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# WARRIORS TO WORK

## CAREER PREPARATION WORKBOOK

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# INTRODUCTION

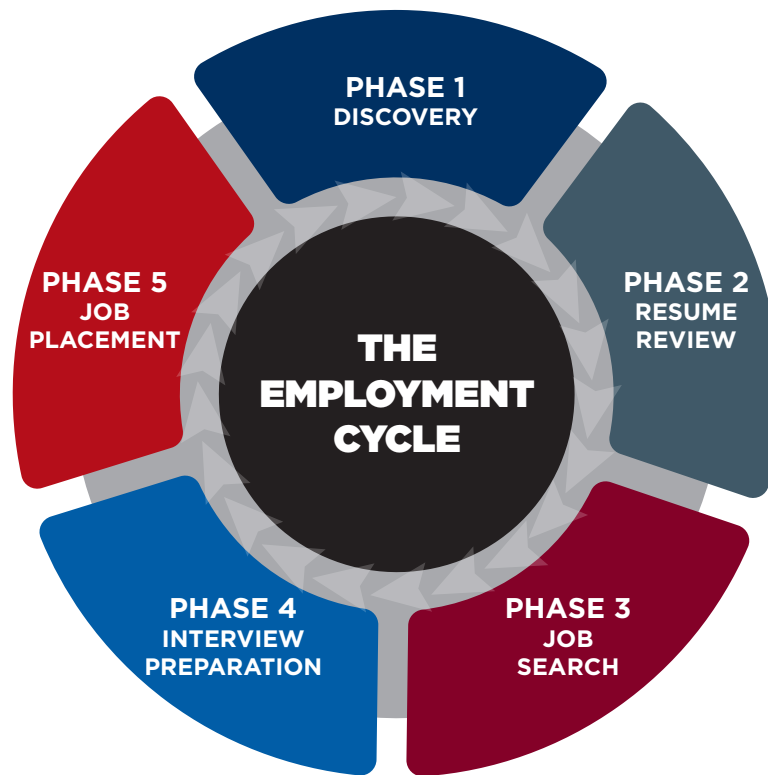
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The Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) Warriors to Work® program provides warriors and their family members with the resources and career guidance needed to be successful in the civilian workforce. Through personalized services, participants will work with a specialist to:

- Prepare for an interview.
- Build an effective resume.
- Network with local employers.
- Set attainable short-term and long-term career goals.
- Match your skills and experience to hiring managers' needs.
- Get help managing expectations.
- Gain a better understanding of your service-connected injuries and how they could impact career decision-making.
- Engage the job market through job search assistance.
- Groom your professional development throughout the career journey.

As with all WWP™ programs, these services are offered to you, your family, or caregiver at no cost.

# THE EMPLOYMENT CYCLE



## THE EMPLOYMENT CYCLE IS THE VARIOUS PHASES OF GETTING A JOB OR A NEW POSITION.

Starting with **Discovery**, you will need to figure out what you want to do in your next career, job, or position if you are looking to advance to the next level in your workplace. Additionally, you will want to plan how to get there, figure out what resources are needed, and do some self-discovery about who you want to be in the workplace. In this section, we will walk through the planning process and develop your professional brand.

After Discovery is the **Resume** phase. Even with the best credentials and industry experience, without a great resume, you will find it difficult to achieve your professional goals. Here, we will provide some tips on how to best present yourself on paper to get noticed.

Next in the process is the **Job Search** phase. Your job search is much more than just searching and applying for a job you found online. We will review how to network, discuss various job board search techniques, and discuss filling out the job application.

Then we get into **Interviewing**. We will talk about the different types of interviews you may encounter in your job search, along with the various types of questions you may be asked. We will provide tips on how to answer those questions using the STAR method. We will also review disability in the workplace and the topic of accommodations.

Finally, we get to **Job Placement**. You get a job offer, and then what? Learn about the job offer process and some common parts of the onboarding process. We are excited to be a part of your employment journey!

# DISCOVERY

In this section on work preferences, you will answer the following questions:

- Who am I?
- What am I passionate about?
- What am I qualified to do?
- What are my deal breakers?
- How much money do I want to make?
- How much money do I have to make?
- What am I willing to do to get what I want?



## WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU IN A JOB?

**ON A SCALE OF 1-5, THINK ABOUT WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU:**

	Most important			Least important	
	5	4	3	2	1
Location					
Money					
Work tasks					
Growth potential					
Culture and values					
Travel and relocation					
Benefits					
Education potential					
Security					
Cool opportunities					
Other:					
Other:					

# DISCOVERY

## WHAT ELSE MATTERS TO YOU?

I enjoy working with:

- Data (information, ideas, words, numbers)
- People
- Things (machines, equipment)

I prefer working:

- Indoors
- Outdoors
- Some inside and some outside

I want to work for a company:

- With fewer than 100 employees
- With 100 to 500 employees
- With 500 or more employees
- That I own

I would like to work in a:

- Large city (Chicago, New York, Atlanta, Seattle)
- Medium-size city (Portland, Omaha, San Diego)
- Town or suburban area
- Small town or rural area

I prefer a job that involves:

- A lot of travel (two or more times per month)
- Some travel (once a month)
- No travel

I want a job that requires:

- Interacting with a lot of people
- Some interaction with people
- Little interaction with people
- No interaction with people

I want to work:

- Full time
- Part time
- Plan to work and attend school
- Temporary

I would like work duties that:

- Frequently change
- Vary from day to day
- Are fairly routine
- Never change

I am willing to work overtime:

- As much as possible
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never

For the right job, I am:

- Willing to relocate
- Not willing to relocate
- Not able to relocate

Other things to consider:

- Are you open to relocation? If so, to where?
- Do you believe you have any barriers to employment?
- What do you want out of a position?
- What can you see yourself doing every day at work?
- Where do you see yourself five to 10 years from now?
- What did you like most about your last position?
- What did you like least about your last position?

# DISCOVERY

Now, what are you qualified to do?

## CHECK EVERY SKILL WITH WHICH YOU HAVE HAD EXPERIENCE:

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration/Clerical/Secretarial | <input type="checkbox"/> Inventory Control             | <input type="checkbox"/> Project Management                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aviation/Aviation Maintenance       | <input type="checkbox"/> Journalism/Electronic Media   | <input type="checkbox"/> Purchasing                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership/Team Building      | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Assurance                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carpentry                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal/Regulatory Compliance   | <input type="checkbox"/> Risk Management                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Resolution/Problem Solving | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales/Sales Management            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construction                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Security                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing/Advertising         | <input type="checkbox"/> Staffing                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Material Handling             | <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electrician                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanic                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisory/Management            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Explosives/Demolition               | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical: Medic/Corpsman       | <input type="checkbox"/> Supply Chain Management/Logistics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Planning                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Microsoft Office Suite        | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching/Professor                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy Equipment Operations          | <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiation                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Skills                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Operation Management          | <input type="checkbox"/> Telecom Repair                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology (IT)         | <input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Telecommunication                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation/Creative                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Policies & Procedures (SOPs)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Training/Mentoring/Coaching       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intelligence Operations             | <input type="checkbox"/> Presentations/Public Speaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Warehouse/Facility Management     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International Operations            | <input type="checkbox"/> Process/System Improvement    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____                      |

Other things to identify to determine what you are qualified to do:

- How many years of experience do you have performing each of the skills listed above?
- What degrees do you have? What other formal education have you had outside of degrees received?
- What certifications do you have?

