



MARINES IN TRANSITION

A Bi-Monthly Publication of the Marine Executive Association

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FREQUENT LINKEDIN® QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Reprinted Courtesy of Military Officers Association of America (MOAA): <http://www.moaa.org/>

During recent MOAA virtual and live career fairs, networking events and Marketing Yourself career transition presentations on military bases nationwide, some of the most popular questions concern best practices for using LinkedIn. Here are some of the most frequent topics with answers from the MOAA career transition team and outside consultants who advise our program.

Q: Who should I connect with on LinkedIn? I'm receiving invitations all the time from people I have never met or barely know.

A: In our experience and after consulting with JJ Ramberg, host of MSNBC's Your Business, a consensus emerges that it's best to use LinkedIn to supplement an existing relationship. Don't start a relationship on LinkedIn. In most cases, there must be some meaningful interaction before connecting on LinkedIn; for example, a meeting, phone call or pull-aside at a conference. The one exception may be connecting with recruiters, especially if you're contemplating a job change.

Q: If I'm transitioning out of military service, should my LinkedIn photo be in uniform or in civilian business attire?

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FREQUENT LINKEDIN® QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS *CONTINUED*

A: You should dress for the job you want; not the job you have. Also, avoid selfies and family photos. This is the first peek corporate recruiters will have at your style, personality and cultural compatibility, and everything about your presentation needs to exude professionalism and executive presence, including your LinkedIn photo. Don't be afraid to smile!

Q: Should my LinkedIn profile headline reflect my current position or job status, or should I use the headline to promote my core skills?

A: Career transition experts and recruiters in our network agree that a LinkedIn profile headline should reflect core skills and personal brand, rather than a current job title. Additionally, since it's best to have a job when you're looking for a job, LinkedIn headlines reflecting your current status in transition are not helpful. When recruiters and employers search LinkedIn using advanced people search techniques, they load key words and job titles descriptive of the positions they're seeking to fill. Another idea to consider is listing your e-mail address or phone number at the end of your LinkedIn profile headline. Listing both can appear too cluttered. Remember the advice of LinkedIn expert Jason Alba: "The objective of your LinkedIn profile is to increase your chances of being found and to effectively communicate information about you."

Q: Please explain how the LinkedIn Public Profile differs from the LinkedIn Profile.

A: Your LinkedIn Profile is what your connections see when they are logged into LinkedIn. Your Public Profile is what people -- both connections and others -- see if they are not logged into LinkedIn. Returning to Jason Alba's advice: "It's important to think about what to show and what to hide." Access Account and Settings at the right side of the main navigation bar under your miniature photo. Click first on Privacy and Settings -- Review. Then click on Edit Your Public Profile under the settings column, where you can choose what to show and hide on a single screen. After editing your Public Profile settings, note that the next box down on the right side of the screen allows you to customize your Public Profile URL. Consider changing this to your noun name, or something close, in order to maximize your visibility to Internet search engines. Add your customized URL to your resume header, business cards and e-mail signature block. Please explain how the LinkedIn Public Profile differs from the LinkedIn Profile.

HOW AN IT PROFESSIONAL CAN TRANSITION TO A CYBER SECURITY CAREER

Source: <http://clearedjobs.net/blog/it-professionals-get-a-cyber-security-job/>

<http://www.marineea.org/index.php/announcements/239-how-an-it-profession>

From banking and healthcare to government contractors and intel agencies, you can't look anywhere today without seeing something about cyber security. Whether it's the challenges that are facing us from cyber security threats to the growing number of employment opportunities in the cyber security field, it's clearly the buzz word of the moment.

There's buzz for a good reason. In the metro DC area alone there are tens of thousands of cyber security job openings. A key challenge is the need for cleared professionals with both the skills and the required certifications to meet contract requirements.

We hear it from our cleared employers as well. A constant search for qualified cleared cyber security professionals. That's why ClearedJobs.Net is the Cyber Job Fair partner for this year's CyberMaryland conference in October.

If you're an information technology (IT) professional the demand means opportunity. Opportunity that may not cost you anything more than time and perseverance.

Security University recently received a \$2.75M training grant* to help information technology professionals train for cyber security certification / credentials. That means free or very low cost hands-on cyber security certification training is available to help you compete for a cyber security job if you're unemployed or transitioning military, or to get a raise and improve your cyber security skills if you are currently employed.

Since October 2013, SU's 5-day cyber security training classes in Herndon, VA, have helped transitioning military and those who are unemployed to get a job within 60-90 days post-certification at salaries ranging from \$109k – \$165k.

While certifications are often contract requirements, some in the cleared community have disparaged the drive for certifications. Do certifications demonstrate competency or simply an individual's ability to pass a test? What sets SU's Q/ISP (Qualified/Information Security Professional) training apart is that it requires students to qualify and validate practical cyber security skills and ability, not just test completion.

Who May Participate

Firstly all participants must have an active or current security clearance. If it's been two or more years since you last held a clearance via working in a cleared position, or your periodic reinvestigation has come due during the two year period since you last held a cleared position, you are unfortunately not eligible to participate.

Secondly you must have some previous experience or education in information technology or cyber security. This is a broad definition so check with Security University before disqualifying yourself.

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HOW AN IT PROFESSIONAL CAN TRANSITION TO A CYBER SECURITY CAREER *CONTINUED*

Employment Status

If you *have a job*, your employer must agree up front to give you an increase in pay once you complete the training. That's surprisingly easier to sell than you may think.

Transitioning military are especially encouraged to participate as this grant does not impact your GI Bill benefits.

If you are *unemployed* you'll need to contact your workforce agency to assess whether you're eligible for a WIA (Workforce Investment Act) training grant. The WIA training grant varies by county.

