouses and supply distribution points for aircraft parts, food, fuel and lubricants, munitions, and other items
- Developed database to track parts usage, achieving $16,000 in savings and eliminating 200 redundant items
- Wrote reference guides and operating instructions that increased the safe handling of hazardous materials, eliminating accidents and spills
- Developed streamlined procedures for shipment of aircraft parts to Asia from California, reducing delivery time from 10 to 4 days

Training

- Plan and inspect training programs for over 300 logistics and distribution team members
- Built a comprehensive Safe Warehouse Operations training program for new team members that reduced qualification time from 9 weeks to 4 weeks and reduced accident and damage incidents by 35 percent

Employment History

- Supply & Logistics Supervisor (Senior Master Sergeant), Travis Air Force Base, 20xx – Present
- Supply Specialist (Master Sergeant), Ramstein Air Base, 20xx –20xx
- Supply Technician (Technical Sergeant), Barksdale Air Force Base, 20xx –20xx

Education

Bachelor of Science in Business (Operations Management), Excelsior College, 20xx

Associates of Applied Science, Oregon Community College, 20xx

Resume for Jessica MacFarlane

Army Major (04) separating after 14 years in the military

Jessica MacFarlane

5268A Wolff Avenue, Fort Bliss, TX 79906
jessica.macfarlane@email.com
915-555-1212
www.linkedin.com/in/jessicamacfarlane

Experienced Information Technology & Support Professional

Objective

Director, Technology & Support, Paragon Manufacturing Systems

Summary

Computer scientist with established people skills and project management experience. Ensures complicated technology projects are completed on time and under budget. Able to quickly understand users' priorities and operating constraints and adapt systems to meet their unique needs. Recognized leader providing mentorship, strategic planning, and personnel development. Distinct areas of expertise include:

- Cyber Security
- End-user Analysis
- Compliance
- Project Management
- Network Design
- Recovery Techniques
- Cost-Benefit Analysis
- Contingency Planning
- Traffic Management

Relevant Experience

Information Management Officer — **U.S. Army**
Jan 20xx – Present — **Fort Benning, GA**

- Create, update, and monitor system compliance for 700 users with policies governing communications security, Internet and email usage, access controls, and incident response.
- Prepare, and implement departmental IT plans, including needs assessment, work plans, and resource management. Monitor processes to ensure progress and consistently meet timeline milestones and budget goals.
- Lead a team of more than 50 communications specialists, programmers, and network technicians who provide technical support to 8 organizations across 5 states.
- Generate technical reports and formal briefings to executive leaders on developing technologies, providing the data they needed to forecast departmental IT needs.
- Collaborate with 4 department leads to design, plan and implement proprietary database to manage inventory control of 2,500 computer components across multiple platforms.
- Direct daily operations of information management office with $1.2 million annual budget.

Special Projects Officer **U.S. Army**
Oct 20xx – Dec 20xx **Fort Hood, TX**

- Led study group that evaluated and selected hardware and software to upgrade communication networks at 3 military bases serving 65,000 users.
- Designed and supervised the implementation of a program that combined customized software, computer networks, and new processes that were adopted by 120 operating departments.
- Conducted monthly training inspections with geographically-dispersed units, leading to 98% mastery rate for students learning new computer systems.
- Planned and coordinated replacement of 1,300 obsolete computers with upgraded systems increasing efficiency over 75%. Created procedure to ensure continuity of upgrades.

Education & Training

U.S. Army Information Systems Manager Course, Fort Gordon, GA

Signal Officer Basic Course, Fort Gordon, GA

Bachelor of Science, Computer Science, California State University, Bakersfield, CA

Resume for Kenneth Jefferson

Navy Captain (06) retiring after 25 years in the military

Kenneth Jefferson

9343 Green Creek Lane ● Springfield, VA 22155 ● 703-555-1234 ●
KLJefferson@email.com

Objective: Vice-President of Strategic Planning at Interregnum Corporation

SENIOR EXECUTIVE

Results-oriented leader with 25 years of experience applying a unique mix of strategic analysis, operational management, personnel development, and marketing skills. Able to analyze data and detect emerging trends, and identify and evaluate alternate courses of action. Adept at balancing operational, financial, personnel, and regulatory constraints when managing projects. **Top Secret Security Clearance.**

Data Mining/Analysis – Policy Development – Stakeholder Relations – Budgetary Oversight
Written and Oral Communication – Program Development and Management

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

UNITED STATES NAVY **1992-Present**

Department Head, Defense Intelligence Agency, Washington, DC 2015 – Present

- Manage 40 joint military intelligence specialists who provide timely and accurate information to air, naval, and ground units across the globe.
- Revised all aspects of new member training program to ensure immediate effectiveness and full capabilities within 14 days of arrival.
- Review and synthesize data and reports from over 30 sources to prepare weekly Intelligence Summaries read by 300+ senior ranking Army, Air Force, and Navy military leaders.
- Deliver briefings that permit senior staff to quickly grasp the essentials of complex and ambiguous situations, enabling them to adapt operational plans in order to take advantage of rapidly-changing circumstances.

Commander, Recruiting Station, Los Angeles CA **2012 – 2014**

- Led a team of 50 recruiters and 16 support staff who were responsible for talent acquisition and applicant on-boarding; exceeded regional and national goals by 6 percent in FY10, 8 percent in FY11. Earned the Western Region's top performance award for two consecutive years.
- Ensured recruiting activities complied with federal, state and Navy employment policies and regulations resulting in zero complaints or infractions in FY10 and FY11.
- Redesigned on-boarding process and improved timeline by 15 percent over a two year period.
- Provided oversight for over $1 million in contracts with external vendors for advertising and special events, IT systems, and other support services ensuring compliance with federal contracting laws and requirements.
- Represented the U.S. Navy at 243 community relations events throughout California, Utah, and Nevada speaking to groups of 3-300 people.

Executive Officer, USS Decatur, San Diego, CA **2009 – 2012**

- Coordinated efforts of operations, navigation, engineering, and supply staff for 750 member crew during three deployment cycles ensuring operational readiness and mission completion.
- Conducted regular systems inspections to verify function and readiness of ship technical, weaponry, and communications systems valued at $1.8 billion.
- Supervised training requirements for 250 employees resulting in compliance with compliance with federal and organizational training requirements.
- Ensured personnel rosters, unit staffing assignments, orders, and reports were submitted accurately and ahead of schedule. Received superior performance award.

Deputy Director, US Seventh Fleet, Yokosuka, Japan **2005 – 2009**

- Directed daily operations of 80 member intelligence group in Asia-Pacific region.
- Served as multi-day Watch Officer during international security threat in Southeast Asia, supporting the safety and security of hundreds of local citizens.
- Conducted intelligence analysis in support of 4 multinational joint military exercises in Thailand, Korea, and the Philippines Islands improving the safety and security of 1,500 – 3,000 military personnel involved with each exercise.
- Developed comprehensive training plans for 185 personnel in order fulfill U.S. Navy and federal government regulations.
- Maintained 100 percent accountability for sensitive information and equipment valued at $27 million during 4 multinational joint military exercises.

EDUCATION and TRAINING

M.A. National Security and Strategic Studies, Navy War College, Newport, RI
(Honor Graduate)

M.S. American University, National Security Studies, Washington, DC
(Summa Cum Laude)

B.A. Business Administration, Cornell University

U.S. Navy Intelligence Officer Training Course, Dam Neck, VA

Completed numerous executive-level courses in project management, federal government acquisitions, leadership, and personnel management.

For “One-on-One” employment assistance contact your local American Job Center at www.veterans.gov