Now, you will need to look into your finances just a bit.

Personal preferences and goals are nice to have, but the ultimate driver behind your job search is likely to be financial.

You need to take a realistic approach toward what you HAVE to make compared to what you WANT to make. This will also depend on what your motivations are for getting a job or moving to a new position.

# DISCOVERY

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Realistic things to consider:

- What is your current monthly budget?
- How much have you saved for your transition?
- What is the average salary for the types of roles you are qualified to do at this moment?

One final area to think about before we move onto the next thing: What are you willing to do to get what you want, which is a job/career? In addition to relocation, what else are you willing to do?

Consider the following:

- Are you willing to go back to school?
- Are you willing to take a position you feel is beneath you to gain necessary experience?
- Are you willing to wait for that perfect job, or do you need to find work immediately?
- Which, if any, of your work preferences are you willing to consider compromising?

Now that you have done a lot of self-discovery on what you are able to do and what you wish to do, let's work on your professional branding and elevator pitch.

Professional branding is all about your identity, skill set, and what you are known for in the workplace. Although it often appears written as a short descriptive paragraph or spoken as your "elevator pitch," it is also a concept or theme related to your reputation.

Things to consider when building your brand:

- What do I want people to think of when they think of me?
- What is my value and how does it differentiate me from my competition?
- How do I manage my message strategically and tactfully?



# DISCOVERY

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## Strategy for building your brand:

- Conduct an honest evaluation of your knowledge, experience, and capabilities. Create a list of every skill with which you have experience, and include degrees, certifications, honors, awards, and special recognitions. For example, you may have an industry certification, college degrees, commendation medals, or security clearances. You should also seek honest feedback from others on your professional strengths and weaknesses.
- Focus on building a brand that is relevant, innovative, and sets you apart from everyone else.
- Organize all of this information into a short, paragraph-sized elevator pitch that is easy to memorize and use it to present yourself effectively in a short amount of time. This is your answer to the dreaded interview or general networking question, “So why don’t you tell me a little bit about yourself?”

*“My name is John Doe, and I have a background in leadership, logistics analysis, scheduling, and inventory management. I was recently a senior supply sergeant in the Army, where I had the privilege of leading teams of up to 12 personnel and managing \$47 million in supplies and equipment. What I am most proud of is developing an automated method for equipment tracking and increasing average delivery rates to 99.5% on time while maintaining a 100% quality control inspection rate with no loss of materials or assets.”*

This is your value proposition and it should be written and spoken in a way that is comfortable to you. It can be shorter or longer than the example but should focus on the main points. This is a proven technique to summarize your best qualities, develop confidence in your brand, and effectively market yourself to potential employers.

- Practice, practice, practice! You should become comfortable delivering this value message/professional brand to others.

Next up is your resume.

# RESUME WRITING

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Your resume is a summary of experiences and skills relative to the field of work you are targeting. The purpose of writing a resume is so you can truly understand and learn how to demonstrate what best describes your experiences, while highlighting your value. By understanding your worth, you will build confidence in your ability to showcase your professional brand and value, both verbally and in writing.

## Types of Resumes:

The resume is one of the most essential and most intimidating parts of any job search. You will need to include all the relevant education, skills, and experience you have while keeping it to no more than a couple of pages. Your resume will most likely be in one of three formats: traditional, functional, or combination.

### Traditional Resume:

Traditional, or chronological, resumes are probably the most common. They begin with your most recent experience at the top of the page and end with your earliest relevant experience.

- **Pro:** This format is a tried-and-true classic; if most of your experience is relevant to the position for which you are applying, keep it in this format.
- **Con:** If your most recent experience is irrelevant to the position or your career objective, you may lose the reader before they reach the bottom of the page.

### Functional Resume:

Functional resumes are organized by skills or functions, so the names of companies for which you've worked and positions you've held previously are left out. Achievements and experiences are grouped according to the skills they represent. For example, management skills or communications skills could be functions in which you have experience. Under these functional headlines, you would list what relevant experience or accomplishments you have.

- **Pro:** If your chronological experience is all over the place or irrelevant to your desired field, this resume format better displays what skills you offer an employer.
- **Con:** This resume format is certainly not the norm and could possibly distance a traditional hiring manager or applicant tracking system. Some employers may not even accept this format.

### Combination Resume:

A combination resume is a blend of the traditional and functional formats. A resume in this format would include a reverse-chronological list of your experience. This includes where you have worked, your previous positions, and the dates you were employed. Below that would be a functional list of accomplishments and skills, grouped by their corresponding function.

- **Pro:** This blend has the benefits of a functional resume while still appeasing advocates of the traditional format.
- **Con:** Many hiring managers may want to see or only accept traditional resumes.

# RESUME WRITING

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## Essential Parts of Any Resume:

No matter what format you use, there are certain elements that must be in your resume. Make sure to include:

- **Contact information:** Be sure to list your email, phone number, address, work-appropriate social media profiles, and online portfolio or website. Remember to keep this updated regularly with any changes.
- **Education:** Include the schools you have attended, degree(s) earned, and your graduation year if you graduated less than five years ago.
- **Prior experience:** You must mention where you have worked, what position(s) you held, and the time period you were employed.
- **Accomplishments:** Focus on what you have achieved or accomplished in any position instead of listing day-to-day tasks or assignments.
- **Relevance:** Make sure all the information and work experience listed is relevant to your field and the position for which you are applying.



Make sure any resume you create is visually appealing. If you are unsure, ask someone you know to be knowledgeable and trustworthy to review your resume. Make certain it is free of typos and grammatical errors while remaining targeted to the position for which you are applying. Any resume format still needs to accomplish the same goal — to inform and grab someone’s attention long enough to secure an interview.

# RESUME WRITING

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## Top 10 Resume Mistakes:

1. **So much military jargon that a human resource (HR) professional cannot determine where you would best fit with the company.** Solution: Describe the skills you gained in the military in a transferable manner; do not focus on one aspect of your position but the responsibilities and accomplishments as a whole, not just specific to the military.
2. **Including multiple phone numbers.** Solution: Include only your primary phone number, and make sure you have an answering machine or voicemail set up along with a courteous professional greeting. **Note: Avoid using slang or songs as your greeting.**
3. **Leaving off your email address.** Solution: Always include your email address. This is the second most common way the majority of employers and recruiters correspond. **Note: Always use a professional, civilian email address.**
4. **Including a picture on the resume.** Solution: Leave off all pictures. In the United States, this information could be considered discriminatory and should always be left off.
5. **Adding personal information about yourself, for example: Married, with two children ages seven and nine.** Solution: Leave this off altogether. You do not want to allow the hiring manager to make assumptions they are not allowed by law to make. For example, the HR professional may feel you will not travel because of your family.
6. **Including any information that would specifically lead a reasonable person to know from a resume the applicant's race, color, or religious affiliation.** Solution: Leave off all information regarding any group or award that specifically reveals your race, color, or religious background. Knowing this background is a hot potato for an employer and may cause them to eliminate the resume from consideration.
7. **Resume longer than three pages.** Solution: The longest any resume should be is three pages, though preferably not more than two pages. Remember: The purpose of a resume is to provide a brief career history, emphasis on brief. Many people feel they will look better to an employer if they have a longer resume; however, this is untrue. Instead, have multiple resumes that highlight different jobs — it will all depend on the targeted career objective.
8. **Using the word “I” too often in the resume.** Solution: Write your resume in first person silent, meaning without personal pronouns. Instead of “I processed weekly payroll,” use bullets and write “Processed weekly payroll for 100 people.”
9. **Using elaborate or nonstandard fonts.** Solution: Use a standard font that is easy to read, such as Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, Cambria, Georgia, or Garamond.
10. **Having a resume that does not match the person.** Solution: People are brought in for interviews based on their resume. If the person who shows to the interview does not match the resume, then the organization feels it has been misled.