What's Expected of You

You will be provided with reading materials to review and study several weeks prior to class. This pre-homework is so everyone enters class with a baseline knowledge. Investing time prior to the start of class is critical to your success.

After completing one or two week-long classes you will take a certification exam plus complete a practicum to demonstrate your competence by putting what you've learned into practice. You really have to do something more than just beat a test. That validates to employers that you are qualified and your certificate isn't just a piece of paper, but a demonstration that you have mastered the required cyber security skills.

Is It Right for You

Employers are desperately trying to fill positions for qualified cleared cyber security professionals. If you're underemployed or concerned about your future, out of work and struggling to find employment, or transitioning military, this may be the solution for you.

To answer your questions and to find out more about whether this is a good program for you, contact Security University's CyberSecurity Career Office 877-357-7744 or via email QISP@securityuniversity.net

AIRBORNE HAZARDS AND OPEN BURN PIT REGISTRY

Source:

<https://veteran.mobilehealth.va.gov/AHBurnPitRegistry/index.html#page/home>

Service members who believe they have developed illnesses from working and living near burn-pit disposal sites in Iraq and Afghanistan noticed Thursday they could log in and register on the VA's public health website (<http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/burnpits/action-plan.asp>) according to a report in the Military Times.

Eligible veterans and service members include those who served in:

- Operation Enduring Freedom/ Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn
- Djibouti, on or after 9/11/ 2001
- Operations Desert Shield or Desert Storm
- Southwest Asia theater of operations on or after 8/2/1990

THE VA VOC REHAB SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR VETERANS

Source: <http://disabledveterans.org/mil-va-voc-rehab-survival-guide-veterans/>

Nervous about your upcoming VA Voc Rehab appointment? Feeling bullied by your Voc Rehab Counselor? The Voc Rehab Survival Guide solves this by giving you insider tips and templates written by me, a Veterans Law attorney with over 10 years of VA Voc Rehab user experiences, including my own. Best of all, it is electronic so you can access it immediately.

Beyond the 100+ pages of templates, advice and videos for this eBook, we are even throwing in a subscription to our Online Veterans Resource Center with the first 30 days free, cancel it at any time. The subscription will allow you to:

- Email me directly to my SOS email if you hit a roadblock
- Access the Case Studies for Voc Rehab of numerous other veterans
- Use the disability guides and templates to increase your disability rating while in training

This way, you come out of college with a great shot at a new career or small business, and the disability benefits you earned.

MARINE RECEIVES HIGHEST HONOR

Source: Billy Watkins, The (Jackson, Miss.) Clarion-Ledger, June 19, 2014

Medal of Honor recipient Kyle Carpenter saved a fellow Marine's life by covering a grenade with his own body in Afghanistan. The grenade exploded under him.

At the time, it was viewed only as a cute photograph: A blonde-haired, 3-year-old boy in a white shirt, his head slightly tilted, his eyes and mouth smiling only as a child's can, and his right hand poised and touching just above his temple in a full-fledged salute.

Two decades later, one has to wonder if it was a sign that retired Marine Cpl. William Kyle Carpenter, born in Jackson on Oct. 17, 1989, somehow already knew at least part of his life's path, which included the East Room of the White House. Carpenter became the third Mississippian to receive the Medal of Honor, the highest U.S. military distinction. It is awarded for valor far and beyond the call of duty during combat. Carpenter more than qualifies.

On Nov. 21, 2010, in the Marjah district of Afghanistan, a Taliban stronghold, Carpenter made the split-second decision to cover an enemy-launched grenade with his body in an attempt to shield his fellow Marines. "I don't think I'd ever thought about what I would do in that situation," Carpenter said by phone from Columbia, S.C., where he attends the University of South Carolina. "I don't think there is any way to know until you're faced with it. But I did what I was trained to do, and that is protect my fellow Marines at all costs."

Read the complete article:

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/06/16/medal-of-honor-kyle-carpenter/10570959/>

LETS HEAR A LOUD OORAH AND CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR ROYAL MARINES BRETHREN

By Tim Murphy, MEA Executive
Director

Let me explain. I recently returned from just over two weeks in Scotland, with fifteen family members. Four days in Edinburgh, four days on the Island of Mull, three days in Inverness, and three days on Edinburgh. We came back to Edinburgh to catch our return flight. Before we departed for Scotland, we saw the advertisement for the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Of course we got tickets.

The showcase is the massed Pipers and Drummers and the Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines. The Marines were not just another performing group they were "the showcase". The Tattoo opens in complete darkness. Camouflaged figures creep silently in the darkness, capturing suspects. The lights go up and the figures are introduced as the United Kingdom's "Commandoes" – The Royal Marines.

Job Hunting Tips & Techniques Available on MEA Website

Check the MEA website for an extensive listing of how to network, search for jobs, draft a resume and much more!

<http://marineea.org/index.php/for-marines-menu/tips-and-techniques>

With the lights up, the combined Royal Marines Band marches on, drummers and pipers playing Scots marching songs. The audience is entertained for several numbers. Then the announcer asks for applause for their loyal service to Great Britain. "This year we are celebrating a remarkable 350th anniversary of the founding of Her Majesty's Royal Marines. 120 outstanding musicians from HM Royal Marines Plymouth, Portsmouth and Scotland - who the Producer describes as "perhaps the greatest musical instrument on the planet" - will mark the occasion alongside the Royal Marines' seaborne soldiers, the Commandos."

The Royal Marines were formed on 28 October, 1664, making this their 350th anniversary. Lets hear a loud OORAH and Congratulations to our Royal Marines Brethren on their 350th Anniversary.



