

# Moving Veterans Forward Career Toolkit



# Transitioning from the Military into your next career

- The Moving Veterans Forward Program is a complimentary service from PRSA to assist transitioning military service members
- This program offers 20 free PRSA memberships each year for one year, allowing you to continue to learn your craft as you transition
- Through it, we can help you tailor your next steps for a successful career change



# Military Accomplishments Fitting Into Civilian Jobs

- Your military experience has made you an expert communicator.
- Your troops have depended on you; you have dispatched orders, handled crises, and saved countless lives.
- But how do you translate these skills to get hired?
- There's much hope, and PRSA is here to help.



# Your Career Battleplan

You served your country and you're ready to transition into civilian life. PRSA is here to help. The first step is finding the right job that emphasizes your skills as a leader, motivator and team player. This document provides the following career content to place you on that path. Topics being covered are:

Networking

Job interview

Overall tips

LinkedIn

Personal branding

Cover letters

Resumes

Phrases to assist

Converting Military to Civilian Terms

The Job Interview

Facing Recruiter Feedback with Grace

Fields to Consider

Additional resources

Final remarks

# Networking Opportunities

- PRSA Chapter events
- PRSA Professional Interest Sections
- MyPRSA Online Community
- Survey your network
- Build your network on LinkedIn, Facebook or Google+.
- Get out there and Network!



# PRSA Jobcenter Career Resources

Job hunting  
advice

Resume and  
cover letter  
help

Networking  
guides

Interview  
advice

Mentoring

Salary  
Information

Career  
guidance from  
your peers

# Overall tips

- Build relationships.
- Give to get (reciprocity).
- Find mutual personal interests.
- Write a blog.
- Be honest and authentic.
- Engage on social media.
- Join the Military and Veterans Task Force Community in PRSA



# LinkedIn

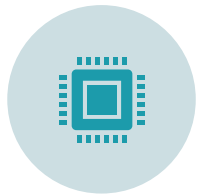
- Profile is the most important element.
- Use the “specialties” section to place keywords.
- Must have a picture.
- Say what you do (e.g., multi-cultural program).
- Keep profile relevant and up-to-date.
- Make sure your resume and profile match.
- Complete your profile.
- Join up to 50 different specialty groups.



Information courtesy Sandy Charet –  
Charet Associates.



# Personal Online Branding Guidelines



Can you be found online easily? If you were to Google yourself, where would you place and can you be found?



Build, enhance and/or check your profiles on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter etc.



Start building an online portfolio of your work.



Establish a blog or other social media platform to provide thought leadership about your field.



Do this wisely. Everything you post online —pics, comments is now public domain.

# Personal Branding: Your Brand Identity

## 1. Establish an online identity.

- Own your domain name.
- Differentiate yourself.
- Develop consistent LinkedIn,
- Twitter, Facebook and other profiles
- Work with [brandyourself.com](http://brandyourself.com)

## 2. Personalize URLs

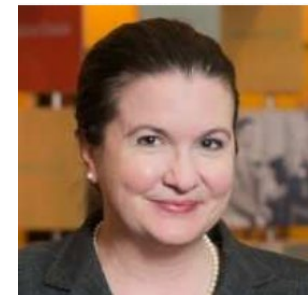
- Strengthens your search engine optimization (SEO) related to your brand.
- Check through <http://namechk.com/> if name is still available.

## 3. Develop content

- Use Google Alerts to receive daily updates on selected topics.
- Share content through a personal blog site such as WordPress.

# Your Brand Identity

4. Promote brand name.
5. Promote content.
6. Actively network via associations and LinkedIn.
7. Engage your audience.
  - Review and respond to postings in a timely manner.
  - Post questions to the group.
8. Monitor your brand.
  - Establish a Google Alert for your brand.
  - Use tracking sites like Social Mention.
9. Measure your online engagement.
  - Based on actions such as retweets,
  - @messages, follows, comments and likes.
10. Manage your brand presence.