# RESUME WRITING

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Below are additional tips and guidelines for your resume:

- Be sure to have your resume proofread by a working professional, and ask more than one professional to review and proofread it. Solicit feedback on your resume before submitting it.
- Demonstrate your military experience by highlighting your accomplishments, but avoid gory details of combat.
- Always assume the hiring manager knows nothing about the military, and avoid military jargon. Check out Crosswalk for assistance with translation of military terminology to a civilian equivalent. <https://www.onetonline.org/crosswalk/>.
- Focus and tailor your resume so it speaks to employers' needs and the job description.
- Do not list your references on your resume. If they are not aware of your job search or forgot who you are, it could reflect negatively on you.
- Use power words whenever possible (ex: team player, collaborated with, directed, impacted, served as, etc.).

## Developing an Effective Resume

### STEP 1 - CONTACT INFORMATION:

Format: Full name in all capitals (bold), mailing address, phone number, and email address.

#### EXAMPLE:

**JOHN M. DOE**  
1322 Main St., Boston, MA 12345  
617-267-7864  
john.doe@gmail.com

*Note: There is some debate on whether you should or shouldn't include your full address on your resume. Do some online research to determine what you are most comfortable with. Please remember that even if you leave your address off your resume, you will most likely have to enter it into the formal application through an applicant tracking system.*

# RESUME WRITING

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## STEP 2 – SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS:

- The summary of qualifications outlines skills that are reflected in your work experience and should be the first section of the resume. Focus on your value proposition and professional brand.
- Use paragraph format, or list information in six to eight bullet points.
- Be sure the summary of qualifications reflects how you want to be summarized as a potential candidate and proves your value to potential employers.
- This section is where areas of expertise, such as leadership, training, and management, are listed. Providing supporting examples is imperative to your proposition delivery. Remember, you are essentially selling yourself to prospective employers.

## STRUCTURE:

Start the summary with the title of the job you are applying for or the targeted title you want to go to market with, and support it with quantifiable evidence (ex: the number of people you managed, size of the budget you managed, value of machinery you maintained, degrees or special certifications that set you apart, years of work or military service experience, languages you speak other than English, a current security clearance if you have one, etc.). Include significant awards or recognitions in this summary, even though some of them also will appear in other sections. This summary should be no more than six typed lines.

## EXAMPLE:

Intelligence analyst offering 10 years of physical security and surveillance experience in the military and public sector. Career is supported with a BA in Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. Trained and supported 26,000 personnel on risk management techniques, threats, and operational procedures. Managed multiple lines of risk to oversee and assist projects and equipment valued at \$11.6M, while meeting the mission and vision of senior leadership. Possesses a comprehensive background in training facilitation and strategic planning. A proven ability as a corporate steward through interacting and collaborating with multiple levels of management and diverse cultural audiences in high-tempo environments.

## AREAS OF EXPERTISE:

Physical Security | Strategic Planning | Operational Surveillance | Risk Assessment Planning  
Threat Identification | Personnel Development | Project Management | Training and Development

# RESUME WRITING

## STEP 3 - WORK EXPERIENCE:

List your work experience for the past 10 years, beginning with your current position. Going back more than 10-15 years in your work history should only be done if it is truly relevant to the type of position you are currently seeking.

### EXAMPLE:

#### **Quality Assurance Inspector and Trainer**

October 2009-Present

United States Army, Fort Benning, GA

- Accountable for \$500M worth of fleet vehicles and equipment; train, supervise, and direct a division of 340 personnel for combat vehicle readiness.
- Provide inventory needs and critical parts to high-level government officials including military officers, members of Congress, and international dignitaries to ensure vehicle and equipment readiness for hostile environments.
- Ensure safe and successful convoy operations for 26 vehicles and 56 personnel while assigned as the convoy commander during 22-unit missions, resulting in zero incidents and 100% vehicle sustainability.
- Analyze mission requirements and coordinate and communicate with supporting units to ensure optimal support on security aspects during three major operations involving more than 25 vehicles and 200 personnel.
- Review and update approximately 60 annual training lectures, schedules and tracks all classes, testing, and certifying trainees with a 100% qualification rate.

## STEP 4 - EDUCATION:

- Starting with the most recent, list each degree, college or university name and location.
- List any relevant honors or academic recognition.
- Whether or not you should include the year you graduated depends on a variety of factors, including the relevance of the degree to the position you are seeking and how long ago you graduated.
- If currently enrolled, list “current” and your expected graduation date.

### EXAMPLE:

Bachelor of Science in Human Resources Management, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, 2018

# RESUME WRITING

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## STEP 5 - TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS:

- As an extra section on a resume, training and certifications can help your resume stand out.
- Starting with the most recent, list any **relevant and significant** training or certifications you've had, including course name, location, and year.
- They must relate to the position type you are seeking.

## STEP 6 - AWARDS:

- Similar to the training and certification section, listing awards on your resume can differentiate you from others.
- Include awards that provide industry and/or job-related evidence of your skills and abilities, but do not include awards older than five to 10 years unless they are still very relevant to the role for which you are applying.



## SAMPLE 1: RESUME A

NAME, MA

Lexington, SC 29072 | 111-222-3333 | email address

### ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST ► *Office Administration, Technical Support, Documentation*

High-performing administrative professional and information systems analyst who increases efficiency, productivity, and compliance in the workplace. Proven ability to manage organizational and technical operations for large-scale organizations.

- **Accomplished administrator** with strengths that include process development, purchasing and procurement, meeting and event planning, executive engagement, technology management, and project management.
- **Clear communicator who demonstrates high confidentiality**, partnering seamlessly across levels and functions to provide training, guidance, and support for administrative, strategic, technical, and tactical initiatives.
- **Robust technical skill set** with experience in system administration, IT support, network management, and technology upgrades. Able to train and support users of all knowledge levels to resolve technical challenges.

### SIGNATURE STRENGTHS

Administrative Operations

Policy Development & Documentation

Records Management

Purchasing & Procurement

Project Management

Team Leadership & Training

Executive Support

IT Help Desk & Technology Management

Event & Meeting Planning

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

South Carolina Army National Guard | Columbia, SC

2006 to 2017

#### **Computer Information System Analyst** (07/2006 to 10/2017)

Leveraged administrative, project management, and information technology skills to support IT operations for the South Carolina Army National Guard. Installed, configured, troubleshooted, repaired, and updated hardware, software, systems, and networks, providing consultation and support to individual users and departments.

#### *Key Contributions:*

- Supported the success of major initiatives with over 700 team members by installing, operating, and maintaining large-scale, multiuser systems and technical equipment.
- Increased operational efficiency by designing, implementing, and updating information systems, data control measures, and bulk data storage solutions.
- Wrote, edited, and distributed operational manuals and technical instructions, communicating complex information in an easily understandable manner for technical and nontechnical users.