SENIOR MARINES AND SAILORS ARE LEARNING CIVILIAN JOB SEARCH SKILLS

By Chuck Heiser

After a Marine Corps career spanning some 20 to 30 years it someday must come to an end. The Marine Executive Association, an all-volunteer non-profit organization of former and current active duty members who provide assistance to Marines in job search, resumes, and generally all skills needed to find a job in the civilian world. One day I was approached by Col Steve Fisher, USMC (Ret.) and he asked if I would like to put a program of job search skills for a group of senior Marines who were leaving the Corps. Sure I would, just give me a few weeks to put it together. Which I did in two weeks. In addition to writing the program I put together a 203 Slide Program to present this in a classroom as well as a 68 page workbook plus 12 case studies which are an ongoing homework assignment to gain background as the class progresses. The basics of this course , resumes, references, networking, negotiating, targeting & research, adapting to change and interviewing are designed to give class members ability to develop skills in each area. This was a further assurance that I had all the information as I remembered it when I left the Corps. I enrolled in the National Veterans Training Institute at the University of Colorado Denver. In addition to running my own program I am now certified to teach the congressionally mandated TRS program. I am also certified by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education and I am an Eligible Training Provider for the State of California Employment Development Division. I wanted to be sure that we were giving these men and women the latest most current information on job search skills.

We give this senior 25+ program at Camp Pendleton three times a year. We usually have approximately 50 Marines and Sailors per class. It is a sought after class and we have a woman at Camp Pendleton who signs people up electronically making sure that we have a full class each time that it is given. Some of our classmates try to take this course about two years out from retirement and then again a second time just before retiring. So that all of the information is current in their minds. If you need more information about our Seminar you can call me at (760) 751.2174.

In addition to what I described we also have volunteer guest speaker experts to enrich the course as we go. We have a current President of an aerospace corporation speaking about current job availability and transferrable job skills from the USMC to civilian jobs. He is a former Marine and that makes him instantly believable to this group. We have a retired Marine Major who gives three hours on financial management and how to handle your retirement funds and healthcare. We also have a former Major who is V.P. of Operations for an Executive Search and Placement Firm who goes over with our students in detail about how they can be of help to Marines and Sailors who are looking for professional employment. I also have a retired Lt Col who wrote a book entitled "Orders to Nowhere" The after action report from a career Marine's transition back to the civilian world. He explains how much more difficult it is leave the Marine Corps than to join it. Finally, we have two speakers who speak on dressing for the interview and dressing for success. One from a men's clothier and one from a women's shop.

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SENIOR MARINES AND SAILORS ARE LEARNING CIVILIAN JOB SEARCH SKILLS *CONTINUED*

To help women Marines and spouses as well. I also have a very fine volunteer in Lt Col Mike Collier USMC (Ret.) He was an Education Major in his undergraduate work who is a wonderful teacher and instructor and has really made a study of this entire subject of leaving the Corps and finding civilian employment. He does an outstanding in this assignment.

This has been a true labor of love; to see how these men & women progress from being well trained Marines to men & women who are ready to take on the responsibilities of the civilian world once again. Camp Pendleton is the only Marine Base worldwide that offers this unique program.

If you are a senior Marine or Sailor and would like to register by phone for our last Seminar this year (17-20 November 2014) you may phone Mrs. Rhonda E. Smith at (760) 725.6324

MEA Board Vote

MEA will electronically vote for the 2015 Board of Directors in November 2014 and install the new Board in December. To be eligible to vote, Marines and our Navy Corpsmen must be members in good standing. Check that your dues are current and make your vote count.

If you would like to serve your fellow Marines and Navy Corpsmen as a Board member, start a new chapter, or provide support in other ways, contact MEA's Executive Director, Tim Murphy at ExecDir@MarineEA.org for information.

15 WAYS TO LEVERAGE LINKEDIN® FOR YOUR MILITARY TRANSITION

By Andrea Downing-Peck on 5/2/14

Veterans transitioning to the civilian workforce need more than a military jargon-free resume to catch the eye of hiring managers. In today's competitive job market, using LinkedIn for your military transition is an important step in launching a post-military career.

"LinkedIn is a major resource for anyone who is passively or actively searching for a job," said Philip Dana, a former Navy surface warfare officer who serves as director, global talent acquisition, at NuVasive. "All recruiting teams in corporate America leverage LinkedIn in one way or another to find or network with veterans."

Here are 15 Ways to Make LinkedIn Work for You:

Get Noticed

Peppering your profile with keywords found in the specific job or industry you are seeking is key to attracting a recruiter's attention. "Most mistakes in social media involve not leveraging search engine optimization, meaning not putting enough meat and potatoes, not using enough terms and words that define who you are and what you want to do," Dana says.

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15 WAYS TO LEVERAGE LINKEDIN® FOR YOUR MILITARY TRANSITION

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Borrow From the Best

For “how to” examples when creating your LinkedIn profile, turn to employees in the industry you are targeting, as well as profiles belonging to social media experts. “Get somebody who does this on a daily basis, grab their profile and copy it,” Dana says. “My own profile can be used as a template.”

Make a Statement

The headline is the “most valuable piece of real estate” on your profile because it is visible when recruiters search LinkedIn for job candidates. Use the space to advertise your skills. “Most people just put a job title there and it is boring,” says social media expert Sultan Camp, a Navy veteran and recruiter for Orion International. “For example, if I had an IT background and did sales, I would say, ‘The geek who can speak – Bridging the gap between IT and sales.’”

Sell Yourself

LinkedIn’s executive summary should be the equivalent of your “30-second elevator speech” to perspective employers, Camp says. It is an opportunity to highlight the core competencies you would bring to an employer and broadcast that you are transitioning to the civilian workforce.

