



MARINES IN TRANSITION

a publication of the Marine Executive Association

www.MarineEA.org



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A Bi-Monthly Publication of the Marine Executive Association

February 2012

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the MEA I wish to salute all of our membership and thank you very much for your service to our Corps and to our Nation. We also thank you for your continued support of each other and to Marines and Corpsmen in transition. We welcome all of our new members as well, and hope to see all of you at our luncheons and transition support functions world-wide.

I wish to thank our new Board Members for their steadfastness over the years and for each of you in our current endeavors to support Marines in transition. Ladies and gentlemen, our Board of Directors and the membership at large share the load by supporting resume reviews and distributing them to other Marines and members who may use those in transition, promoting and sharing employment opportunities, etc. Our 2012 Board Membership is listed on page 11.

We recently had to cancel the 10 February MEA Networking Luncheon at the Clubs at Quantico, due to a gas leak. Every fire truck on Quantico was at the club when I arrived to turn participants away. David Wills successfully worked with the Club Management and we are on again for 24 February to continue to support our transitioning Marines.

We recently learned that the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) is changing their schedule to encompass 5 full days and thus putting a crunch on our ability to host them on Fridays. Our Vice President, John Beiswanger is working with the TAP staff and trying to find a workaround.

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JOB FAIRS REQUIRE STRATEGIC APPROACH

[Las Vegas Review Posting: October 16, 2011 by John A. Challenger](#)

The allure of the job fair is that you have a large number of employers under one roof; presumably, all with open positions to fill. However, the number of job seekers at the fair is likely to far exceed the number of available jobs. You are basically taking a leap of faith that you will stand out in the sea of candidates flowing by the recruiter's booth.

In August, more than 3,000 job seekers flooded an Atlanta job fair hosted by the two Georgia congressmen and the Congressional Black Caucus. The job seekers were vying for positions at the 90 employers in attendance, all of which had job openings to fill.

In September, an estimated 5,000 people turned out for the JobQuest Job Fair in Honolulu. Many of those in attendance were military veterans hoping to find positions at one of the employers specifically looking to hire former military personnel.

In Park Ridge, Ill., nearly 1,000 people attended a relatively brief four-hour job fair in the hopes of landing a position with one of the 63 employers represented.

Despite the slim odds for success, job seekers should not entirely dismiss job fairs.

The employers attending are usually there to fill specific openings. The chances of them hiring you are small, but the chances of them hiring you are zero if you don't show up at all. In this job market, many job seekers are correctly deciding that a small chance is better than no chance.

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JOB FAIRS CONTINUED

There are steps you can take to increase the odds of success at a job fair.

You cannot go in blind or without a plan. It is important that you know which employers will be there and the types of positions they are trying to fill. Only visit those that align with your objectives.

If there is an opportunity to interact with the recruiter, time will be limited. So, it is critical to have a succinct script that highlights your skills, experience and strengths.

It is also critical to maintain a positive and upbeat attitude throughout the job fair. You may already be carrying a lot of frustration related to your job situation. That frustration may be heightened by the job fair process, which typically has you waiting in long lines, surrounded by others who are equally frustrated.

This frustration, while natural and understandable, should not be on display at any point during the job fair. Anything short of a bright and cheery attitude is likely to eliminate you from consideration.

Most importantly, don't put all of your job-search eggs in the job-fair basket. A successful job search requires a multifaceted approach. Those who rely on just one tool will take longer to find a position, even if it is networking, which is considered by many to be the most effective job-search strategy.

So, by all means, attend every job fair that comes to town. But, don't neglect the other tools at your disposal, such as online job boards, networking groups, social and professional networking websites, newspaper ads and simply cold-calling employers.

Job Fair Tips

Dress as if you were going to an interview. Wear neat, pressed clothes and shined shoes. Cover tattoos, if possible. No visible body piercing (other than earrings on women).