*Information courtesy Dr.  
Dawn Edmiston.*

# Cover Letters

- Showcase key qualifications and what sets you apart from other candidates.
- No more than two paragraphs.
- Inspiring and brief.
- Grab their attention. Do not repeat your resume. Study the job description and company.
- What can you add to the position that no one else can?
- Put just enough in the cover letter to entice, but not too much.



# Resumes

Six seconds to attract  
a recruiter's attention

Keep it organized

Review it

- - Upload your resume to PRSA Jobcenter and opt-in for a free resume review

Start with a  
background summary

Use language in the  
job description

Express your  
accomplishments,  
achievements and  
service

# Resume Background Summary

Suggestions from recruitment experts

*“Emphasize strong hands-on skills, strategic thinking and leadership ability.”*



**George Jamison Spencer Stuart**

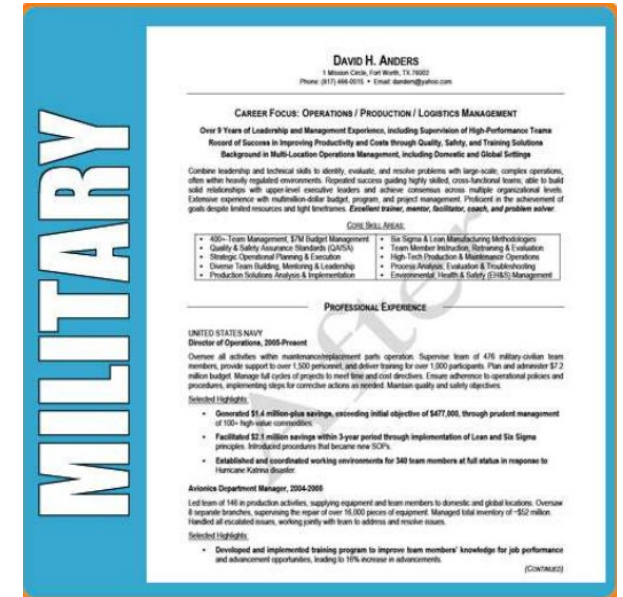
*“Include most prominent public relations skills, niche specialty/categories, industry specialization.”*



**Dennis Spring of Spring Associates**

# Resume Guidelines

- Focus on what you've accomplished for past employers.
- Tightly target to your audience. Use relevant words.
- Use action words that paint a picture of who you are and your value.
- Use storytelling techniques.
- Make the resume fit each opportunity. Tailor the resume to each job description.
- Match keywords to the job description.
- Create one very long “master” resume and pull what you need for each application based on job description.
- Attend on-base resume writing courses when available.
- No two resumes should look the same.
- Google “resume that went viral.”
- Log on to PRSA Jobcenter as employer and select “view resumes.”



Information courtesy PRSA Mentors and College of Fellows

# Potential Phrases to Incorporate in Your Resume (Communications)

- Led multi-service communications team.
- Developed external/internal communications program.
- Employed communication strategies/programs.
- Identified communication gaps and initiated updates.
- Managed marketing and communications strategy.
- Managed marketing and communications execution.
- Spokesperson at unit/regional levels.



# Phrases to Consider (Media Relations)

- Responded to international, national and local media.
- Directed outreach campaign.
- Targeted themes.
- Coordinated integrated public outreach programs.
- Responded to media queries.
- Created talking points.
- Spearheaded service line marketing/development campaigns.
- Targeted national outreach.
- Provided interview techniques.

# Phrases to Consider (Strategic)

- Results-oriented communicator.
- Developed outreach strategies.
- Developed strategy/executed plans for senior leader implementation.
- Defined and executive integrated marketing strategies.
- Developed marketing and business strategies.

# Phrases to Consider (Leadership)

- Provided sound advice and counsel.
- Wrote implementation plan for field headquarters.
- Orchestrated branding campaign.
- Prepared health care and Air Force senior leaders to succeed in media engagements.
- Led seminars.
- Led public-relations-focused trips.
- Guided the Air Force through career field mergers following workforce cuts.

# Phrases to Consider (Social Media & Tactical)

- Directed Facebook page.
  - Developed social media plan.
  - Initiated company blog.
  - Created Pinterest page for company.
  - Created and maintained Twitter page.
  - Led content curation for blogs and tweets.
- 
- Produced e-newsletter.
  - Tracked results.
  - Possess strong organization skills.
  - Able to translate technical information into easy-to understand text.