Be Picture Perfect

Including a photo makes it seven times more likely your profile will be viewed. Unless you are looking to transition to a defense industry job, a professional civilian headshot is the best choice since a military photo may “create the impression you are not ready to leave the uniform,” Camp says.

Make Your Profile Visually Appealing

Similar to a resume, your LinkedIn profile should be easy to read. Camp says that means avoiding block paragraphs and using bullets when outlining job experience and accomplishments.

Avoid Sending the Wrong Message

Repeatedly mentioning your military rank and using military jargon in your profile tells employers you “want to stay where your comfort zone is.”

Translate Your Skills

When describing your military experience, include the same skills and terms found in job announcements for positions you are seeking and “marry them up” so your profile stands out to hiring managers.

Join Groups

Active involvement in LinkedIn Groups – both military and civilian – scores points with hiring officials who gain insights into your expertise and experiences. By joining groups, Dana says a veteran can “define who you are” and tell recruiters “what my future interest is.”

Grow Your Network

Adding connections – i.e., the contacts you ask to join your personal network – allows you to network with veterans who have a similar military background and have successfully transitioned to the civilian workplace, as well as hiring officials, friends and family who may have job leads.

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15 WAYS TO LEVERAGE LINKEDIN® FOR YOUR MILITARY TRANSITION

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Cultivate Recommendations and Endorsements

Hiring managers increasingly are using LinkedIn recommendations and endorsements as filters when recruiting potential applicants, requiring a minimum number of each. When asking for recommendations, Camp advises directing connections toward the aspects of your skill set that match your civilian career aspirations. "You are trying to build your online professional presence," he says. "If you have a background in logistics but you also have worked in security and you want to go the logistics route, you don't want them to highlight your security experience."

Manage Your Settings

For recruiters to find you on LinkedIn, your profile needs to be public. You also can make changes such as turning off activity broadcasts and customizing your public profile URL.

Be Available

Do not miss out on a job opportunity by forgetting to include up-to-date contact information. "Sometimes recruiters will see a great-looking LinkedIn profile, see you are transitioning and see you are a fit," Dana says, "but if you don't have at least an e-mail or Twitter handle in your 'Contact Me' section, we may just pass on you."

Search for Jobs

LinkedIn also allows you to search for jobs and sends job announcements directly to you that match your interests and skills. In addition, members often post jobs directly to LinkedIn Groups.

Grab an Upgrade

LinkedIn offers veterans a free, one-year Job Seeker premium account, which includes perks such as a complete list of who has viewed your profile. If your profile includes your veteran status, a pop-up window offering the free upgrade should appear when you sign into your LinkedIn account.

No matter whether you are a transitioning officer or an enlisted service member, a half-hour spent creating a LinkedIn profile will be time well spent as you enter the civilian job market.

"The return on investment for your time and the cost, which is free, is definitely there," Dana says.

Share Your Hiring Success Stories

Hiring success stories are important to those who are starting transition. Share yours. Please send it to ExecDir@MarineEA.org

*"Thanks to MEA I got another job with EDSI in Fallbrook, like 8 minutes from my house for 72k a year as a Senior Systems Analyst. I simply can't say enough how much I appreciate what you guys do and how you bring together a good source of *relevant* job postings for transitioning service members; and, how you do it on a daily basis. This is the second great job (the first I couldn't take last year) that I obtained through an MEA post."*

- Tom V.

TRANSITION THOUGHTS

By Tom Lindblad

Congratulations! Welcome to “the world beyond” your Government service. No doubt you have gone through the gamut of “life after” transition courses provided by your Service or Agency. Here are a few tidbits that are not usually covered in those retirement classes. Read and heed!

View the complete article on the MEA website: <http://marineea.org/index.php/resumes/240-transition-thoughts-by-tom-lindblad>

Am I employable. Get over it! You are worth a lot, and everything that made you successful before will help you in your next chapter of life. YOU ARE IN THE DRIVER SEAT!

NO ONE IS GOING TO GIVE YOU A JOB FOR JUST BREATHING OXYGEN- you need to find your own hookups (or maybe they will be seeking you like an IR missile)

Talk to people – find out what they do – practice your interview techniques

Focus on things you enjoy doing – you’ll be happier that way! Talk to your wife about what her true desires are and what she thinks your strengths and weaknesses are.

Most guys change jobs 2-3 times in the first 5 years after retirement – probably reflects poor planning and changing interests. More likely though, you haven’t thought about “what you wanted to be when you grew up” since about high school and want to find something with meaning to your life.

Your security tickets, contacts, education, and recent experiences are your aces – play them carefully for your advantage.

Very few “strategic hires” occur. Things won’t heat up till you are 30-45 days from being available to work! Everyone wants to know “when are you available to go to work.” – it is a screening technique for interview process start.

Don’t jump on the first pretty deal that walks along – there might be others out there. Do your research, work your network hard and sell yourself – your future is at stake.

Get Trained. Good courses are the Navy Ruehlin Course and MOAA’s “Marketing Yourself for a Second Career” (www.moaa.org). Use them to focus on retirement, and not do your job at night/afternoon. Need to have your goals thought out and resume ready before you start, else it’s going to be rough! The 30 Year Col’s TAP at Quantico is reputed to be worthwhile.

Do your Homework! Update your resume constantly, always have one available. Prepare a general resume, and then tailor it to the job you are interviewing for based on your research. If they ask you for your resume again, update it based on your initial research and conversations to tailor it to what they are specifically sending you a message on. Everyone expects you to be at least marginally computer-literate. It is bad form to send a “general” resume to a specific job opportunity. Reduce it to only what is pertinent and keep it to two pages.