Smile. This is your chance to make your best first impression. Remember your image: I am a professional, I have no problems, I will create no problems, and I will solve all your problems.

Be yourself. Don't play a role, but be your best self.

Shake hands. Be enthusiastic. Show interest in the company and the company representative. Know what the company does.

Sell yourself. Treat this like an interview. Tell the company representative what kind of employee you are, what you can do for a company and give some examples of each.

Make sure you understand each company's application procedure, whether paper or online. Ask for a business card for proper information. Fill out applications completely and neatly. Include a copy of your résumé when returning the application.

Approach each employer's table by yourself, not with a friend or as part of a group.

Bring plenty of résumés. Put them in a folder or portfolio so they don't get crushed. You can also use the folder to hold any brochures, literature, applications and business cards you collect. Don't give out your résumé right away. Talk to the company representative first.

Remember to be positive, prepared, polite and polished.

VETERAN DISCRIMINATION IN THE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE

[VAntage Blog Posting: February 9, 2012](#)
by Nichole Olson

Where are you from? I've never been able to answer that question. Hometowns do not exist for those who grow up in a military family; home is, and always will be, wherever I happen to lie my head down at night. This year will mark my 15 move. That number does not include the four locations I lived in one geographical area nor does it include any move before the age of five or the few times I was sent to various schools the military decided to send me to.

How does this pertain to Veteran's employment? Let me explain...

I've had the luxury of having two careers almost simultaneously. I have 20 years experience as an Aviation Electronics Technician in the Navy and over 10 years experience as a Medical Practice Administrator in the civilian workforce. Due to this lifestyle, my résumé has become almost a timeline of my entire adult life. While of course it emphasizes experience and education it also draws attention to the many times I have moved including a recall to active duty for which I left a job I'd been at less than 90 days. These highlights can be either helpful or harmful depending on whoever happens to be doing the hiring.

Four months ago, I found myself looking for new employment in the civilian sector. Long story short, I'm serving on extended orders overseas while attempting to look for civilian employment in anticipation of my return to the U.S.

I've sent out hundreds of résumés over the past four months and have had five interviews with two companies. I was lucky enough to get the interviews I have had but it was not an easy task. In each of my interviews, my military experience obviously came up and it was evident that it was an issue. Not that my experience meant little but the fear of my being called up again and my availability came into question several times. I found this odd but even more so, discouraging. After the last interview, I really started thinking as to why I would not be considered for one of the open positions. **I was told that I had the qualifications, experience, and that they were sure I could handle the job but my availability was in question due to my commitment to the Navy Reserves. They weren't sure they wanted to hire me because I may have to leave unexpectedly.**

From a business standpoint, I understand their concern; who wants to hire someone who may have to leave due to a national crisis? They do have a business to run after all. However, the more I thought about it, the angrier I became. I am but 1 reservist in a sea of thousands of others who, especially since 9/11, have found themselves in this exact situation at least once in the last 11 years. My experience cannot be that uncommon to that of my fellow reserve/guardsmen and of those who have recently separated from active duty; I can't be the only one who has experienced this opaque form of discrimination.

Still, it is not merely the fact that qualified Veterans and active reservists and guardsmen are being turned away for positions due to their military affiliation that is upsetting; it is also that many seem to lack the compulsory education/certifications for particular occupations as determined by mainstream America (the 99 percent).

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Veteran Discrimination *Continued*

Admiral Mike Mullen has expressed sentiments that there is a growing disconnect between the 1 percent of our nation's actively serving population and the rest of our citizens.

This attitude is clearly apparent in the civilian job market. How do we, as Veterans, explain to that 99 percent that we are worth hiring? That we have skills and experience that our civilian counterparts of the same age will never in their lives experience or even comprehend? That we are adaptable, disciplined, can take (and give) direction, perform under pressure and work with diverse populations? That they need to take a chance on the other 1 percent?