United States Army | Multiple Locations

2000 to 2016

#### **Federal Administrative Officer** (U.S. Army, Office of the Adjutant General – Columbia, SC, 2006 to 2016)

Delivered seamless administrative and IT support to the Construction and Facilities Management Office. Created and updated records; documented and responded to in-person, phone, and email communications; and managed daily office operations.

#### *Key Contributions:*

- Partnered with senior executives to plan and deliver on- and off-site agency programs and events with 300+ attendees each. Secured vendors, venues, and supplies; planned itineraries; and oversaw execution.
- Functioned as time and attendance coordinator, documenting, verifying, and reporting hours worked, daily arrival and departure times, vacation time, and other time off for 200+ employees.
- Reviewed, documented, and updated standard operating procedures (SOP), policies, and programs to ensure accurate information and alignment with current processes and requirements.

## SAMPLE 1: RESUME A

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)

#### **Senior Information Systems Operator** (U.S. Army – Fort Gordon, GA, 2003 to 2006)

Led team in direction of communications operations, leveraging technical acumen to manage and maintain all related systems and software. Delivered IT help desk services, creating, maintaining, and deleting user profiles, resetting passwords, configuring accounts, and providing technical and system support to technical and nontechnical users around the globe. Provided modem support, database management services, and communications volume management.

##### *Key Contributions:*

- Coordinated up to 70K communications weekly, efficiently, accurately, and securely receiving and disseminating electronic, written, and verbal correspondence in alignment with security protocols
- Trained, managed, and developed team of 12 communications and technical support specialists, coaching as needed to improve productivity and performance.
- Supported strategic and tactical initiatives, providing technical oversight, consultation, and support to teams worldwide. Ensured compliant use of equipment and adherence to information security best practices.
- Maintained readiness of critical communications systems by performing or verifying daily and weekly backups.

#### **Telecommunications Operator** (U.S. Army – Pentagon, D.C., 2000 to 2003)

Supported U.S. Army communications operations as video telecommunications operator (VTO).

##### *Key Contributions:*

- Provided communication support to the top five U.S. Army executives, conducting data system studies, distributing information, and managing highly sensitive correspondence with discretion and confidentiality.
- Held 100% accountability for electronic and written correspondence security, verifying authorizations and preparing documentation in alignment with regulatory requirements and information security protocols.

### TECHNICAL SKILLS

MS Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.

Hardware, Software, and Network Installation and Support

Network Application Design

### EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

#### **Master of Arts in Information Technology Management**

Master of Arts in Information Security System Management

Webster University | Ft. Jackson, SC

#### **Bachelor of Science in Information Technology Management (Minor in Applied Software)**

Limestone College | Gaffney, SC

#### **Information Assurance Security Certification**

South Carolina Army National Guard | Gaffney, SC

Equal Opportunity (EO) Training

#### **Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Training**

United States Army | Columbia, SC

**SAMPLE 2: RESUME B****FIRST NAME LAST NAME**

111-222-3333 | email address | LinkedIn Address

**SUMMARY**

A multifaceted leader with over 15 years of change management and organizational development experience. Possess strong problem-solving skills, with mature judgment, and known to align goals with designed solutions to drive process improvements and business gains. Able and willing to lead or follow in complex environments, while mentoring and motivating individuals and teams from diverse backgrounds toward a common goal.

**SKILLS**

- |                              |                                  |                                  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| - Change Management          | - Cross-Functional Supervision   | - Data Analysis and Presentation |
| - Operations Management      | - Training Management            | - Policies and Procedures        |
| - Organizational Development | - Program and Project Management | - Team Building and Mentoring    |

**CAREER HISTORY****IT Organizational Change Management and Strategy Leader, Independent****(Remote) Aug 2020 – Present**

*Responsible for managing a comprehensive OCM strategy and plan, utilizing proven OCM methodologies and related tools that include impact index, communications strategy, and methods for IT workstreams and initiatives.*

- Works with project management office (PMO) and executive leadership to develop strategic change management workstreams and initiatives (project and group analysis) for business tools and engineering tools applications rationalization of over 2000 applications, and strategic planning for internal and external customer delivery
- Develops PROSCI impact index and change management plan for workstreams or initiatives, including risk assessment/management process, primary sponsor and coalition assessments, escalation of/and communication strategy, change characteristics, and organizational health assessments
- Performs ongoing change management, including user adoption and impact reinforcement, in collaboration with communications and practice management tool development- tutorial scripts, application dashboard analysis, review/reporting of user training requirements, and scriptwriting/editing for application dashboard tutorial video
- Supports business development efforts through identifying opportunities, exploring tool optimization activities, and proposal development
- Ensures that adequate training/cross training was provided, identifies training and developmental needs assessments, and works with executive team and key sponsors to establish performance standards

**Director of Operations, United States Army – San Diego, CA****Jun 2017 – Jul 2020**

*Responsible for all operational-level planning initiatives, programs and projects, process improvements, quality assurance, budget trending, and forecasting for five Army units with 237+ personnel; directly supervised nine employees.*

- Developed and managed a comprehensive organizational training, change, and communications strategy that resulted in all five supporting organizations and seven staff elements passing a total of six organization-wide audits and inspections from FY18-20 (only unit in command to accomplish this feat)
- Worked closely with project managers and workstream leads to deliver an integrated approach to project delivery, policies and procedures, and influencing key project decisions for 11 projects totaling \$14M
- Effectively planned for and managed the FY18-20 Unit Training Budgets, totaling \$5.6M, which improved deployability (52% to 88%), professional development opportunities for training and schools, and staffing shortages (67% to 92%)
- Successfully managed the organizational training strategy for Command Readiness Reviews, training plans, and schedules for training years (TY) 2017-2020, which resulted in greater collaboration and successfully passing four (totaling 201 personnel) national training center rotations (best in the command)

## SAMPLE 2: RESUME B

### CAREER HISTORY (CONTINUED)

#### Senior Operations Manager, United States Army – Greenville, SC

Jun 2016 – Jun 2017

*Led a 137-person Army unit, accountable for facilities, quality assurance, maintenance, and equipment valued at \$21M+; directly supervised six employees.*

- Implemented and executed individual training and medical plans for the organization's headquarters, which resulted in improvements of unit readiness from 47% to 93% within a seven-month period
- Collaborated with project teams on change management initiative and work plans for project initiatives to identify resistance and performance gaps, and worked to develop and implement corrective actions, resulting in an increase in organizational retention by 11%
- Effectively planned for and managed the FY17 Unit Training Budget of \$1.4M, which was \$300K lower than the prior year's, accomplishing higher readiness standards and limiting the use of essential resources

#### Project and Operations Management Specialist, United States Army – Greenville, SC

Nov 2006 – Jun 2016

*Led multiple Army teams, accountable for managing large operational training programs and outcomes of events; managed Army Readiness Lifecycle for an organization of 5,000+ people.*