Profile companies and contacts you’d like to work with/for. Download the company annual report and prepare for interviews by watching their news briefs on web and business pages for recent awards of contracts and trends. Check-out company web-pages for job listings – Break into the “hidden market” through networking

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TRANSITION THOUGHTS CONTINUED

Follow-up your contacts with notes, letters (either hand-written or typed) and phone-calls – don't let them go fallow. At a minimum, send an acknowledgement appreciation email, but the "tactile" advantages of a hard-copy note/letter make you stand out.

Good ideas can be found at:

- Knock Em Dead 2006: The Ultimate Job Seekers Guide by Martin John Yate
- Resumes that Knock 'em Dead, ibid
- Knock em Dead 2004: Great answers to over 200 tough interview questions, ibid – particularly good questions to study in advance!
- Cover letters that knock em dead, ibid

Get 2-3 References, slip them your resume, keep them informed who you are interviewing with and what you'd like them to say (lot of times it will be a cold call while they are in the office, so some talking points on a 3x5 card might help them to say the right things).

Penalty Box. Be sure you understand what you can and cannot do as you leave government service. Many have one-year restrictions; Source Selection Authorities typically have lifetime prohibitions as well. Make good friends with your JAG. The rules are constantly changing, and you need to know what is actually in effect that applies to you. These limitations can profoundly affect your ability to take your next job and then do well in it. **Consult Lawyers on any Conflict of Interest** you might have as an acquisition or contract approval authority, if you did that in the last 5 years. This will influence your marketability and utility.

Legal. Update your Power of Attorney & Wills. Their free from base legal while on active duty – it costs big \$\$ later.

Job Fairs. MOAA Job Fair coming 1st week of May at Washington Convention Center. Good trial run, but generally a cattle call: all they want is your resume to put in a data-base, know what your current clearance is and when you are available. The easiest play is to treat them as a "Happy Hour" or reception. Dress for the role, have plenty of resumes and business cards. You're not going to get the ideal job here, but you may get some job offers off-the-cuff. Lower your expectations, and have some "fun".

Take Time off after you retire to re-set your clock. Have a retirement ceremony. Let the people who have served with you enjoy the event. But let it serve as a reminder that you are not and can not go back to work in the service again. Don't start work immediately after retirement – you'll regret it! Make a plan and stick to it, or have them make it worth your while, if you break your plan. Use your leave and enjoy – you'll start vacation plans with zero. They normally build by hours and a great company program for vacation days is 15 days annually! You can't work on billable hours while on PTAD, and you can do so while on terminal leave, but somewhat unseemly or sticky if you have to make client calls, especially with your former office or peers – they still remember your retirement bash and plans. Best to gauge it so you aren't overlapping too much to avoid conflict of interest.

Henderson Hall offers 5-weeks PTAD for the "20 day PTAD" ruling – requires you to check-in/out on PTAD one day out of 5; weekends and holidays don't count. If looking to re-locate out of area – its 20 consecutive days (including weekends/holidays). Other commands policies vary.

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TRANSITION THOUGHTS CONTINUED

You've worked hard for 20-30 years and have a lot of stress/strain, etc. Decompress, but don't stay out of the market too long as your value plummets with time.

Retirement Physical. Document everything that is wrong with you on your "final physical." Don't omit any ache or ailment. This influences your VA disability compensation. Take advantage of the DiLorenzo (if at the Pentagon) advanced VA application process – it will cut 6-8 months off process.

Take the Henderson Hall VA class (1-day one put on by Ron Bell from local VA office – do it now!). Get DAV or other Vet Svc Org. to review your med record, and then get scheduled with DiLorenzo Clinic's pilot program to submit your VA claim early (otherwise it takes a year). Join a Vet Service Org (like DAV), and have them work over your med record and VA application BEFORE you do your final physical and submit paperwork to VA. DAV is a particularly good and aggressive advocate for retirees.

Make sure you document everything that ails you on your final physical – don't be shy – the 5-page questionnaire is there for a reason – it takes a long time to clear through all the specialists, but you won't regret it for a minute – you might discover some stuff you'd regret big time later – others have discovered tumors or other serious problems at their physical, which resulted in delays to your plans while they try to make you whole again – also helps make case for a VA compensation claim later.

Options. When you leave the government, either go for a clean break to something entirely new, or stay in as deep as you can (where your expertise and clearances are worth the most), but don't go halfway – it gets too frustrating.

Résumés. Companies are more interested in what you have done in the government in the last five years than they are in previous years. Write your résumé accordingly, and don't follow *Résumés for Dummies* – use the model advocated in the transition course. Samples available upon request. If you are looking at defense related companies do not "civilianize" the resume. Most people screening your resume are former military and will try to convert it back into a billet they understand.

If defense / government related, highlight your quals and clearance, current or past/eligible. Update your security investigation and hopefully get DISA to act on it before you retire. TS/SBI is worth \$10-20K more in salary. If defense / government related, an employee with no clearance is marginally useful. The key is getting a job before your effective retirement date so they can transfer your clearance over, otherwise you start over! If strictly civilian, military quals, clearances, medals mean little... highlight dollar metrics.

Always have an electronic resume available. You never know when your dream job will knock at your door.

Business Cards. Have something to exchange with the people you meet. It is the only evidence that you have of the meeting for the most part. Get the "card swap" out of the way early... you won't fumble it later. Treat others' cards with respect... it represents that person until you spend some time with them. Take time and (at least) act like you take it seriously and are trying to understand his job with respect

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TRANSITION THOUGHTS CONTINUED

Interviews. Meetings with others can be stressful, but remember that the employer would not be spending the time and energy meeting with you if you were not already qualified for the position. You as the “interviewee” have power in the interview relationship. The company has to sell itself to you as well. The interview is preventing the person from doing something else, so you are competitive by just being there. Relax, mirror the body language of the interviewer and have some fun. Check your zipper.