In speaking with a fellow Veteran recently, maybe the onus isn't on the 1 percent but the other 99 percent. Why is it that military members receive extensive training in the fields of electronics, medicine, mechanics, aviation, and administration yet we can barely get a nationally accredited university to grant us little more than three credit hours towards physical education (because we were smart enough to complete boot camp). While we are able to apply for and received certifications in some career fields, they are either not enough, or are not recognized, by many employers. We can continue to write résumés and attempt to translate our skills into civilian terms yet without education that is nationally recognized, we're back at square one. The GI Bill is an outstanding benefit and most service members take advantage of it in some capacity but many Veterans should be at least 50 percent completed with their degrees simply by the amount of education and experience they've received through the military.

At the very least, they should be allowed to test their competency without having to re-take formal classes. How can we not grant the required qualifications necessary to obtain employment in the civilian sector to deserving Veterans?

How do we tell a military police officer that while he is qualified to carry a weapon and serve in a combat zone that he is not qualified for employment with his hometown police force because he has not gone through their training academy? How is he good enough to go to war but not good enough to respond to 911 calls?

While recent legislation such as the Returning Heroes and Wounded Warriors Tax Credits offer employers a tax incentive to hire certain unemployed and service-disabled Veterans, it's disheartening that our nation must entice business owners with a monetary bonus to hire those who have already given so much. However, I believe that the reason this legislation actually passed is because we already know that the system is backwards. Our elected leaders suddenly had an 'Aha' moment and decided they needed to do something about the high unemployment rate amongst Veterans but instead of requiring that the Department of Defense and America's numerous college and universities work together to offer certifications and more credits towards college degrees, they decided to tempt employers into hiring us the only way they know how-with money. All we really need to do is give credit where credit is due; it's a quite simple concept.

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Veteran Discrimination *Continued*

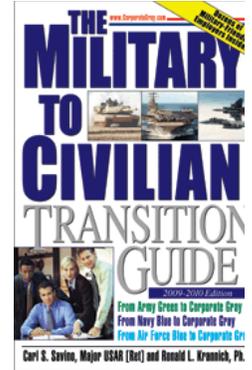
My personal résumé screams “no longevity” to a potential employer though it is clear that I have a military background. I feel very strongly that it is not merely the fact that I have had several moves that is hurting my employment prospects, it is that employers are still under the false impression that an individual will stay with them for longer than a few years. We live in a highly mobile society; gone are the days of pensions for employees who stuck around a company long enough to attain them. The 99 percent must take the chance on hiring Veterans who will give them the best of what they have while they are there regardless of how long that may be. Additionally, our nation must make it less cumbersome for Veterans to obtain the education required to make them successful and competitive with their civilian peers.

However until our nation rights itself in this respect, we, as Veterans, will continue to carry on as we always have and will adapt and overcome the adversity handed out by our own countrymen.

Military-to-Civilian Transition Guide

The essential steps from Corporate Gray's Military-to-Civilian Transition Guide are online here!

This online version includes the most important concepts from our book to help you make a successful career transition. The print version, now in its fifteenth year with more than 3.3 million copies in distribution, remains the most widely used transition guide for the military services, veterans, and their families.



The guide will help you:

- Clarify your goals
- Get you moving in the right direction
- Save you time and effort
- Minimize your costs
- Connect with an excellent first post-service job

The steps of the career transition process outlined here include an informational section, exercises to help you apply the concept, and additional resources to further assist you in the transition process.

Start now on your path to a new and rewarding career!

[Order online at Corporate Gray.com.](http://CorporateGray.com)

TIPS FOR TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

Telephone interviews are merely screening interviews meant to eliminate poorly qualified candidates so that only a few are left for personal interviews. You might be called out of the blue, or a telephone call to check on your résumé might turn into an interview. Your mission is to be invited for a personal face-to-face interview. Some tips for telephone interviews:

Anticipate the dialogue: Write a general script with answers to questions you might be asked. Focus on skills, experiences, and accomplishments. Practice until you are comfortable. Then replace the script with cue cards that you keep by the telephone.

