Tapping the Talents of America’s Heroes: Hiring and Retaining Disabled Veterans

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Tapping the Talents of America’s Heroes: Hiring and Retaining Disabled Veterans

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Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN)
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• A no-cost resource for employers seeking to proactively recruit, hire, retain and advance qualified employees with disabilities

  ➢ Access trainings, webinars and numerous publications

• Funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy

• Collaborative of multiple partners with expertise in technical assistance, training and research

• Visit website at http://AskEARN.org
• For audio call: **415-655-0045**
  ➢ Access code: **666 127 353#**
• Contact WebEx tech support at 1-866-229-3239
• Download slides at **AskEARN.org**
• An archived recording of the webinar will be posted to **AskEARN.org** within the week
• Submit questions via Q&A window or via **@AskEARN**
• Having trouble posting to the Q&A window? Email **AskEARN@viscardicenter.org**
• Tweet using **#AskEARN**
• Live captioning is located at the bottom right of the screen
• Receive 1.5 general recertification credit hours through the HR Certification Institute (HRCI) and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) (via email following the event)
On a scale of one to five (1 = very little understanding and 5 = extensive understanding), how would you rate your understanding of effective strategies for hiring and retaining disabled veterans?
Tapping the Talents of America’s Heroes: Hiring and Retaining Disabled Veterans

Roxann Griffith
Regional Veterans’ Employment Coordinator
U.S. Department of Labor Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (DOL/VETS)
VETS 101: Veteran Employment

- VETS is committed to helping America's veterans and separating service members and their spouses by:
  - Preparing them for meaningful careers;
  - Providing employment resources and expertise;
  - Promoting their employment opportunities; and
  - Protecting their employment rights.
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AskEARN.org
Hiring Veterans is a Win-Win

**Hiring Veterans is a smart business decision**

- Make great employees
- Center New American Security (CNAS) Study

**Surveyed Employers**

- 90% veterans promoted faster
- 75% veterans easier to manage
- 68% veteran outperform peers

https://www.cnas.org/publications/reports/onward-and-upward
Veteran Demographic

- 20.5 million total veterans in the U.S.
  - 92.7% male
  - 7.3% female
  - Median age = 64

- Nearly 51% of all veterans are in the workforce (10.4 million):
  - 409,000 unemployed veterans
  - 79% of veterans are 45 years or older
  - 56% of unemployed veterans are 45 years or older
  - 13,000 unemployed veterans are 18-24

- Declining unemployment rates- the lowest in last 10 years (currently 2.7%)
  - Veteran unemployment rates continue to be lower than non-veterans
Connecting with Veterans

- Connect with regional employer outreach specialists in DOL VETS to access local resources to meet your unique hiring needs.
- Post position descriptions and openings in the Veterans’ Job Bank/National Labor Exchange database.
- Access the free veteran hiring toolkit, “America's Heroes at Work,” and other resources for employers.
Connecting with Other Partners

- **US Department of Labor**
  - Office of Disability Employment
  - Office of Apprenticeship
  - Office of Strategic Outreach

- **Department of Defense**
  - Soldier for Life Program
  - Marines for Life Program

- **Small Business Administration**

- **US Chamber of Commerce**
  - Hiring Our Heroes (Transition Summits, Hiring Events, Military Spouse Events)
Attracting Veterans

• Making your company appear veteran friendly…
• Speak their language: core values, mission oriented.
• Suggest translatable jobs.
• Include job titles, MOS codes, ranks or grades that are familiar and equivalent.
• To attract veterans, make the face of your company a veteran.
• Veterans know other veterans. Put the employees in your organization to work.
• Create an Employee Referral Program.
• Transition from a Veteran Friendly Culture to a VETERAN READY CULTURE (veteran initiatives, veteran Employee Resource Groups/Affinity Groups, veteran mentorship programs).
What’s in it For You?

• **Retention:**
  - *Fact:* Most veterans transition three times after the leaving the military before they find their niche. However, veterans who transition into an organization with a veteran culture usually make that their next and only career before civilian retirement.
  - *Fact:* The retention rate for veterans is higher in organizations with a DOL Apprenticeship Program.
  - *Fact:* Veterans will stay in organizations that provide training opportunities, information on tools for success, proven growth potential and realistic/competitive pay.
  - *Fact:* Veterans are more apt to look at companies that showcase their military friendly side publicly (attending job fairs and hiring events, having a web page dedicated to veteran hiring, having a program for military spouses, being present in the community).
Final Thoughts

• Tailor your job descriptions to be veteran friendly

• Have a plan for your veterans when you “on-board” them…Retention Focus

• Veteran Affinity Groups are essential to your success
Resources

GET THE RESOURCES

ONLINE

www.veterans.gov
dol.gov/vets/militaryspouses
www.servicelocator.org

DOWNLOAD

TAP E-Book
Shareables
CareerOneStop App

VISIT

Get one-on-one assistance at your local AJC. Locate one nearest you at www.servicelocator.org
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Jeffrey Hall
National Employment Director
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
DAV (Disabled American Veterans)

• DAV was founded in 1920 with the sole purpose of empowering veterans to lead high quality lives.

• DAV currently has nearly 1.3 million members

• DAV’s major programs & services include:
  • National Service Program
  • National Voluntary Services Program
  • National Legislative Program
  • National Employment Program
• Since June 2014 DAV has co-hosted more than 300 traditional and virtual career fairs with our strategic partners RecruitMilitary and Veteran Recruiting, with more than 112,000 veteran job seekers attending, and more than 40,000 receiving job offers.

