



WINNING THE TALENT WAR THROUGH MILITARY HIRING

Military veterans comprise a rich and plentiful talent pool for today's civilian jobs. But to maximize the effectiveness of service people in the workplace, organizations must adopt military-friendly practices for recruiting, onboarding, developing and retaining this unique population of workers. This brief sheds light on the challenges and benefits of hiring veterans and offers best practices for using a military talent program to turn service members' strengths into an organization's competitive advantage.

CHALLENGES TO MILITARY EMPLOYMENT

On average, more than 250,000 service members left the military each year between 2009 and 2012.¹ Of those recently leaving the service, 90% are age 35 or younger.²

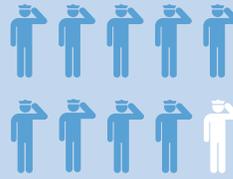
That's a sizable influx of highly trained individuals into the job market at a time when organizations struggle to find qualified talent. Still, employers face challenges in recruiting veterans and bringing them onboard: cultural differences between military and civilian work environments, difficulty articulating military skills and experience in lay terms, and lack of understanding about service-related disabilities can hinder a smooth transition.³

250,000+

service members **left the military annually** from 2009-2012.

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of them were **age 35 or under**.



BENEFITS OF HIRING VETERANS

Organizations that adopt military-friendly hiring practices stand to benefit greatly from the strengths that veterans typically bring to the job, including leadership, technical and collaborative skills as well as desirable work traits such as action-orientation, reliability, and organizational commitment.⁴

In addition, employers may receive tax incentives for hiring veterans, such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), and may get government subsidies to help cover certain training costs.⁵

What Employers Stand to Win Through Military Hiring



Key workforce skills



A large volume of experienced candidates



Valuable employee characteristics



Tax Incentives



Government subsidies for training

¹Defense Manpower and Data Center, Military Separations Data, FY2009-FY2012, as cited in U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Hiring Our Heroes/U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Guide to Hiring Veterans, 2014, p. 5.

²Defense Manpower and Data Center, Military Separations Data, FY2012, as cited in U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Hiring Our Heroes/U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Guide to Hiring Veterans, 2014, p. 5.

³Apollo Education Group, Hiring Heroes: Employer Perceptions, Preferences, and Hiring Practices Related to U.S. Military Personnel, 2011 and 2015, p. 5; cf. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Hiring Our Heroes/U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Guide to Hiring Veterans, 2014, p. 4.

⁴Apollo Education Group, Hiring Heroes, p. 14; cf. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Hiring Our Heroes/U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Guide to Hiring Veterans 2014, p. 3.

⁵Find information on Special Employer Incentives (SEI) through the Department of Veterans Affairs: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/VOW/for-employers.asp>.

MILITARY HIRING BEST PRACTICES

Employers can improve their access to military talent—and maximize the value of their military hires—by implementing the following proven practices.⁶

- 1. Commit to results.** Consider your organizational goals, and set benchmarks for military hiring—e.g. increasing the annual percentage of veteran new hires, the military recruitment budget, etc.

Engage current employees in supporting and celebrating the contributions of service members to society and the workplace.
- 2. Learn military basics.** Familiarize yourself and hiring managers with basic military staffing terminology and relevant acronyms such as MOC (military occupational categories) and MOS (military occupational skills), as well as military cultural values (service, respect, team orientation, etc.). Consider partnering with an educational institution that offers “Military 101” workshops for managers.
- 3. Translate skill needs.** Assess your organization’s talent gaps, and identify the military equivalents of the required jobs and skills using the online Civilian-to-Military Occupation Translator at CareerOneStop: www.careeronestop.org/reemployment/veterans/civilian-to-military-translator.aspx
- 4. Tap veteran talent sources.** Utilize educational, government, and nonprofit resources specializing in military career transitioning such as university talent acquisition services and Hiring Our Heroes, a U.S. Chamber of Commerce initiative to increase veterans’ employment.
- 5. Educate and celebrate.** Communicate your organization’s commitment throughout all functional areas and staff ranks.
- 6. Flex the work environment.** Provide flexible schedules to accommodate military transitioning services, medical appointments, and reservist duties. Flexible schedules generally do not hinder productivity.⁷
- 7. Clarify success measures.** Ensure your military hires understand how they will contribute to organizational outcomes, and how their performance will be measured. Have each hire create an individual development plan (IDP) tied to enterprise goals.
- 8. Create affinity groups.** Develop and support military employee resource groups and networking forums to foster engagement and peer-to-peer mentoring.
- 9. Revisit the commitment.** Periodically track progress toward your hiring commitment, and adjust as needed.
- 10. Display military-friendliness.** Update your organization’s external marketing to reflect its pro-military hiring policies and culture.

LEARN MORE

A global leader in adult learning and professional development since 1973, Apollo Education Group offers full-service talent development solutions to help companies build and sustain a competitive workforce that includes military hires. Partnering with industry leaders and employers to identify talent gaps and skills needs, we take a research-driven, customer-focused approach to designing and delivering talent acquisition strategies, training programs, and measurement tools to fit our clients’ needs. To learn more, contact your Apollo Education Group representative or visit apollo.edu/APD.

⁶These practices reflect strategies identified by leading authorities on military career transitioning. See Sherrill A. Curtis, Support from Behind the Lines: 10 Steps to Becoming a Military-Ready Employer [published by SHRM], 2012; U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Hiring Our Heroes/U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Guide to Hiring Veterans, 2014; Institute for Veterans and Military Families, Launching a Veteran Employment Program: Best Practices in Recruiting, Hiring, Onboarding and Retaining Veterans, 2013; U.S. Department of Labor: Hiring Veterans: A Step-by-Step Toolkit for Employers, <http://www.dol.gov/vets/ahaw/>; Office of Veterans and Military Affairs at JPMorgan Chase, Military 101: Introduction to Hiring Military Candidates, 2013; White House Business Council, Guide to Hiring Veterans, 2012.

⁷Cf. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Hiring Our Heroes/U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Guide to Hiring Veterans, 2014, p. 30.