Keep your notes handy: Have any key information, including your résumé, notes about the company, and any cue cards you have prepared, next to the phone. You will sound prepared if you don't have to search for information. Make sure you also have a notepad and pen so you can jot down notes and any questions you would like to ask at the end of the interview.

Be prepared to think on your feet: If you are asked to participate in a role-playing situation, give short but concise answers. Accept any criticism with tact and grace.

Avoid salary issues: If you are asked how much money you would expect, try to avoid the issue by using a delaying statement or give a broad range with a \$15,000 spread. At this point, you do not know how much the job is worth.

Push for a face-to-face meeting: Sell yourself by closing with something like: "I am very interested in exploring the possibility of working in your company. I would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you in person so we can both better evaluate each other. I am free either Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday morning. Which would be better for you?"

Try to reschedule surprise interviews: You will not be your best with a surprise interview. If you were called unexpectedly, try to set an appointment to call back by saying something like: "I have a scheduling conflict at this time. Can I call you back tomorrow after work, say 6 PM?"

Intelligence Program Seeks Wounded Warriors and Disabled Veterans

Rababy & Associates, a service disabled veteran owned small business, is seeking wounded warriors and disabled veterans with a VA disability rating of 30% or greater for our **Disabled Veteran Intelligence Program** (DVIP) in which we recruit, train and equip our disabled veterans to support government agencies in the collection and analysis of information requirements.

The program is also open to spouses and parents who have become fulltime caregivers for their loved ones due to combat injuries.

Please send a current résumé with disability rating to David Rababy at david.rababy@rababyassociates.com.

10 TIPS FOR SURVIVING A LONG JOB SEARCH

This is a tough market and many people are having long searches. People who conscientiously work the Five O'clock Club methodology—and who truly do put in 35 hours a week on job-search—still arrive at the stage of receiving offers within two to three months. But longer searches are not uncommon. As things drag on, people feel their morale and energies slip away. How do you rebound? The Energizer Bunny has to be your role model, and it is especially important to maintain a positive attitude to have a successful campaign with a happy ending.

Here are Ten Tips to help keep you motivated when things look bleak:

1. Do something new. People who have been unemployed a year might tell you they've been "looking for a year." But chances are, there are "new things to do." For example, try professional-level volunteer work, join associations, and earn some money some way. One relatively senior-level person took a job at the Gap just to get out of the house. He was excited about the great sales he made, and it kept him pumped up and feeling like a winner. We encourage job hunters to do what they have to do to keep body and soul together. Review the Five O'clock Club methodology.

Have you skipped any steps? Something you overlooked might be the something new to try—and be honest with yourself: Are you really spending 35 hours a week on job search?

2. Expand your targets! Think outside of the box. If you have been looking only in your major metropolitan area, look in the suburbs. Most of the job growth in the 80s and 90s occurred there. People who have worked for accounting firms should look on the client side: explore accounting for not-for-profits or small- to mid-sized corporations. There may be literally hundreds of companies and organizations to explore, most of which can be unearthed by just a few hours of Internet research—which brings us to the next tip.

3. Use many techniques for getting meetings. Most job hunters rely on search firms and ads. Yet fewer than 20% of all jobs are filled through search firms and ads. The most overlooked technique is direct contact (which is not the same thing as networking). Our job hunters are getting 36% of their meetings by contacting companies directly. Follow their lead: find out the names of department heads. Try to get in to see people whether or not they have openings. "You never know when you'll need someone like me" is one approach.

4. Be flexible on salary. Most people are not making what they made three years ago. Many people were over-paid during the boom of the 1990s. People should expect to be paid fairly at current market rates, and the market is not very strong right now.