# Converting Military to Civilian Terms: Example

Military platoon leader, leading petty officer, section leader = front line supervisor in the corporate world.

- Supervised and evaluated up to 75 employees.
- Conducted high-quality training for groups up to twenty-five employees.
- Improved staff productivity and efficiency by 30 percent.
- Enforced 100 percent of company policies and procedures.
- Submitted comprehensive and timely reports to supervisor.



Source: TAPS Guide

# Converting Military to Civilian Terms: Creating Accomplishment Statements

Think of this as a story with a title. Identify the scenario. Some topics (titles) may include:

- A task you performed alone.
- A project you worked on as a team member/team leader.
- A challenge you overcame in the job setting.
- A problem you solved.
- A goal you set.

*Source: TAPS Guide*

# Converting Military to Civilian Terms: Measurable Results (Examples)

- ... which reduced accidents from 30 percent to fewer than 2 percent in two weeks.
- ... which enabled constant communication in four different states.
- ... which increased the training rate of employees by 45 percent.
- ... that provided search and recovery support for disaster victims.



*Source: TAPS Guide*

# Your Military Experience and the Job Interview —Introduction

*How did your military career prepare you for this job?*

Remember, your military experience has made you an expert at leading, inspiring and following instructions – attributes applicable to any position. Below are some qualities to emphasize in the interview.

Mission-  
focused

Discipline

Commitment

Team leader

Flexibility

Writing skills

Problem-  
solving skills

Organized

Good  
planner

Priority-  
driven

Honesty

Integrity



# The Job Interview — Guidelines

- Research (website, media articles, analyst reports, social media channels, press releases, friend, etc.)
- Keep calm during the unexpected questions.
- Practice your one-on-one interview.
- Work on your public speaking.
- Ask questions to show significant interest.
- Be authentic...Be You!



# Interview Mistakes That Can Take You Out of the Running...

- Any negativity about a previous job experience.
- Showing up late.
- Not dressing for success.
- Being unprepared in researching the company.
- Not following up with a thank-you email.
- Having a vague understanding of the job description.
- Not following instructions on the application.

# Facing Recruiter Feedback With Grace

- **Be Kind:** Reinforce you are willing to take any classes or tutorials to get hired.
- **Be Brief:** Do not tell them you are surprised you didn't get the position. Limit questions to one or two ones.
- **Be Prepared:** Don't be defensive when taking criticism.
- **Be a Good Listener:** Listen to what is said and how it is said.

# Fields to Consider

Advocacy

Corporate/employee  
communications

Community relations

Educational institutions

Media liaison/media  
relations

Media training

Nonprofit/associations

Organizational  
management

Public  
affairs/government

Public relations

Journalism

Investor relations

Technology

Health

Travel/tourism

# Additional Info: Overall Tips

- Look for companies that advertise their support of Veterans –aerospace and defense companies, Coca-Cola, etc.
- Be prepared to take a brief step back in your career to get your foot in the door.
- Look for associations that have employer toolkits to hire military.
- Consider going for your Accreditation in Public Relations + Military Communications (APR+M). Consult PRSA.
- Think like a public relations or communications professional.
- Explain your value in civilian terms.

# Resources for Information

- Public Relations Society of America (PRSA): [www.prsa.org](http://www.prsa.org)
- Transition Assistance Program (TAP)
- LinkedIn Group –America’s Heroes at Work
- Converting military to civilian terms: <http://www.careerinfonet.org/moc/Default.aspx>
- Military Officer’s Association of America (MOAA): [www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org)

# Final Remarks

- Check PRSA Jobcenter: <https://jobs.prsa.org>
- Consult PRSA membership for special rates.
- Tap into PRSA's complimentary member webinars.
- Consider signing up with a PRSA Mentor.
- Consult award-winning Silver Anvil campaigns.
- Contact [john.Kesaris@prsa.org](mailto:john.Kesaris@prsa.org) for career information.