- Successfully planned and executed an organizational change management strategy for a brigade warfighter exercise on a reduced budget (from \$2.4M to \$890K) with less than 45 days to execution (received a general officer letter of recommendation for accomplishment)
- Successfully managed all brigade communications strategy for command readiness reviews, training plans and schedules for TY 2015 and 2016
- Coordinated and planned all communications strategies for workshops and breakout sessions for major training events in TY 2015 and 2016
- Led and managed the personal development of over 600 people in this time with many going on to become senior leaders or experts in their chosen profession

### EDUCATION

**Binghamton University (SUNY) – Binghamton, NY**, Doctor of Philosophy (Student) – Systems Science (Concentration: Data Science and Operations Research Optimization)

**University of Arkansas - Fayetteville, AR**, Master of Science- Operations Management

**Indiana Institute of Technology - Fort Wayne, IN**, Bachelor of Science- Organizational Leadership

### PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

**PROSCI (ADKAR)- Change Management**, 2020

**Lean Six Sigma Green Belt (ICGB)**, U.S. Army, 2011

**Planning and Administering SharePoint (Administrator, Power User, Site Owner)**, U.S. Army, 2017

**Training Manager**, U.S. Army, Fort Knox, KY, 2017

**Training Plan Development**, U.S. Army, Fort Knox, KY, 2017

**U.S. Army Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information Security Clearance**, DOD CAF, 2019

**Microsoft Skills** (365, Outlook, SharePoint, Teams, Word, Excel, PowerPoint)

# RESUME WRITING

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## Writing an Effective Cover Letter:

A cover letter serves as a complement to your resume and an introduction to the employer. It highlights aspects of your experience and accomplishments directly related to the position for which you are applying and can be used to explain details your resume does not address. Although not always required, having a tailored cover letter to accompany your tailored resume can set you apart from other candidates.

### COVER LETTER TIPS:

- Follow the employer's instructions when applying. If it says it's required, it's required.
- Whenever possible, address your cover letter to a named individual. Avoid "To whom it may concern."
- Content and presentation are important, so ensure a good format for your resume.
- Include key words from the job description and industry in your cover letter.
- Be sure to highlight the title/position you are applying for and mention how you discovered the job opportunity.
- Grab the reader's attention by writing an appealing first paragraph, using aspects of your professional brand/value proposition.
- Focus on targeting your qualifications to the job requirements.
- Relate yourself to the company through incorporating specific aspects of the company that are intriguing to you, and explain why.
- Never include negative information, especially about the company.
- Include a strong closing paragraph that refers to your resume and requests an interview.
- Request follow-up feedback, and keep it positive.
- Avoid typos and mistakes through proofreading your cover letter. Whenever possible, have a professional proofread it as well.

# RESUME WRITING

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## Key Elements of Successful Cover Letters:

Your Present Address

City, State, Zip Code

Today's Date

Individual's First and Last Name

Title

Company

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

**Introduction:** Indicate the reason for writing, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and how you learned of the opening (ex: career center, name of publication or website, friend, employment service, etc.).

**Body:** (One to three paragraphs) Mention why you are interested in the position, the organization, or its products or services. Above all, indicate what you can do for the employer. If you are a recent graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. If you have had some practical work experience, point out your specific achievements or unique qualifications. Try not to repeat the same information the reader will find in the resume. Refer the reader to the enclosed resume or application, which summarizes your qualifications, training, and experience. As much as possible, try to tie your qualifications to the employer's needs, particularly those expressed in the job description.

**Conclusion:** In the closing paragraph, indicate your desire for a personal interview. You may want to suggest dates and times, or simply advise the employer of your flexibility as to the time and place. Repeat your contact information in the letter, and offer any assistance to help in a speedy response. Finally, close your letter with a statement or question that will encourage a response. For example, say you will be in the city where the organization is located on a certain date and would like to set up an interview. Or ask if the company will be recruiting in your area.

Sincerely,

(Your neatly handwritten signature here – IF A PRINTED COPY)

Your Typed Name (if an electronic copy)

Enclosure (this signifies that other documents, such as a resume, are enclosed with this letter)

# RESUME WRITING

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## SAMPLE 1: COVER LETTER:

123 Main Street  
Chicago, IL 60600

January 20, 2008

Valerie Jones  
Editorial Director  
Red Ink Press  
123 42nd Street  
New York, NY 10000

Dear Ms. Jones,

I am responding to your advertisement on LinkedIn, which lists an open assistant editor position at Red Ink Press. I believe that my Bachelor of Arts in journalism and freelance experience have allowed me to develop the qualifications for this position and would like to submit my resume for consideration.

As you can see from my enclosed resume, I have written for several local publications as a freelance contributor. I have also enclosed a few writing samples to give you an idea of my style and range. Additionally, I am proud to have gained leadership and intercultural experience through my service as a U.S. Marine, where I was deployed twice in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Furthermore, I am familiar with the accounting industry, having worked part time for a CPA while I was in college. This background will undoubtedly prove useful in understanding the needs and the perspective of your professional audience, which relies on your publications for insight into trends in the accounting industry.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to the possibility of speaking with you further about this position and can be reached at (312) 555-5555.

Sincerely,

Mike Vasquez

Enclosure

# JOB SEARCH

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Many job seekers are faced with the challenge of finding the most effective job search strategies when searching for employment opportunities. Part of the challenge is not having a solid frame of reference, especially for military veterans who are trying to understand the translation of skills, responsibilities, leadership, and training to civilian workplaces.

In a competitive job market flooded with job seekers, one of the most important things to remember is how to stand out from the rest of the competition — how to get hiring managers to select you as a strong candidate!

## FIVE STEPS TO AN EFFECTIVE JOB SEARCH:

**STEP 1:** Define what you are looking for, and be specific. Hiring managers don't have time to figure out what you are looking for; it's up to you to show them.

**STEP 2:** Determine and sharpen your relevant skills. Do your homework on relevant skills that match the industry you're targeting and that are in demand.

**STEP 3:** Understand and acknowledge job search obstacles and how you can alleviate them.

**STEP 4:** Do your homework, and be prepared. Gather as much information as possible about a job, the company, and the industry.

**STEP 5:** Market yourself. Understanding your professional brand, your value, and how to market yourself with an online presence is critical to getting your message out there. In addition to more traditional forms of networking, consider marketing yourself on social network sites like LinkedIn.



## Effective Networking

People often underestimate the power of networking when conducting job search strategies. Strong networkers realize that networking is similar to a full-time job, and it's not just something you can wing. Networking includes skills that create the power of influence and create opportunities that connect with different cultures, different age demographics, special interest groups, and political networks. In addition to connecting with these groups, strong networkers focus on consistent follow-up, making connections within connections, and building strong alliances.

According to many career resource articles and blogs, 60%-80% of all jobs are found through some form of networking.



# JOB SEARCH

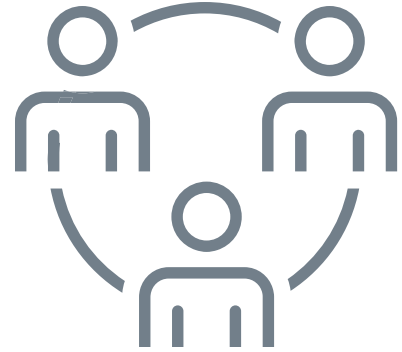
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## Traditional Networking:

Networking is about relationships — both tapping into existing relationships and forming new ones. Although attending networking events is one way of networking, it involves much more than that. Think about who you already know or who you'd like to know.

