



Veterans' Guide

Helpful Career Tips for Those with
United States Military Experience



Marketing Military Veteran Experience On A Resume

As a military veteran, you have developed a number of transferable skills that can be applied not only in the military, but also in the civilian workplace. As a veteran, you have experience with:

- Leadership
- Responsibility, work ethic
- Supervision and managerial skills
- Commitment and dedication
- Accountability, meeting deadlines
- Ability to plan and multitask
- Strong attention to detail
- Written and verbal communication
- Organization and planning
- Conflict resolution, problem solving
- Results oriented
- Desire to learn and improve
- Team oriented
- Performing under pressure
- Accepting responsibility
- Resourcefulness
- Analyzing data or facts

Translating Military Experience On A Resume

In writing a resume, it's important to include your military experience and all the skills gained during that time. It's also important to do so in a way that makes complete sense to a civilian. To do so, consider translating your military experience to more civilian terms by following the steps below.

1 Write out a list of everything you did in each of your jobs using language that makes sense to you.

- If you get writer's block, try explaining it aloud to someone, preferably a civilian.
- It may be helpful to break your job duties and responsibilities into categories based on skills.
- Management, leadership, communication, research, technical, resourceful, organizational, etc.
- Example: Led an infantry team in combat operations, providing tactical and technical guidance to subordinates and professional support to both superiors and subordinates in the accomplishments of their duties.

2 Condense and present experiences in a cohesive and coherent manner that civilians could understand.

The use of military translators, like the following, can help get the ball rolling in translating military service to civilian terms. However, always make sure you express your experiences in your own words.

- military.com/skills-translator/mos-translator
- acinet.org/acinet/moc/default.aspx?audience=WP
- onetonline.org/crosswalk/MOC
- Navy: cool.navy.mil/index.html
- Army: cool.army.mil/index.htm

Common Translations:

- Mission = responsibility/task
- AO (Area of Operations) = responsibilities
- Commanded = supervised/directed
- Combat/War = hazardous conditions/conflict management
- Battalion/Platoon = organization/department
- Infantry = security force/personnel security
- Regulations = policy/guidance/handbook
- OAC = Officer's Advanced Training Course
- BLCD = Basic Leadership Development Course
- Words to Avoid: war, combat, battle rattle, IEDs, PT, weapons
- Example: Directed subordinates and superiors by providing tactical and technical guidance

3 Tailor each military job description to the specific civilian job to which you are applying.

To do this, decide whether or not the skill you learned in the military job is related and/or relevant to the civilian position. If it's not, remove it and replace it with the most relevant job you've held. Some jobs in the military, such as infantry, special operations forces, and artillery, may present challenges. In this case, continue to focus on transferrable skills. "Do I always have to translate my skills?" This answer depends on exactly where you are trying to get a job and who will be reading your resume or interviewing you.

- You may not have to translate the lingo if you are trying to land a job with the defense industry as either a federal or contracted individual; however don't assume you are exempt from entirely translating your skills.
- If your job in the military closely resembles the same job in the civilian world, the basic job description, in or out of uniform, is the same. The difference is that on your resume you can generically translate your military-specific accomplishments and responsibilities for understanding.
- You should definitely translate your military experiences if you are dealing with a civilian employer who is not familiar with any and all things military.

Classifying Military Experience On A Resume

Highlighting RELATED Military Experience:

- If you have military experience that is related to the position/field you are applying for, it is important that you highlight it on your resume.
- Include all related experience in a section at the beginning of your resume.
- Divide your experience by positions held or list all of your experiences in one section/under one job title.
- Whenever possible, list job duties and accomplishments with quantifiable data, such as numbers of employees managed, types of equipment/supplies handled, how much the equipment was worth, etc.

Highlighting UNRELATED Military Experience:

- There are many veterans that have held military jobs that are very different than what they are planning to get into now that they are a civilian.
- Just because your military experience is not related to your current career or job choice, does not mean it is invaluable.
- Veterans are known for their wealth of transferrable skills including leadership, teamwork, integrity, strong work ethic, dedication, loyalty, etc. Highlight these skills when writing your job description for your military work so an employer can make that connection.

Quick Tips

- Translate military jargon into civilian terms.
- Focus on skills, qualifications, and accomplishments that are transferrable.
- If you've held multiple different ranks and duties, highlight the ones with the most responsibilities or the most relevant to the position you are seeking.
- Provide a brief explanation for any phrases, titles, or acronyms that may not be self-explanatory.
- Avoid using military time, use civilian time.
- Quantify your experiences.
- Include relevant honors and awards.