• In 2018, DAV will expand our efforts by co-hosting nearly 150 traditional and virtual career fairs, including many on military bases.
Due to overwhelming need with more than 250,000 service-members transitioning out of the military each year, DAV launched our National Employment Program in June 2014 with the primary focus of helping veterans and their spouses secure meaningful employment.

3 main tools being utilized at present:

- Online tools and resources - jobs.dav.org;
- Traditional and online or virtual career fairs; and
- Direct engagement with veterans, employers, government and nongovernment entities, and other related sources.
DAV National Employment Program

- Our website, jobs.dav.org, is currently receiving more than 15,000 visitors per month, which includes both veterans and employers, who are seeking our assistance in the employment sector, and we expect this to continue to grow exponentially moving forward.

- In addition to the full schedule of our sponsored career fairs, company links and other tools, we will be adding two major online resources in the near future:
  - DAV Employer Guide to Hiring and Retaining Veterans with Disabilities; and
  - Links to DAV sponsored episodes of Hiring America TV.
Hiring and retaining veterans with disabilities:

- Employers regularly seek DAV’s guidance about their practices when wanting to hire veterans with disabilities, which led us to create the DAV Employer Guide to Hiring and Retaining Veterans with Disabilities (DAV Hiring Guide).

- The DAV Hiring Guide is intended to be a practical guide that provides insights, best practices and practical strategies for employers looking to hire and retain veterans with disabilities.

- The DAV Hiring Guide is free to employers and will be available at jobs.dav.org.
Hiring and retaining veterans with disabilities:

- Working closely with hundreds of employers and thousands of job seekers who are veterans with disabilities, DAV discovered a significant knowledge gap amongst employers who are wanting to hire and retain veterans with disabilities.

- Many employers don’t realize that of the approximately 4 million veterans with service-related disabilities, the vast majority have disabilities that are not visible.

- Likewise, far too many veterans with disabilities fear hiring or workplace discrimination. In fact, a survey conducted by DAV and Military.com revealed that 57% fear such discrimination, while 71% with a diagnosed mental health condition had no intention of disclosing this information in an employment situation.
Hiring and retaining veterans with disabilities:

• Most companies believe that workplace accommodation that will help veterans with disabilities succeed will be extremely costly.

• In reality, there are many accommodations that cost little to nothing to implement, such as time off for medical appointments, adjustable work station or ergonomic chairs, or even a flexible work schedule or telecommuting.
Helpful tips for hiring and retaining veterans with disabilities:

• Veterans who already work for you can play a key role in the veteran hiring initiative by reviewing resumes and translating relevant skills and experience.

• Veterans can act as coaches for candidates, which can be very valuable for veterans with disabilities, especially those transitioning to the civilian workforce, by helping them prepare for interviews and understand how their experience and expertise can fit into a company.

• Develop a mentoring program - veteran employees can act as peer mentors for newer veteran employees, which is especially helpful to those veterans who have recently transitioned from active duty.
Helpful tips for hiring and retaining veterans with disabilities:

• Make sure your website and all your recruiting materials clearly state that your company supports the hiring of veterans, especially those with disabilities.

• Provide contact information for a member of your team – preferably a veteran – so that a veteran candidate can call with any questions about how his or her military experience can translate to your company.

• Train your recruiting and hiring managers on veterans’ skill sets, as well as the types of disabilities they may have and how those disabilities do and do not impact the workplace.

• Understanding common disabilities such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is extremely important and helpful.
Final Thoughts:

- Visit jobs.dav.org under the “For Employers” tab for inquiries or to learn about other partnering opportunities, or contact us directly at (859) 442-2055.

- To learn about DAV and our programs, visit dav.org.
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Tiffany Daugherty
Program Director
Military and Veteran Affairs
First Data
Hiring and Onboarding

• Educating Recruiters and Hiring Managers
  • Business case for hiring veterans
  • Disability and accommodation practices and dispelling myths
  • Interview techniques for digging deeper/overcoming language barriers

• Job Descriptions
  • Speak to traits whenever possible highlighting transferrable skills
  • Be mindful of technical qualifications that can eliminate candidates

• Onboarding
  • Provide education on military and disability specific resources
  • Create a dialog for seeking help/asking questions

• Buy in
  • Success requires buy-in from all levels of company leadership
Retention and Career Progression

• **Employee Resource Groups**
  - First Data examples: Military Affinity Group (MAG) and THRIVE for individuals with disabilities and their supporters
  - Events that engage and create opportunities for mentoring relationships and support networks to develop

• **Career Progression**
  - Educate veterans on career paths within company
    - Clearly outline the internal application and performance planning processes
  - Educate managers on the military career path and importance of ongoing and open dialog
  - Hire internally first for traits and potential (80% rule)

• **Retention (other)**
  - Dedicated staff or POC that serves as an advocate for veterans and military spouses
  - Survey veterans to understand needs and gaps
Resources


- Job Accommodation Network (JAN): [https://AskJAN.org/](https://AskJAN.org/)

- U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP): [https://www.DOL.gov/ODEP](https://www.DOL.gov/ODEP)
Contact Information

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Takeaways

• Corporate leadership, recruiters, and hiring managers need to know the value of the veteran.

• Hiring Veterans is a smart business decision.

• DAV is interested in working directly with any company who is looking to hire and retain veterans, especially those with service-related disabilities.

• DAV recognizes outstanding large, midsize and small employers through our National Commander Awards program, for which nominations are open now through the end of February 2018.

• Invest in educating leaders at all levels of your organization to create an inclusive culture.

• Leverage Employee Resource Groups as a force multiplier.
On a scale of one to five (1 = very little understanding and 5 = extensive understanding), how would you rate your understanding of effective strategies for hiring and retaining disabled veterans?