5. If you're forced into a low-paying position, remember that this is all temporary. Whatever kind of work you might settle for, whatever you get paid—think of it as temporary until the market turns around. Don't beat up on yourself, "Oh, this is what my life has come to after all these years." Instead, do what you have to do to bring in some money and keep yourself healthy emotionally. The situation will all change again in a few years. You're just trying to get through this rough patch.

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Surviving a Long Job Search *Continued*

6. Be around POSITIVE people. It doesn't help to associate with people who wallow in depression and take perverse comfort in telling themselves about "how bad it is out there." Join associations to make positive contacts and meet people with an upbeat attitude—and to keep up-to-date in your field. Five O'clock Clubbers work at keeping a positive attitude, measure the effectiveness of their searches, and keep on plugging. Of course, they also have a career coach to help them see that the glass might just be half full and guide them through the process.

7. Continue to job-hunt even if your heart isn't in it. When you were in your old job, there were days you didn't feel like doing it, but you did it anyway because it was your responsibility. Job-hunting is your job right now. Some days you don't feel like doing it, but you must. Make a phone call. Write a proposal. Research a company. Do your best every day. No matter how you feel. And somehow it will get done, as any job gets done.

8. Get a job-search buddy. Your buddy is someone who is also searching whom you can talk to — fairly often and informally. "Here's what I'm planning to do today in my search. What are you planning to do? Let's talk tomorrow and make sure we've done it." You can probably find your job-search buddy in your small group at the Club. To avoid giving each other bad advice, be sure to follow the Five O'clock Club methodology. That is, read and reread the books—and your weekly group will help keep you on track.

9. Take care of yourself physically and mentally. Job search is stressful, and stress can prompt you to give up good habits and throw in the towel, for example, stop going to the gym, abandon your diet. So take care of yourself physically. Watch your drinking, eating, and smoking—they can get out of hand. Get dressed every morning. Look good. Get some exercise. Eat healthful foods. Take some time off to recharge. Don't postpone having fun until you get a job. Schedule at least three hours of fun a week. Do something you are normally unable to do when you're working; for example, go to a museum or to the ballpark. You'll be more relaxed and more interesting when you go on interviews!

10. Remember: you are distracted, so pay attention to protect yourself. We've heard it from job hunters for years: they get mugged, walk into walls, and lose wallets and purses—because their minds are elsewhere. Job search—especially a long drawn-out job search—is not an ordinary situation, and extraordinary things can happen. Be on your guard.

We're Looking for Volunteers!



The MEA's need for volunteers is ongoing. If you can help Marines in transition by volunteering to assist in a Marine in Transition support area, please contact Tim Murphy, MEA Executive Director, execdir@marineea.org or 703-980-3878.

AN HR EXPERIENCE

The veteran's resume was impressive. The formatting was impeccable, the content was excellent, and he did a great job of focusing on accomplishments instead of job duties. If I were an employer, I would have been impressed. Then I looked at his cover letter and imagined the employer tossing that perfect resume into the trash bin.

Many veterans and retirees destroy their resumes by accompanying them with half-hearted or downright terrible cover letters. While some employers don't bother reading cover letters, most do. And they will quickly eliminate you if you make these mistakes:

Not using standard business-letter format — The veteran's cover letter looked more like a cut-and-paste e-mail than a business letter. It had no recipient information, no return address and no date. **The letter screamed "unprofessional."** Be sure your cover letter uses a standard business letter format. It should include the date, the recipient's mailing address and your address.

It's not all about you — It may seem counterintuitive, but your cover letter, like your resume, should be about the employer as much as it's about you. Yes, you need to tell the employer about yourself, but do so in the context of the employer's needs and the specified job requirements.

Typos and grammatical errors — Employers tend to **view typos and grammatical errors as evidence of your carelessness and inability to write.** Proofread every letter (and email) you send. Have a friend who knows good writing double-check it for you.

