



Put Yourself in the Returning Veterans Shoes - Moving from Not-for-Profit to For-Profit jobs

Perhaps the largest not-for-profit employer in our nation, the military, employs hundreds of thousands of people who when their tour of duty ends or they choose to retire, they must, in most cases enter the civilian (for-profit) job market.

Today, most hiring managers may not have military experience so will not know how to maximize a veteran's potential. Veterans are punctual, well-groomed, organized, analytical and leaders. They complete tasks, possess good work ethics and communication skills, and have conflict-resolution capabilities. Veterans know how to follow a chain of command and can quickly integrate as part of a cohesive team. All of these characteristics or traits are considered "soft skills" that all employers hope their employees possess.

How do veterans go about effectively transferring the skills they learned in the military to the corporate environment?

There are 105 military-transferrable occupations. To see a listing of military occupations, you may follow the link to a website that correlates your military position through transferrable skills to a civilian position - http://www.military.com/Careers/Content1/0,13587,skills_leader,,00.html

For example:

In the Army your position may have been:

You could transfer your skills to be:

Multiple launch rocket system	Mobile Heavy Equipment mechanic or Engineering technician
Armor	Maintenance mechanic
Multimedia illustrator	Art director, painter, illustrator, graphic designer, or electronic pagination system operator
Multi-channel transmission systems	Electronics mechanics and technicians, data processing equipment repairer, or a communications manager
Supply Systems Technician	Purchasing Manager

As you search for a job, you may need to help a private sector interviewer understand what your military title would translate to in the private sector, for example – a commanding general is the equivalent of a CEO – Chief Executive Officer. Be proud of the rank you achieved. Help civilians understand the military better by explaining the comparisons.

Determine the private sector names for skill sets that you gained in the military. This will enable you to complete an application that will list skills as they relate to the job for which you are applying.

Teamwork is typically encouraged in the private sector. Being able to relate to an interviewer how you accomplished your jobs through the efforts of your military team will help you begin the process of explaining all of your transferrable skills.

How do you use your skills as a military medic in the for-profit workplace? (replace medic with another military skill)

Here are the steps:

- Identify whether you need credentials.
- Determine where and how you can earn them.
- Plan how you will complete the credentialing process.

You went through special training to learn to be a medic. Could you use those skills as a paramedic in the private sector? The answer is yes. But just as other paramedics are required to do, you would need to obtain a credential to find employment. Credentials are obtained through a license obtained from a local, state or federal government agency or a certificate from a private organization that maintains skill set standards. Our paramedic example would then mean that in Illinois, you would need to find a program associated with a hospital, complete any coursework, have a specified number of practicum hours, and pass a certification test.

Some skills directly relate to private sector like doctors, nurses, surveyors, or musicians. Others will take a bit of thought and research to find a correlation. No matter what, you will need to follow some of the same steps to find a job as everyone else in the private sector job market.

You will need a professional resume, current interview skills and the ability to network. Networking not only helps with finding a job, but may assist you in the switch between military and private sector. In a world of "Sir, yes sir", saluting and extreme professionalism, a veteran making the transition into the for-profit business world may feel ill at ease in the less structured environment that is typically today's global marketplace. Networking with other veterans who have successfully made the transition may help your own transition.

When trying to find a job a few resources for vets include: Military.com Mentor network, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Women in Military Service for America Memorial. Networking will help you build your interpersonal skills as you rebuild old connections or forge new ones. Networking with other veterans can help your awareness of employment obstacles in the job market; can help you with job leads; or, may be able to help you find other resources like start-up capital for an entrepreneurial endeavor.

How we can help – We offer many resources to help you gain a new position on your way to a career. The Employment and Training Representatives at [Kane County Department of Employment and Education](#) can help you create a professional resume, refresh your interview skills, or help you find ways to network effectively. Visit www.illinoisworknet.com and click on the JOBS link, you can find additional tips to help you in your job search.

Four Offices to serve you:

Elgin – 30 DuPage Court	847-888-7900 x 230
N. Aurora – 2 Smoketree Plaza	630-844-6640 x 203
DeKalb – 1701 E. Lincoln Hwy.	815-756-4893 x 240
Yorkville – 811 W. John St.	630-553-8304

www.kcdee.org