Prepare a 30-second commercial that describes what your goal is; and your key skills; practice—practice—practice. Have about five bullets/examples that are relevant, and keep coming back to them; they will keep you disciplined. Stay on message, and bring them back to your commercial or pivot/adapt based on the ebb-flow of interview/discussion – don’t leave without them getting your message. After your thirty second “commercial”, stop talking! Let the interviewer talk.

It ain’t the Job. Industry jobs are 100% personality driven. The #1 guide for your first job should be the people you will be working with. Pay, perqs, location, hours, even the job itself are all secondary.

Moreover, you will find that your company’s organization, jobs, promotions, and operating procedures are all personality driven. There is no formal training process similar to what the military has developed in order to accommodate high turnover. This means there are no rules except what your boss invents. Beware. The best preparation for your new job is to watch re-runs of Survivor. There are more than enough jobs out there that you can adequately fill and get compensated well at. Find a spot that you will not mind spending your waking hours at.

Workaround Age Discrimination. Some older workers are still drawing the short stick when it comes to finding a new or better job. Research shows that some bias against candidates because of their age begins as early as the 45 year mark. How can you protect yourself from ageism? Unfortunately, there’s no foolproof way to eliminate such bias, but the following four steps can provide an important measure of protection.

Step 1. Be at the state-of-the-art in your profession, craft or trade -- not the same as having lots of experience or time on-the-job. In today’s technological workplace, being up-to-date means having both the latest knowledge and skills in your field and the wisdom and insight to apply those skills effectively in the workplace. Continuous knowledge acquisition is now a part your job and essential to average, let alone superior, performance.

Step 2. Maximize the employer’s return on its investment in you. Competing for a new position is not an exercise in describing your skills and experience; it’s a contest to convince an employer that you will make a more valuable contribution to its success than other candidates. Figure out what the employer expects from the job and then convince the recruiter and hiring manager that you can and will provide it. The key is not proving that you can do a job, but instead, proving that you can produce the results the employer needs and do so on time, within budget, and to the highest standard of quality.

Step 3. Work beyond your position description. Those who establish a track record of seeing their role larger rather than smaller in an organization—those who are flexible and creative enough to work outside the box of traditional job definitions—give themselves a significant competitive advantage in the job market.

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TRANSITION THOUGHTS CONTINUED

All organizations today are struggling to control labor costs, so they are looking for employees who are able and willing to contribute more than “their fair share” of the work.

Step 4. Look and be physically fit for your age. When a youthful person is out of shape, they're simply viewed as lazy; when an older person is unfit, they're pigeonholed as worn out. That doesn't mean that you have to compete on the company softball team or pump iron in the gym after work, but it does mean that you have to be healthy enough to meet all performance requirements of your position—whether that involves physical capacity or simply the stamina to show up every day and work late or on weekends to finish a special assignment. It may or may not be right, but physical fitness is a key component of career fitness in the American workplace, and “older workers” don't get a pass.

Network. Stay in touch with, or at least cognizant of pretty much every person you have helped or can help. EVERYONE appreciates something their way that is useful to them. Every referral, business or personal, that comes your way is easier that going out “mining”. Be Prepared in all forums to relate that you are interested in...looking to retire and available to work around when?... - palm the cards, do the research, contact and follow-up. Don't be a MAYTAG repair man waiting for that call – develop those contacts within 48-hours of making it, else it will go cold.

What are you worth? It depends on locality and how hard you want to work. Sales jobs may pay more, but you may have to work harder. Being carried on overhead is rare, but then compensation is pegged according to what you bring to the table!

People with PPBS, business, JCIDS, and Acquisition experience are more valuable than operators.

Look up a company's GSA schedule on the web and divide by the hourly off-site rate by 2-2.5 for a gauge on what you get in hourly salary (you bill “loaded” hours, get paid once monthly generally). Salary is dependent on company, experience, locality and job title/requirements-It is rare to replace your total active duty pay (Base Pay+BAH+BAS, etc.) right off the bat. In No. Virginia, there is a salary line at the Occoquan; those above get roughly 10-15% more based on locality; other states considerably less.

Unlike the military everything is generally negotiable. Use the worksheet to compare and negotiate counter-offers. Don't be afraid to counter-offer or make a conditional acceptance- they put a lot of effort into recruiting you and the serious one won't want to let you get away. Vacation, telecommuting, salary, bonus (pre-tax, or after-tax), etc. Benefits such as med/dental/401K/Pension are standard and not likely negotiable (save maybe Stock vesting). If you don't negotiate or clarify, you get the standard package – you'll know when to stop negotiating. www.salary.com can give you some brackets depending on the job title. It depends on your skills, how you sell yourself & negotiate

Negotiating requires some poker skill, but more importantly knowing your worth (be careful not to over-value yourself), what industry comps are and what value you are bringing to the company to get what you want. Don't undervalue or overvalue... it shows that you are ill-prepared. Know the band of pay for similar positions.

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TRANSITION THOUGHTS CONTINUED

If Stock is offered as an incentive, clarify if it is stock whether it is openly traded, or restricted stock, what happens should you leave (e.g. you have to cash restricted stock in), and when dividends/vesture takes place!

For those who aspire to be an SES; few are chosen, and it's largely like making BGen – who you know, what you have to offer, and when opportunity comes around. SES's in the DoN are selected at the service level, and have to be approved by DoN and OMB – can take 6 months to a year. GS-15, step 10 makes more than an SES-1.

In either case, **don't plan on getting promoted again anytime soon**, as the people you leaped over are going to take it out on you, as well as the long-term civil service guys. Be alert to who are the mentors for civil service – everyone has one.