Some networking opportunities to consider:

- Current and former colleagues.
- Friends and neighbors.
- People associated with the same groups and clubs, whether professional or personal.
- People who attend the same social events.
- Alumni from college, graduate school, etc.
- Professional or industry association members.



If you have a specific job at a specific organization in mind, your networking needs to become a lot more strategic and targeted. In that instance, you'll want to do your research to find out who the key players and decision makers are. You'll also want to find out who can provide you with useful information and who you know at an organization who can help be a cheerleader for you.

## Social Media Networking:

LinkedIn is a social networking site devoted to professionals. It allows you to link up with past skill sets and jobs, find information about companies and future employers, and increase your visibility in the job market.

Think of your LinkedIn profile as a virtual business card. This should be a summarization of your professional experience, your interests, and your capabilities. The intent is to attract the attention of important people who may be searching for your specific skill sets and desires. A strong profile that articulates your value and what you bring to the table is a key differentiator in the job market.

# JOB SEARCH

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## TIPS AND TECHNIQUES FOR BUILDING A PROFESSIONAL LINKEDIN PROFILE:

### STEP 1: DESIGN AN INFORMATIVE PROFILE HEADLINE:

- Your profile headline gives people a short, memorable way to understand who you are in a professional context.
- Think of the headline as the slogan for your professional brand, such as “Logistics Supply Chain Manager, United States Army.” Check out other logistics supply chain managers’ profiles for comparisons, ideas, and inspirations.

### STEP 2: DISPLAY A PROFESSIONAL AND APPROPRIATE PHOTO:

- LinkedIn is not Facebook, X, or Instagram. If you choose to post a photograph (highly recommended), be sure you select a professional, high-quality headshot of you. Party photos, Rambo pictures, and cute pictures of your puppy don’t fit in a professional environment.

### STEP 3: SHOW OFF YOUR EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND CERTIFICATIONS:

- Be sure to include information about training used in the civilian world if it is relevant and comparable. Most military personnel went through field sanitation or land navigation, but these courses are rarely recognized in the civilian workforce and have little to no value.
- List any schools or training seminars you’ve attended. Include your major and minor, if applicable.
- Highlight worldly experiences demonstrating diversity, cultural awareness, risk assessment, etc.
- Highlight your accomplishments, especially if they are relevant to your target goals.

### STEP 4: DEVELOP A PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY STATEMENT, AKA VALUE PROPOSITION:

- Your summary statement (elevator pitch/value proposition) should resemble the first three to five sentences of your best-written resume and your cover letter — concise and confident about your goals, qualifications, and quantifiable results.
- Remember to include relevant apprenticeships, internships, volunteer work, etc.

### STEP 5: BE ACTIVE ON LINKEDIN:

- Like any other social media, it is important to be active to remain on people’s radar screens and to enhance your professional image.
- Ways to be active include commenting on posts, creating or sharing posts, updating your status, updating your profile, and adding new skills.

# JOB SEARCH

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## **STEP 6: SHOW YOUR ABILITY TO BE DIVERSE AND CONNECT WITH LINKEDIN GROUPS:**

- Joining groups and displaying the groups' badges on your profile are the perfect ways to fill out the professionalism of your profile (brand) and show your desire to connect to people with whom you share a common interest.
- A starting point for military veterans is to find their division or battalion groups on LinkedIn and see if there are any company affiliations within their targeted industry. (When connecting with others, be sure to provide a short paragraph about why you are connecting with them.)

## **STEP 7: SHARE YOUR WORK:**

- A strong way to enhance your LinkedIn profile is to include examples of your work, writing, and any accomplishments by displaying URLs or adding LinkedIn applications.
- By including URLs, you can increase traffic and visibility as well as direct people to your website, blog, X feeds, etc.

# JOB SEARCH

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## Job Boards:

Although networking is an essential part of your job search strategy, you need to exhaust all avenues to find that job opportunity. One way is through diligent, frequent searching of job boards. Although a large portion of job opportunities are never advertised externally, many times, they are. Also, once you find a job posting you are interested in, you can then really leverage your network to help you get introduced and in the door.

Job postings wind up on job boards in a variety of ways. Jobs can be directly posted to a job board by the employer, or they can be aggregated from another site, such as the employer's career page. At times, a job search site can be both a direct posting job board and a job aggregator, scraping jobs from thousands of other sites.

Some job boards to consider:

- Indeed
- LinkedIn
- Glassdoor
- Monster
- ZipRecruiter
- CareerBuilder
- Snagajob
- Jobs2Careers
- SimplyHired
- CareerJet

If you are looking for a job that is very niche, you'll also want to try industry-specific sites.

If you are looking only for a federal job, you'll want to check out USA Jobs for career opportunities.

# JOB SEARCH

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## Applying for a Job:

Once you find a job you are interested in, you then will need to apply. For compliance purposes, most employers will require you to formally apply for a position before they can seriously consider you an applicant.

But how to apply? Your best bet is to apply directly through the company's career site to the specific job posting. In most instances, your application will be done in an applicant tracking system (ATS). Basically, you see a job posting, you click "Apply Now," and it routes you directly to the ATS. The exception to this is when you see the "Easy Apply"-type buttons on some job boards. In those instances, you can express your interest in a role through submitting your profile or a resume. However, if you are further considered for the role later, you will still have to fill out a formal application.

An ATS is a software application that provides recruiting and hiring tools. These systems accept and store candidate information for tracking purposes. Some companies use theirs solely as a database and have recruiting staff manually look through all applications and resumes for a position. Some companies, if their ATS is configured that way, use knockout questions to weed out applications that don't meet minimum criteria, and the recruiters only look at what is left. Some companies take a more complex approach, using the ATS to score applicants and rank them based on the established criteria using key words.

Each applicant tracking system is different, and there are many on the market that you may encounter as you apply to different companies. They can be super easy and fast, or you may spend over 30 minutes filling out the application and answering questions. It really depends on the company and the ATS they use.

It is very important that you follow all instructions and fill out all areas of the application. Though it might seem tedious and redundant to fill out all those sections, especially after uploading your resume, this must be done in order to have your application move forward in the consideration process.

As part of the electronic application process, you may be asked to upload a resume, upload a cover letter, and provide your address, work history, skills, and references, and you may be asked a variety of questions related to your level of experience and competency, and various work preferences.

Although most ATSes will parse your information from your uploaded resume to fill in some of the required application fields, it doesn't always transfer properly, so you will have to review each field to ensure that the information carried over properly. Be sure to fix any issues you find with improper data transfer.

Once you finally submit your application through the system, you generally will receive an automated email from the organization thanking you for your interest in the position.

At this point, be prepared to be directed or receive links to various workplace assessments. These

## JOB SEARCH

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assessments can be things related to workplace personality, safety, mathematics, critical thinking, or anything else as relates to the particular job for which you are applying. If you are receiving these emails with links to assessments, please understand that this is more than likely a required part of the application process. Failure to complete the assessments will prevent you from moving forward in the process. Sometimes these assessments are used for screening out unsuitable candidates. Sometimes they are just a way for the employer to get a better, more well-rounded idea of the candidate. Before starting the assessment, ensure you have ample time in a quiet environment to complete them and that you are rested.

Now the fun begins with utilizing your network to ensure your application gets the attention it deserves and improve your chances of getting that interview. While you're working your network to help get a foot in the door, you also should be working on your interviewing skills so you can be ready to go when they call you.

