



# Hiring Veterans – A Guide for Small Businesses

*By: Syracuse University, Institute for Veteran and Military Families*

Your company has made the decision to hire at least one U.S. military veteran. With that in mind, here is a short and helpful checklist to guide your hiring efforts.

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## HOW TO FIND A VETERAN FOR YOUR JOB OPENING

*The best veteran candidate may not be in the same geographic location as your company, which is why a broader search will help you find the right applicant. Many veterans are willing to move for their next job and most transitioning servicemembers can utilize their Department of Defense permanent change of station allowance to move themselves and their families to the location of their next job. Use the approach that works for your company's capacity and geographic make up.*

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- Ask current veteran employees to help in recruitment efforts. Seek their input on how to attract veteran applicants and referrals.
  - Reduce your recruitment costs by posting your job openings on several free websites that veterans review often including:
  - Post your job opening(s) on your [state job bank](#). For example: [California](#) (select "Yes" for Veteran).
  - Post your job opening(s) on [Hero 2 Hired](#).
  - Contact a local Veterans Employment Representative at an [American Job Center](#). Tell them that you want to hire a veteran. They will do the heavy lifting for you
  - Post jobs on [Vetsuccess.gov](#) (create a username and password).
  - Post your job opening on the [Veterans Job Bank](#). Follow the instructions for Employer Participation.
  - Consider using **social media** to post jobs and find veteran candidates. Start by creating a [Facebook](#) page and/or a [LinkedIn](#) profile for your business.
  - For your industry segment, contact a trade organization or other industry collaborators. This will help to expedite your recruitment efforts and identify industry-specific resources for veteran recruiting and onboarding.
  - Consider aligning with veteran service organizations (VSO's) in your community. Find local VSO's by visiting the [national directory](#).
  - [Student Veterans of America chapters](#) can help you contact career centers at local universities, colleges and trade schools.
  - Participate in veteran-focused career fairs and hiring events where practical and appropriate; [find a Hiring Fair near you](#).
  - If your company's goals include hiring and advancing veterans with disabilities, consider using the [Career Center for Wounded Warriors and Disabled Veterans](#) website as a resource.

## LEARN MORE ABOUT MILITARY JOB CANDIDATES

*If you have decided to hire a veteran, you don't need to be convinced that your business will benefit. Make sure the rest of your team understands how the skills and competencies brought by a veteran or transitioning service member will enhance your company's success.*

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- Learn more about military job candidates, their unique experiences and the training they gained while in the military. Within this website find “Military 101” and “Business Case for Hiring a Veteran,” which are great resources to learn more.
- To help recruit a military candidate, determine what skills and knowledge your open job(s) require and if there are military occupations that use those skills. Consider using that language when posting job openings.
- There are several resources to help translate military to civilian occupations:
  - Consult internal veteran employees to understand distinctions and describe the military roles that align with your job openings.
  - O\*Net Online offers the [Military to Civilian Crosswalk](#) that can be used to search for military classification codes that best correspond to a particular civilian job title.
  - Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) offers websites to help determine how military careers, ratings and experience can translate to meet job descriptions, civilian certification and license requirements: [Army](#) and [Navy](#).

## INTERVIEWING MILITARY CANDIDATES

*Interviewing is an opportunity for candidates to expound on their resumes and convince you they are the best person for the job. In the case of transitioning servicemembers and veterans, they may seem unforthcoming about their capabilities. That is because they are accustomed to thriving in a team environment and not necessarily advocating for themselves. Keep that in mind and ask for specific examples about their skills, experiences and goals.*

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- Ask questions to identify the applicant's experience and qualifications:
  - What military training did they receive?
  - Does the candidate meet the minimum job requirements – whether through military training, their military experience or education?
  - Look for evidence of distinctive leadership, teamwork and problem solving.
  - During the interview, explore the applicant's level of responsibility. Discuss the actual job tasks performed and associated results achieved. For example, a weapons loader on a ship or an infantry soldier may not seem like a perfect fit for your firm, but when you dig down it may become evident that these servicemembers have managed budgets, overseen equipment maintenance, developed logistics strategies and led personnel; skills which are aligned with the talents you need to fill the job.
  - Identify whether the candidate has specific functional certification(s) that support the open position (e.g., HazMat for truck drivers, Certified Public Accountant for finance positions, etc.)
- Check whether the candidate belongs to professional associations that demonstrate commitment to their field of expertise. Affiliations with any clubs, sports, coaching, etc. can also be a sign of leadership abilities.
- If appropriate, ask the candidate to address his/her frequency of job changes. Numerous job changes may be due to weak economic conditions, a military spouse forced to relocate, multiple Guard and Reserve deployments or an inability to find a job in his/her desired field of expertise.
- Learn More - Some of the best tips and information for employers can be found at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs [Veteran Employment Toolkit](#)
- Should you hire the veteran applicant, your company may be eligible for a tax incentive for hiring a veteran. Read about the [Work Opportunity Tax Credit](#) Vow to Hire Heroes provisions.
- Review the [USERRA Advisor](#) to understand veterans' rights and responsibilities.



## ABOUT THE 100,000 JOBS MISSION

Launched in 2011, the 100,000 Jobs Mission is a coalition of companies committed to hiring at least 100,000 U.S. military veterans by 2020. For more information about the 100,000 Jobs Mission, visit [jobsmission.com](http://jobsmission.com).

100,000 Jobs Mission Leading Practices promote the use of business case research in recruitment, hiring, retention and advancement of veterans in business and industry to enable the creation of veteran employment initiatives.

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