Be cognizant of the intangibles. Assess your needs for life-insurance and supplemental med insurance- MOAA, MCA, and other vet service org's offer plans – do some life-cycle comps before you jump. SGLI was cheap; it terminates on retirement. Most people will accept your final physical for medical clearance on new insurance if within 60-days of retirement. Do comparisons on life-cycle costs – something cheap now may balloon to something big later in terms of premium.

Survivor's Benefit Plan (SBP) is strictly life insurance. Make your own decision, but if you decline, you better have a lot of life-insurance if you have a family. The cost is 6.5% of your retired pay or roughly \$350/month for wife + kids – she'll get 55% of base pay (inflation adjusted) if you die first.

Effective Aug. 1, 2013, most Survivor Benefit Plan annuitants over the age of 55 are no longer required to complete and submit an annual Certificate of Eligibility to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. DFAS is no longer required to deduct DIC payments from monthly SBP annuities, if a person is entitled to both benefits and has remarried after age 57.

<http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/survivors/manage.html>

Be alert during the HR pitch which precedes your interview –will be a fire-hose of information – first and last time to ask general and specific questions, that will get uncomfortable during negotiations – treat it as information gathering – come prepared

Watch out for guys who hide behind generalities! Some count Fed holidays as vacation days figuring you'll make that up as comp time (you won't get paid overtime).

Vacation plans vary – 2 weeks is min; negotiate for more if you can, but don't get too greedy- its work after all, and billable hours is how you make your living

Success. The biggest single obstacle that keeps most people from being “successful” in their first job after government service is that they cannot adjust to the fact that they have to do real work. No more kibitzing from on high, providing policy inputs with no accountability, being the Wing King and letting the troops do the work. Once your new employer gets you off the street and away from their competitors, you become just another mouth to feed. You have to be constantly showing them that you are worth what they are paying you.

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TRANSITION THOUGHTS CONTINUED

Value Added. Your government training is rarely found on the outside. Take advantage of it. Remember that your new contemporaries 1) may not have it themselves, 2) might not know that you have it, and 3) wouldn't want you to take advantage of it at their expense if they knew you had it. You have to take the initiative.

Those who have done that have done well. One of the benefits of military service is having successfully performed jobs/duties that you were minimally, (if that) prepared to perform. Watches, staff jobs, command, etc. That your generalist abilities were able to successfully complete them is noticeable.

Actually DO something. There is a tendency to talk a thing to death and avoid commitment to actually risk action. Your ability to actually complete things will be noticeable.

Stability. Go easy on moving your I-love-me stuff into the office in your first week on the job. The average government retiree doesn't settle in until the third company.

Reorganizations. Within your new company, reorganizations will be a never-ending process. What you see in front of you when you come on board is unlikely to look the same a year later. At the same time, reorgs almost always open more doors than they close. Expect them and get the jump on them.

Business Development, Part I. You can't do good BD in your first year on the outside, especially if you are in a penalty box. BD is not the same as anything else – beware your compensation plan. Talk with someone who has been through this and survived.

Business Development, Part II. Beware the "bonus trap." Big-bonus compensation plans for marketers and BD types often have a hidden catch: the bonus may not be payable until after the work is finally billed. This means you could be laid off after you win "the big one" and you would never see the bonus – nor would you have any recourse to "future earnings" unless your contract specified a buy-out option for a deferred bonus.

Business Development, Part III. If you are given a new market to chase, some rules of thumb (ROE):

- It will take 12 to 18 months of effort before you rack up your first win
- It is rare to win on your first or even second proposal
- Making a smart "no-bid" decision is as valuable as making the right "bid" decision

Mergers and Buyouts. There are no medium-sized fish; companies between \$20M and \$150M don't survive. This affects you when it comes to buying out and being bought out. Watch the press on who is buying whom. It isn't always easy to find the information, but it's well worth the research. Make sure you understand your employment agreement and what happens to you and your benefits in the event of a buyout/merger.

Health Care. Companies have no incentive to keep an eye on your benefits. Ex-military people need to know how to assess corporate health care. With health care costs increasing, companies are transferring more and more costs to the employees. Before you accept a job offer, know what your cost-sharing arrangements will be.

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TRANSITION THOUGHTS CONTINUED

If you are in an area serviced by military hospitals and a strong TRICARE network, the military health care is generally better service than you can get as a benefit for your company. Get as much done prior to walking out the door. Dental care is limited (Delta Dental, for example, to \$1000 per year) ... get all the family squared away before hitting the street.

You'll lose Dental on retirement; TRICARE offers Dental, but its costs are usually higher than a company sponsored plan- take care of your teeth before you exit, along with the rest of your med requirements!

TRICARE automatically converts from Prime to Standard unless you re-submit paperwork 30 days prior to your retirement date- don't plan on VA taking care of you after you retire unless it is service connected. Contact your desired TRICARE clinic before you retire! With Reservists and National Guard members on active duty, most clinics are NOT enrolling retirees. Prime will give you access to doctors in town, but you will have to do a whole lot of legwork for referrals and appointments – you may not be able to use the one-stop shopping at the clinic.

DD-214. This proof of service is necessary when trying for government jobs. Request online. Great news for veterans - The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has the following website to gain access to your DD-214 online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov/>. This will cut the waiting time for copies of your DD 214 and will be particularly helpful if you need a copy of your DD-214 for employment purposes. Make a PDF copy so you can include with an electronic email.

VA Disability Compensation Payments. They are based on disability rating and dependents; until concurrent receipt comes into effect, VA payments reduce retired pay 1:1. Concurrent receipt is potentially on the horizon. VA Compensation is tax free. This could significantly reduce your tax burden. Review the VA disability rating guide. You have 1 year from your retirement date to submit your paperwork. You will end up having to do some re-work on physicals at VA center. Have DAV screen your record first and assist in forms!!!