# INTERVIEWING

## Interviewing

You find a job you're interested in, and you apply.  
 You wait, and then finally, you hear something.  
 They call you and want to conduct an interview.  
 Hooray! Now what?

### TYPES OF INTERVIEWS:

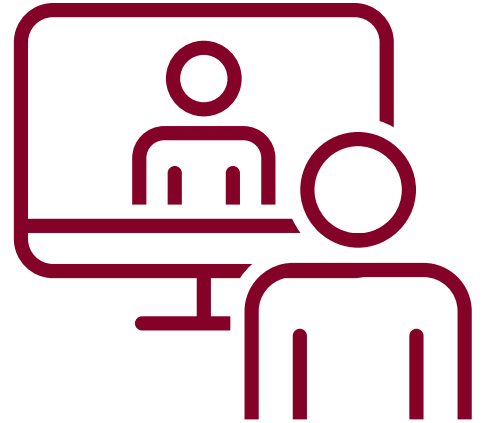
Depending on how often you have changed jobs or how often you have looked for a job, you may not be very comfortable with the interview process. The interview process is just that, a process. There are many different types of interviews that you may be subject to. Here are a few of them.

**Phone Interview** – Oftentimes, the first interview you have will be a phone screen with a recruiter. This person will generally ask you questions to clarify the information on your resume and to ensure that you meet the qualifications of the job, and that your preferences and expectations are somewhat aligned with the company's. They will often ask you questions related to your cultural fit for the organization as well. The recruiter is the gatekeeper, and you must satisfy their needs before you move on to a hiring manager/decision maker. For a phone interview, ensure that you have a quiet place with good reception where you can participate without distractions and be able to take notes.

**Virtual Interview** (using a computer application involving video like Webex, Skype, etc.) – The virtual interview can be used in lieu of a phone interview or an in-person interview. Your virtual interview can be with a recruiter or a hiring manager, or multiple people. You must treat the virtual interview with as much professionalism as you would an in-person interview. Be sure you are dressed professionally, and not just from the waist up. Ensure that you have quiet place free of distractions in which to hold the interview.

**Pre-Recorded Video Interview** – Some companies have chosen to use this type of interview instead of a phone screen. You will receive an email with a link that generally is facilitated by a software application. You'll get a set of interview questions to answer and a deadline to record and submit your answers. The recruiter can later watch and evaluate the video, and even share it with others in the hiring process. As with any type of interview, you'll want to prepare and do your research. You also need a quiet, private place to record your interview, along with being dressed professionally. Although this is a one-way interview, you need to be as professional and take it as seriously as you would any other form of interview.

**In-Person Interview With One Person** – Usually, an in-person interview will be on-site at the company you're interviewing for, but sometimes these interviews can be held elsewhere. This interview can be with a recruiter, a hiring manager, or anyone else from the company.



# INTERVIEWING

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**In-Person Interview With a Panel** – Usually, this interview type will be held in a small conference room or a large office with ample space for the panel participants. Your panel may consist of representatives from human resources and recruiting, hiring managers, and peers. Sometimes you may be asked in advance to prepare a presentation as well, depending on the type of job. The panel interview is by far the most intimidating of interviews. When you are invited to a panel interview, ask for the names and roles of the individuals ahead of time so you can do your research and prepare.

**Group Interview** – Sometimes a company chooses to do an interview in which a recruiter, hiring manager, or both will interview several candidates at the same time. In this type of interview, usually held in a conference room, all candidates will be interviewed at the same time.

Regardless of the type of interview, you'll need to be as prepared as possible, and remember that practice makes perfect!



# INTERVIEWING

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## Preparing for your Interview:

### STEP 1: CONDUCT EXTENSIVE RESEARCH

- Thoroughly review the website content and get to know the company mission, vision, and values.
- Research leadership and your interviewer on LinkedIn.
- Check Glassdoor: Read the company reviews and the salary ranges (but take this information with a grain of salt).
- Based on your research, be ready to explain why you are a fit for their organization.

### STEP 2: DEVELOP APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS

- Based on your research and what you want to know about the job, prepare some questions to ask the interviewer. Not asking any questions is a big mistake.
- You may ask questions about the specific role itself and its job duties, along with other questions that will help you better understand the organization.
- If they haven't already told you, your last question should always be asking what the next steps are in the process.
- For recommendations on questions to ask, use Google. There are many lists of examples out there.

### STEP 3: PRACTICE ANSWERING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Research common interview questions, and start crafting relevant answers to those questions.
- Find help with mock interviews — have someone act as the interviewer and ask you questions, and answer them to the best of your ability.
- Practice the S-T-A-R method to prepare for behavior-based interview questions: Situation — Task — Action — Result
  - Situation: What was the situation?
  - Task: What were your tasks?
  - Action: What actions did you take?
  - Result: What was the result?
- Sample questions:

# INTERVIEWING

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- Can you give an example of a time when you had to deal with a difficult individual or co-worker and how you managed to work together to accomplish a common goal?
- Was there a time when you had to make a very hard decision at work? What was the situation, and what happened?
- Can you provide an example of when you had to demonstrate creative or innovative thinking?

## STEP 4: DECIDE ON INTERVIEW ATTIRE

- Research appropriate interview attire.
  - Men should wear a suit with a long-sleeve shirt and a tie, dark socks, and conservative shoes.
  - Women should wear a suit — pants or a skirt — with a coordinated blouse, and if wearing a skirt, it should be a conservative length. Shoes should be professional and closed-toe.
- Avoid loud colors and flashy accessories; limit jewelry.
- Clothing should be neat, clean, and pressed.
- Limit perfume/cologne, and do NOT smoke before your interview.
- Hair should be neat and styled in a conservative fashion.

## STEP 5: ARRIVE EARLY AND BE PREPARED

- Inform your references of your upcoming interview.
- Gather your portfolio — it should contain a pad of paper, pens, several copies of your resume, a list of your references, and mints.
- Research directions and travel time to the location, leaving early to avoid any parking and/or traffic delays.
- Plan to walk through the door no earlier than 15 minutes before your interview, but at least 10 minutes early.
- Turn off your cellphone.
- Treat everyone you meet in a friendly, professional manner.

At some point in the interview process, you will probably be asked the dreaded salary question.

# INTERVIEWING

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Questions about salary often make job seekers uncomfortable. However, some job seekers are OK with talking about their salary expectations. A good practice is to be realistic about expectations and to do thorough research beforehand so you have a salary range with which to work.

## HOW TO DEFLECT THE SALARY QUESTION:

**EMPLOYER QUESTION:** What is your desired salary range?

**ANSWER:** Before we get into compensation, can you tell me more about the kind of responsibilities the job entails, management support, and the type of individual you're looking for to help you reach your goals?

**ANSWER:** I strongly believe that matching pay to performance is essential for professional growth; however, money is not my number one priority. I'd really like to discuss my value and the overall impact I could potentially make for your company first and whether we're the right match for one another — if that is OK with you?

When an interviewer presses for a discussion about salary, be sure to focus on your value.

## YOU'VE SURVIVED THE INTERVIEW. NOW WHAT? SEND A THANK-YOU NOTE!

Believe it or not, sending a thank-you note could be the difference between “You're hired” and “Thank you for your time, but we've selected another candidate.” Use your letter as a way to stand out from the crowd.