Potential Military Search Sites

- Military & Veterans Career Center: military.com/Careers
- Vet Jobs: vetjobs.com
- Transition Assistance Online: taonline.com
- Career One Stop: careeronestop.org/militarytransition
- Wall Street War Fighters Foundation: wallstreetwarfighters.org
- US Office of Personnel Management: fedshirevets.gov
- Veterans' Employment and Training Service: dol.gov/VETS
- Office of Veterans Business Department: sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/ovbd/index.html
- US Army Material Command: amc.army.mil/pa/amccareers.asp
- Regional Veterans Employment Coordinators: 4.va.gov/VECS/index.asp
- Military Stars: militarystars.com
- America's Heroes at Work: americasheroesatwork.gov
- Student Veterans of America: studentveterans.org

- USA Jobs: usajobs.gov/veteranscenter
- Vet Success: vetsuccess.gov
- Recruit Military: recruitmilitary.com
- Military Hire: militaryhire.com
- The Veterans Corporation: veteranscorp.org
- G.I. Jobs: gijobs.com
- Clearance Jobs: clearancejobs.com
- Army Career and Alumni Program: acap.army.mil
- Hire Vets First: hirevetsfirst.dol.gov
- Turbo Tap: turbotap.org
- Troops to Teachers: proudtoserveagain.com
- Ideal Military Hire: idealmilitaryhire.com
- Military Connection: militaryconnection.com
- Veterans2Work: veterans2work.com

Social Media

Networking is an important part of the job search process. To begin, it may be helpful to start networking with other veterans. Take time to get to know them. You may consider asking them about their transition from the military to a civilian career. One way to find other veterans near you is through military.com's Career Network (benefits.military.com/vcn/search.do). You may also consider the following:

LinkedIn Groups:

- U.S. Government Connections (over 9,000 members)
- U.S. Military Veterans Network (over 6,000 members)
- The Value of a Veteran (over 700 members)
- Military Network (over 3,000 members)
- US Veteran Recruiter-Candidate Connection (200+ members)
- Military Veterans Employment (over 500 members)

Twitter Groups:

- IdealMilHire" (Ideal Military Hire)
- USDOL (US Department of Labor)
- Wbveterans (Welcome Back Vets)
- Recruitmilitary (Recruit Military)
- USJFCOM (US Joint Forces Command)
- Greenjobs4vets (Veterans Green Jobs)

Marketing Military Experience In An Interview

In most interview situations, questions of candidates are generally open-ended and behavioral in nature. This allows you to show your ability to analyze situations, offer solutions, make decisions, take on leadership roles, and show your creativity. To showcase your skills, abilities, and career goals, consider the kinds of questions you might be asked and try to identify how you would answer such questions. The following questions are a few that if answered strategically, could give you the opportunity to market your military service to employers during an interview.

General Interviewing Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you consider your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?

Leadership Interview Questions

- Describe your leadership style.
- How do you work under pressure?
- What are some of the challenges you've experienced as a leader?
- How do you motivate people?

Answering the questions you may be asked is more than providing a yes or no answer, or giving general information. Instead, be more strategic with your answers by utilizing the "STAR" method to showcase your skills and abilities.

S = SITUATION	DESCRIBE THE SITUATION
T = TASK	DESCRIBE THE TASK YOU NEEDED TO ACCOMPLISH
A = ACTION	DESCRIBE THE ACTION/BEHAVIOR YOU TOOK AND WHY
R = RESULTS	DESCRIBE THE RESULTS/OUTCOMES OF YOUR ACTIONS

- Describe a time when you set a goal. How did you go about accomplishing it?
- Tell me about a time when you were in a team environment. What is your style participating in a team?
- Describe a time when you had to use your problem solving skills.

SAMPLE: Tell me about a time when you had to improve upon a process.

(Situation) "We have many employers that recruit our students and organize recruiting events. However, often times these events were not well attended and employers were growing frustrated. Students are very busy and have many priorities and commitments so often these events get lost in the shuffle."

(Task) "I really needed to restructure our recruiting process and think of ways to increase student attendance and visibility for employers on campus."

(Action) "I decided to condense all recruiting activities into two dedicated weeks per semester so we could market the whole period as a major event. Starting with new student orientation in August, we could advertise this period to students so they knew this was the time to meet employers and could mark it on their calendars. I also conducted proactive outreach to employers to tell them about the recruiting period so they could plan their events for this time. Finally, I organized a career fair during the period which would draw many more students than an organization's individual recruiting event."

(Result) "As a result, there was more visibility for the recruiting period and events among students and in many cases, attendance at recruiting events was doubled to what it was in the past. Also, the career fair drew over 100 students, which is a much higher number than any employers ever saw at individual recruiting events. Employers saw many students and were satisfied with their recruiting experience."

Resources:

Florida State University - Transitioning from the Military (career.fsu.edu/IMAGES/PDFS/Guides/TransitioningFromTheMilitary.pdf)

Grantham University - Military to Civilian Transition Manual

Illinois State University - Marketing Athletic Experience on a Resume

Quick Military Transition Guide: Seven Steps to Landing a Civilian Job

University of Tennessee - Veteran Resume Guide (career.utk.edu/CS/wp-content/uploads/pdf/Military-Resume.pdf)

University of Tampa - Resource Guide (ut.edu/uploadedFiles/Campus_Life/Career_Services/Current_Student/VETERANS_Resources.pdf)

Career Center
Illinois State University
110 Student Services Building
Campus Box 2520
Normal, IL 61790-2520
Phone: (309) 438-0230
Email: CareerCenter@IllinoisState.edu

CareerCenter.IllinoisState.edu



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[IllinoisState.edu/LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/IllinoisState.edu/LinkedIn)