Figure out your PT plan. Companies will generally NOT have facilities nearby and actually expect you to work during the day. Determine how you are going to manage your life health plan either before or after work. Or you will put on retirement weight. Remember to take a long view though, and the PT is for health reasons and not for a PFT evaluation.

Uniform. Dress for Success. Get at least 2 high-quality interview suits (not sport coat). You can get more accessories later. Generally, you'll need four or five suits. It's the uniform for business. If you don't like wearing a suit, find a job that doesn't require it. Don't wear your uniform to an interview, even if it is a short notice cold call. Observe the contractors who work at what you are interested in for their business attire, and how it shapes your perceptions as a customer. Start off with white shirts, conservative subdued ties – you're not there to make a power statement – do your homework on attire at the office so you feel comfortable fitting in.

Keep an interview suit at the office, along with your resume and talking points – never know when that cold-call is going to come.

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TRANSITION THOUGHTS CONTINUED

Get a good quality rain coat (not your military one!); by the way, you can use umbrellas now! You won't need a wool top-coat right away, unless you are in a colder climate than No. VA.

Print some business cards that don't have all your office information on it to pass around.

Get some comfortable clothes... you'll be in them all day. If you are in front of customers, you'll generally be in a SUIT (not sport coat). Think about good shoes and resole them so you don't have to break in new ones often.

401(k). Most companies will have a 401(k) plan that you will be eligible to join six to twelve months after you begin work. Many companies will match a percentage of what you pay into the plan, but you will not be entitled ("vested") to the company's contribution until three to five years after beginning employment. Be sure you understand your company's plan. You may want to shop around. Always take the 401K matching as this is compensation that you will receive and is deducted from taxable income. You will be able to leave or move these amounts to another 401K or IRA, including the vested amount if you have reached the goals.

Taxes. The only sure things in life are death and taxes...and the taxes can kill you. You are going to pay more in taxes than you ever did before. You will pay Federal and state taxes. (Virginia wants them quarterly). Get an accountant to look at what is going to happen, and change your withholding early, otherwise you are in for some nasty surprises.

Retired Pay is taxable for FITW, most SITW, and not for SSA/Medicare. When you retire and start to draw your military pension as well as salary from your second career, be very careful in setting your payroll deductions for income taxes.

The tax withholding tables are based on two key assumptions:

- * You have only one income
- * Based on the sliding tax scale, the first \$25,000 or so is, for all practical purposes, tax exempt

If you just use standard deductions, then at the end of the year, the net effect of having two incomes will be that no taxes were withheld on \$25,000 of income, and you will now have an "out of pocket" expense at the higher marginal tax rate of 34%. How to avoid? Calculate what your tax liability will be in advance, and adjust withholding accordingly, so you don't end up facing an additional \$10,000 or more in taxes come April 15th.

Retired Pay. Retired pay is based on your ADBD and for most of us senior guys highest pay; changes for younger guys (there are 3 systems currently) – Manpower recomputes it based on your OMPF Documents when you submit your diary – OCS doesn't count; reserve time counts if a drilling reservist.

Every additional month you stay on AD equates to roughly \$50/month more in retirement if you are a 27 year Col under 2004 pay tables. Retired pay is paid (once) on 1st business day of month by Direct deposit; VA Compensation comes by check; can telephonically switch it to direct deposit by calling service office or on line at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/pension/index.asp>. Terminate your allotments before you retire or they'll carry over in to your retirement pay.

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TRANSITION THOUGHTS CONTINUED

Pay attention to your retirement withholding. The government assumes that you are not working and the withholding will be excessively low... in the range of 3%. Pretty good for maximizing the pay, but a real surprise when you are doing your return with another job being taxed at 28%. IT WILL COST YOU MONEY. Ensure that you check how your pension is being taxed. <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx> .

You may set your civilian employment compensation to higher deductibles including additional withholding amounts that may keep you from paying extra to the IRS at the time of your yearly tax filing.

Beyond that, while you're checking your withholding, make sure you aren't also a victim of excess Social Security withholding. With your two incomes, Uncle Sam could be double-dipping you for Social Security. <http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10017html> . If you served in the military in 1957 through 1977, you are credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty basic pay. If you served in the military in 1978 through 2001, you are credited with an additional \$100 in earnings, up to a maximum of \$1,200 a year, for every \$300 in active duty basic pay. After 2001, additional earnings are no longer credited. If you began your service after September 7, 1980, and did not complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings.

Frustration. Now that you are out of government service, remember that when all else fails, you no longer have to tolerate an unsatisfactory situation. Remember, too, that people rarely leave bad companies but always leave bad bosses. You are not committed to the new job for a career. You have the advantage of having income from your retirement that will give you more options than the rest of your civilian counterparts. You are always only two weeks away from your next PCS, assignment, job or company. That is a healthy hole card. Don't be afraid to play it.

Good News. Not to be crass, but you are about to learn how valuable your service to our Nation is – as soon as you begin drawing your retirement pay and using your retirement benefits. Enjoy your windfall – you have earned it.

View the complete article on the MEA website: <http://marineea.org/index.php/resumes/240-transition-thoughts-by-tom-lindbald>

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Upcoming Events



September 10, 2014

**MEA Networking Luncheon
Henderson Hall**

October 17, 2014

**MEA Networking Luncheon
Quantico**

Camp Pendleton Chapter

The MEA Camp Pendleton Chapter meets the
3rd Wednesday of every month, 1800,
Pacific Views (formerly the South Mesa
SNCO Club) on Camp Pendleton

**View a listing of events and
job fair on the MEA Calendar
www.marineea.org**

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