Some tips:

- **Act Fast** — Send it out within 24-48 business hours after your interview.
- **Thank-You Letter Basics** — Thank-you letters can be handwritten, typed, or sent via email. Each thank-you letter should include a thank you for the interview; your interest, qualifications, and skills as they relate to the job you're applying for, and a final thank you.
- **Short and Simple** — Keep your thank-you letters short and simple. Use the letter to reiterate your interest in the job and your enthusiasm for the company, and to sell yourself as the ideal candidate.
- **What You Didn't Say** — If there was something that you wish you had mentioned during the interview, here's your chance to say it by including it in your thank-you letter.
- **Proof the Letter** — Spell-check and proof your thank-you letter. Then ask someone else to proof it for you. That way, you will be sure it's perfect.
- **Thank Everyone Involved** — In addition to thanking your interviewers, thank everyone else who has assisted with your job search, including references, people who refer you to a job opening, and any other employment contacts.

# DISABILITY AWARENESS

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Due to advances in military medicine and protective equipment, increased numbers of today's service members are surviving the injuries they suffer on the battlefield. However, the changing combat landscape has created a shift in the type and range of injuries experienced.

Although some injuries and subsequent disabilities are visible to others, many are not. Unseen injuries/disabilities are no less significant than those that are visible.

It is important for you to take the time to fully understand how your particular disability impacts you, especially if you are considering returning to work or changing jobs.

Veterans who have disabilities often do not think of themselves as people with disabilities. Instead, a veteran may quickly and proudly refer to himself/herself as a disabled veteran or a wounded service member. However, language matters when it comes to understanding all of the legal protections and entitlements, and accessing eligibility-based services and resources within the community.

The next issue you'll face is whether to **disclose or not to disclose** your disability to your employer or prospective employer.

Sometimes, as a part of the application process, you may be asked to complete self-identification forms because the employer is required to keep records and report to the government regarding equal opportunity compliance. These forms usually ask questions related to gender, ethnicity, race, veteran status, and disability status. This is a voluntary self-identification form, and on the form, you usually have an option that says "I do not wish to self-identify" or similar wording.

Please note that filling this section out as a disabled veteran does not mean the employer then knows you are a disabled veteran. Often, this information is restricted behind the scenes in the application process. Also, if you indicate you are a disabled veteran, your employer still does not know what your specific disability may be and whether you need any accommodation to perform the essential job functions.

Usually in the interview process, but sometimes in the application process, you will be asked if you can perform the essential job functions with or without reasonable accommodation. Some job descriptions have very detailed listings of what those job functions are; some do not. You'll need to ensure that you fully understand what the essential job functions are in order to determine whether you need some form of accommodation. In general, you should disclose your disability when you need to request a reasonable accommodation.

# DISABILITY AWARENESS

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Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you can request an accommodation at any time during the application process or while you are employed. You can request an accommodation even if you did not ask for one when applying for a job or after receiving a job offer. Keep in mind that failing to request a reasonable accommodation for a disability you didn't disclose will not excuse periods of poor work performance if you later choose to disclose and request an accommodation. The accommodation — if granted — starts from that point forward and is not made retroactive, meaning your employer is not obligated to rescind discipline that occurred before they knew about the disability, nor do they have to lower performance standards as a reasonable accommodation.

## Some Advantages of Disclosure:

- Opens the door to discuss and receive assistance in developing a work plan that removes employment barriers.
- Provides opportunities and access to reasonable accommodations.
- Identifies disability and employment service support networks.
- Allows the job seeker and the employer to discuss realistic expectations and how to manage those expectations.
- Creates opportunities to develop mentor and support programs for employees and employers.
- Provides legal protection against discrimination. Refer to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Knowledge for navigating your success (Source: Job Accommodation Network):

For more information on job accommodations and disability in the workplace, contact the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) at <https://askjan.org>, or call 800-526-7234 (voice) or 877-781-9403 (TTY).

Having this knowledge and preparing for potential questions could help gauge an employer's attitude about disability. Be sure to prepare yourself for illegal questions that could violate your privacy. Even though it's against the law, sadly, it happens.

# JOB PLACEMENT

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The time comes, and you get an offer. A recruiter calls you and makes you a verbal offer for the job you've been interviewing for, and you're super excited. The recruiter really wants you to say yes right then and there. But should you? No.

Instead, you say, "Thank you. I really appreciate the offer. Can you send me the offer letter and benefit information, and I'll review it and get back to you?" The recruiter is used to this. They will email you the offer letter and benefit information and tell you they need a decision in 24-72 hours, depending on what is normal for their process.

Now you evaluate the job offer. Be sure to take into account the entire compensation package, not just the salary. What other benefits are there? What are additional perks? What about time off benefits? Flexible work schedule? Be sure to read everything, including any noncompete and nondisclosure agreements.

You can consider negotiating. Is the compensation not where it needs to be? Did you expect more vacation time? You won't know if you don't ask. Just don't be too overzealous about it. Although some negotiation is often expected, companies have limits on what they can and can't do.

Once you've read and understood the job offer, and confirmed and negotiated as applicable, you're ready to sign on the dotted line and formally accept it. Call your recruiter right away and let him/her know, and then sign and return the offer letter.

Now starts the post-offer, pre-employment phase. Depending on the nature of your soon-to-be new job, you may have to complete a drug test, a background check, some form of state or municipal licensing or licensing verification, etc. Understand that until you physically start on day one, you are not yet fully hired. Your job is contingent upon successful completion of this phase. Please note that sometimes this phase can take longer than you hoped. Please be patient and maintain contact with your recruiter or whomever they designate this piece of the process to at the company.

Also during the post-offer, pre-employment phase, you may complete a variety of employment-related documents. Often, this is done electronically. It could include reading and acknowledging a handbook, filling out your federal and state income tax forms, and completing direct deposit information. Sometimes this part is done on day one or two of employment, if not done prior to starting.

Once you get past the post-offer, pre-employment phase, you get to your start date. Your start date is generally the day you start working in exchange for pay. Sometimes your first day or days is in a structured new-hire orientation class. Other times, your first day is just you and whomever is designated to complete your onboarding. It will depend on the organization and the type of job you are starting.

# JOB PLACEMENT

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## Some tips to prepare for your first day:

- Know how you're getting to work — both the mode of transportation and the route — and be early.
- Be well rested and looking professional — pick out your outfit in advance.
- Pack a lunch — you don't know if you're going out to lunch that day or not, so be prepared.
- Bring a notepad and pen.
- Don't forget your ID — you'll probably need it — and if you still need to complete your I-9 form, you'll need to bring the proper forms of ID on day one.
- Keep an open mind — it's a new day, new employer, new environment, new co-workers, etc.



Don't be afraid to ask questions — both before and after the offer — regarding what the onboarding process looks like. Be sure you ask about what the first week, few weeks, and few months will look like.

Your onboarding may be a very formal, defined process with specific expectations at set intervals, or it could be very informal and undefined. A lot of the time, your onboarding into a new company will be what you make of it. Don't be afraid to ask questions and seek out opportunities to learn and grow.

If you had been working with a Warriors to Work specialist prior to getting the new job, we will continue to be accessible to you, and we will be checking in periodically during your first year on the job. We want you to be successful in your new role. Don't hesitate to reach out, especially if you're struggling with your new job.



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