Writing a novel — **A cover letter should be no longer than one page.** Employers are bombarded with resumes and cover letters, and their time is scarce. Make sure your cover letter has three or four concise but convincing paragraphs that are easy to read. If your competitor's letter rambles on for two pages, guess which candidate the employer will prefer.

Using the same cover letter for every job and company — Employers see so many cover letters that it's easy for them to tell when you're using a one-size-fits-all approach. **If you haven't addressed their company's specific concerns, they'll conclude you don't care about this particular job.** It's time-consuming but worthwhile to customize each letter for these specific job and company.

Not sending a real cover letter — Some job seekers don't bother sending a cover letter with their resume. Others type up a one or two-sentence "here's my resume" cover letter while others attach handwritten letters or sticky notes. There is no gray area here: You must include a well-written, neatly formatted cover letter with every resume you send. If you don't, you won't be considered for the job. **(This has changed over time and in the recent past 5+ years, unless you are going for an instructional position or the potential employers website does not ask for a cover letter, do not send one. Most HR Recruiters, Program Mangers, Vice Presidents, etc., will initially only spend two minutes on your resume.**

This article originally appeared on Monster.com some years ago and I do not know who to attribute it to. Whoever compiled this, thanks for the scoop and heads-up information. We need all the help we can get.

Message from the President *Continued*

Friday 24 February the Chairman and the President of the MEA presented Mr. Corey Alderman with the Marine Executive Associations Annual Richard H. Francis Award. This Award is presented in memory of Richard H. Francis, career Marine, business leader and MEA Executive Director for more than a decade. Corey was presented this award for professional accomplishments providing assistance to Marines in transition and the Marine Executive Association members.

Recent DOD budget activities make it even more important for Marines and Corpsmen to devote as much time to furthering their education and building their skills for future employment. I see far too many Marines leave the Service without a degree or having made significant progress toward a degree, while FREE Tuition Assistance is available. In addition, for our OIF and OEF Veterans should use this to their advantage before using up their GI Bill.

If you would like to have your résumés reviewed before posting then use the following site:
<http://www.marineea.org/index.php/résumés/52-résumé-review-service>

If you feel your résumé is ready to impress an employer into giving you an interview then please go to the MEA web site and post your résumé at:
<http://hotjobs.marineea.org/mea/hotres.nsf/HotRésumé?OpenForm>

While on the web site please check out the many employment opportunities posted thereon.
<http://hotjobs.marineea.org/>

Also sign up to receive Daily or Weekly blasts that go to about 16,000 at:
<http://www.marineea.org/index.php/for-marines-menu/hotjobs-signup>

When you have your new career started, we ask that you pay it forward by helping another Marine or Service man or woman. At that point we ask that you join our ranks at
<http://mea.afsportal.com/signup.php>

Standby, the MEA is sending your résumé to every clime and place.

Please lend a hand in sending Care Packages to our Service men and women by checking out
www.usmcewc.com.

Thank you for supporting our Marines and Corpsmen in transition.

Semper Fidelis,

Max Wix
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Upcoming Events



April 13, 2012

MCB Quantico Luncheon

May 11, 2012

Henderson Hall Luncheon

June 8, 2012

MCB Quantico Luncheon

**View a listing of events on
the MEA Calendar**

www.calendar.marineea.org

Upcoming Job Fairs

- Mar 2** Hiring Our Heroes Job Fair - Philadelphia, PA
- Mar 6** Job Fair Ready Workshops - Quantico VA
- Mar 7** Hiring Our Heroes Job Fair - Springfield, VA
- Mar 9** Career Resource Mgt Job Fair - Quantico VA
- Mar 16** Career Expo - Washington, D.C
- Mar 21** Military.com Career Expo - Brooklyn, NY
- Mar 23** Job Zone Job Fair - King George/Dahlgren VA
- Mar 29** CivilianJobs.com Career Expo - Ft. Hood, TX

**Go to the MEA calendar for a
complete list of job fairs**