Career Services for Student Veterans

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UM Career Service Model

- Decentralized—student-centric
- How to find your career services office
  - [www.career.umn.edu](http://www.career.umn.edu)
- Basic and advanced services offered
- Other career-related centers
  - LAC, ISSS, UCCS, UMAA
- Online recruiting systems:
  - GoldPASS, CARS
Career Development at UM

1. **DISCOVERY**
   - One-on-one career counseling
   - Mentor programs
   - Personality/interest inventories (Myers-Briggs, etc.)

2. **SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**
   - Career skills courses
   - Mock interview programs
   - Resume writing assistance
   - Workshops
   - Involvement/Community etc.

3. **CAREER OPPORTUNITIES**
   - On-campus recruiting
   - Online recruiting systems
   - Annual career and internship fairs
How and Where to Start....

- Assess yourself/take stock—where am I right now (career development wise)?
- Do I know what I want to do? Do I have absolutely no idea?
- What classes at UM or during your service, have you loved? Hated?
- Keep a list as you ask these questions, then make an appointment at your career center with a career counselor...
Some of the Basics

- Resume
- Interviewing skills
- Networking connections
- List of potential ‘dream jobs’ and ‘dream hiring organizations’
- Strategy/List to define the whole process
- Example
### Strategy/List for Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>DETAILS</th>
<th>COMPLETED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Networking appointments</td>
<td>Call John Boyd at Cargill to request info. interview</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check job search resources (GoldPASS., websites, newspaper, etc.)</td>
<td>Check GoldPASS for finance internship postings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New phone/email contacts</td>
<td>Call General Mills recruiter and inquire about spring internship posting dates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up phone/email contacts</td>
<td>Email last year’s mentor my resume for review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters/resumes mailed</td>
<td>N/A this week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>N/A this week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you notes</td>
<td>Send thank you for informational interview to Joan Deiw at American Red Cross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As you navigate the process

- Challenges you may encounter
- Identifying your strengths and skills
- Developing an “Employer-friendly” resume
- Marketing yourself in the interview
Potential Challenges

- Stereotypes and Biases
  - Personal opinions
  - Confusion based on lack of knowledge

- Communicating your military experience effectively
  - NCOIC: Supervisor, Manager, Coordinator
  - E7 to E9: Director, Supervisor, Department Manager, Senior Advisor
  - [Military.com/careers/mcsijobdescription](http://Military.com/careers/mcsijobdescription)
Positive Assumptions

- Maturity
- Leadership
- Work within a structured system
- Attention to detail / record keeping
- Teamwork
- Experience with diversity
- Problem solving ability

- Planning and strategy
- Work under pressure
- Give/follow directions
- Safety
- Government clearance
- Trustworthy
Potential Negative Assumptions

- Military / civilian cultural transition challenges
- Communication style
- Overly structured / traditional
- Not creative / innovative
- Not “bottom line” oriented
Identifying Strengths and Skills

- Understanding transferable skills:
  - Which skills will be useful in a non-military setting?
  - Which skills do employers seek?
  - How do I communicate those skills?
  - [www.dol.gov/elaws/evets/htm](http://www.dol.gov/elaws/evets/htm)

- What are employers looking for?
  - Top 5 from UMN survey:
    1. Interpersonal communication
    2. Ability to work on a team
    3. Ability to learn new ideas quickly
    4. Problem solving
    5. Leadership
Employer-friendly Resumes

- **Market yourself – resumes lead to interviews**
  - What makes you different from other applicants?
  - Highlight your experiences, strengths and skills
  - Provide sections and content that best represents you as a professional

- **Minimize confusion for readers**
  - Clearly translate your skills to meet employers’ needs
  - Minimize opportunities not to choose you
Example Resume Content

Education

Graduate, Service School Command, San Diego, CA, 2002
- Completed Navy training courses in basic electronics, AC and DC circuits, electronic instrumentation, and radio set maintenance

Graduate, Quartermaster School, Ft. Lee, VA, 2004
- 396-hour course in advanced parachute rigging

Graduate, U.S. Army Engineer School, Fort Leonard Wood, MO
- Eight-week training course in carpentry/masonry
Example Resume Content

Experience

Fabricated, erected, and maintained/repaired structures on U.S. Army bases. Attained advanced skill and provided technical guidance supervision of other personnel.

Warrant Officer, United States Coast Guard (2000 to 2005)
Served as technical specialist in finance and supply. Planned, organized, and supervised the work of storekeepers, subsistence specialists, and other personnel. Planned and supervised the preparation of budgets, payrolls, and other information.
Interviewing

- It is all about fit
  - Are you a good fit for employer?
  - Is the employer a good fit for you?

- Market your skills and experiences
  - Yes, it may feel odd or uncomfortable to do this, but how else do you plan on finding a job?

- Make your answers “employer-friendly”
  - Do my answers make sense to people with no military experience?
Interviewing

- Many questions will ask you to “Tell me about a time…”
  - Situation
  - Task
  - Action
  - Result
Interviewing Assessment Areas

- Accomplishments
- Analytical skills
- Career goals
- Communication skills
- Compatibility / cultural fit
- Creativity
- Customer service
- Diligence
- Education
- Industry knowledge / specific skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Judgement
- Leadership
- Motivation
- Planning / strategy
- Problem solving
- Professionalism
- Risk
- Strengths / weaknesses
- Teamwork
- Working with others
Interview Questions

- Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)
  - Protects service members from job discrimination.
  - Broad law with implications for returning veterans.
Interview Questions - Legal

Legal Questions:

- What type of training or education did you receive in the military?
- Tell me how your experience in the military can benefit the company.
- Do you have any upcoming events that would require extensive time away from work?
Interview Questions – Illegal

Illegal Questions:

- In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve?
- Were you honorably discharged?
- Are you a member of the National Guard or Reserves?
- Will you get called up again? (This may not be illegal, but is frustrating)
Dealing with Illegal Questions

Your options

1. Answer the question.
2. Refuse to answer the question.
3. Tactfully sidestep and answer the *intent* of the question.
Example “Tactful Sidestep”

Answer

Q – “Will you get called up again?”
A – “I can assure you that I will be deeply committed to this position if hired, and I do not currently have any upcoming obligations that would require extensive time away from work.”
Resumes, Interviews, what next?

- Check out your Career Center
- Revise/create a strategy plan and make it operational
- Talk to other Vets at the VTC for tips
- Secure a new mentor or reconnect with a previous mentor
- Check out your Career Center again—USE US!
- And finally....
Top 10 Things Every Student Veteran Should Know

10. You don’t have to know what career you want to come and see us.
9. You have learned valuable transferable skills in your military career; these skills make you very marketable.
8. We know what a ‘Consultant’ or ‘Entrepreneur’ really does and can help you decide if you want to be one.
7. If you need to see us before 8:00 or after 4:30, we can make it happen.
6. Your career in the military is/was valuable, and we can tell you how to share that with others.
5. Civilian resumes are totally different than military resumes.
4. There are some common stereotypes about veterans, learn what they are and how to beat them.
3. Mentors found through the VTC and your collegiate unit can be a huge part of finding a great career path.
2. We can help you create a career development plan and strategy—but only if you come see us.
1. Thank you for your service, we look forward to working with you.