

Nearly One-in-Five U.S. Veterans Say It Took Six Months or More to Find a Job After Leaving Active Duty, Finds CareerBuilder.com Survey

- Expert Offers Tips on Turning Military Skills into Civilian Employment -

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Veterans returning to the U.S. after active duty may now be facing a different battle: finding a job. Nearly one-in-five (17 percent) veterans looking for a job said it took more than six months to secure one after leaving active duty; nearly one-in-ten said it took one year or more. This is according to a CareerBuilder.com survey conducted among more than 750 U.S. veterans between August 21 and September 9, 2008.

One-in-five veterans believe that the biggest challenge to getting hired for a civilian position is employers' inability to understand how military skills can fulfill qualifications for civilian positions. Veterans also point to a lack of a college degree, a low number of jobs in their area and an inexperience with civilian job interviewing as other reasons they feel they aren't finding employment.

Even though veterans may feel disconnected from employers, nearly 20 percent of employers said that they will be actively recruiting veterans over the next 12 months. When asked what qualities are most important that a veteran can bring to their organization, employers said:

- The ability to be part of a team (74 percent)
- Disciplined approach to work (73 percent)
- Leadership skills (66 percent)
- Respect and integrity (64 percent)
- Ability to perform under pressure (62 percent)

"Employers value the diverse skill set that veterans can bring to their workforce and how these workers can have a positive impact on their bottom lines," said Rosemary Haefner, Vice President of Human Resources for CareerBuilder.com. "In fact, 20 percent of employers said that they will be actively recruiting veterans over the next 12 months to fill specific roles in fields such as IT, sales, management and engineering."

Haefner recommends the following tips for veterans seeking a transition from military to civilian life:

- Make your skills transferrable: When crafting your resume, focus on framing your military skills in a civilian light to clearly communicate your strengths to employers. There are several online translators available to veterans that can help you match your military experience and training with corresponding civilian jobs.
- Quantify your experience: Be specific when describing your experience on your resume and in your cover letter to better relate to hiring managers. For example, instead of stating that you worked in "defense," present a detailed explanation such as, "managed strategic planning and day-to-day operation of defense unit of 1,500 military personnel."
- Don't limit your options: While you may have carried a weapon or navigated a submarine, these actions don't have to define your civilian career choices. Some people may expect you to pursue a career in industries like law enforcement or military contracting, but keep your mind open to a position outside of what may be expected from your military experiences. Focus on the value of your skills rather than your military job title.

CareerBuilder.com currently offers job seekers the opportunity to post a free icon adjacent to their uploaded resume on the site that identifies them as former members of the Armed Services. The icon allows employers to clearly see that an applicant has valuable military experience before they even view their resume. For more information, visit <http://www.careerbuilder.com/resumeicons>.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Interactive on behalf of CareerBuilder.com among 3,388 hiring managers and human resource professionals (employed full-time; not self-employed; with at least significant involvement in hiring decisions); and 6,842 U.S. employees (employed full-time; not self-employed) ages 18 and over between August 21 and September 9, 2008, respectively (percentages for some questions are based on a subset US Employers or Employees, based on their responses to certain questions). With a pure probability sample of 3,061 and 6,194 one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.68 percentage points and +/- 1.18 percentage points, respectively. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

About CareerBuilder.com

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