



Transferable Skills: Military Assets

Transitioning into the civilian sector.

Serving in a different kind of company.

Your military tour is over and you're about to enter or return to the civilian workforce. How do you transition from wings and 0900 hours to wingtips and 5:00 p.m. occupations?

Answer: Focus on your transferable skills.

Transferable skills are versatile skills and qualities learned and developed over time that can be applied to many situations. Whether technical or social, hard or soft, they help you navigate through life and are essential to career success.

A competitive advantage.

Your military training has already given you a wealth of transferable skills. Together with real life experience, these skills can give you an edge in the job market, even over college graduates. Employers consider candidates with transferable skills better prepared to solve problems, generate ideas, and meet customer needs. For example, your ability to “think on your feet” and remain “cool under fire” may enable you to handle the logistics and demands of shipping customer goods with the same efficiency needed to transport heavy troops, munitions, and supplies. When crafting your cover letter and résumé, focus on how the following may be relevant to the job opportunity:

Communication skills. Critical in conveying orders and information clearly, effectively, persuasively.

Leadership skills. The ability to inspire, influence, motivate; assess situations, make decisions; take risks and determine goals; achieve results through resourcefulness, creativity, and teamwork.

Analytical skills. Used to evaluate data; research, compile, and interpret information; apply logic; handle numbers; and determine patterns.

Organizational skills. Includes time management; the ability to prioritize, disseminate and record data; generate accurate reports; manage resources; multi-task, administer, direct, and coordinate.

Technical skills. The application of practical know-how and hands-on proficiency with specific

equipment and machinery, software and hardware, chemical substances, techniques and procedures.

Personal qualities. Having integrity, loyalty, resilience, character; self-discipline and control; being punctual, reliable, responsible, structured, resourceful, mission-oriented, with a can-do attitude.

Interpersonal skills. The ability to listen, follow orders, cooperate, supervise, negotiate, guide, Think Purple, and be a team member.

Translating transferables

Military discipline, strategic thinking, personnel and organizational management skills can all be transferred to the corporate, educational, arts, technology, and government sectors. Consider these transitioning examples:

- Aviation mechanics: engineering profession; electronics; mechanics; energy industry; FAA; air traffic repairs
- Submarine operations: complex computer programs; high tech communication systems; cryptology
- Air Force fighter: commercial/private airline; transportation, news, and recreational pilot
- Military rations: food service; catering and events; restaurant business; personal chef; food safety/inspection/distribution; culinary specialist
- Field medic: EMT; hospital ER; Doctors Without Borders; medical consultant
- Special Ops: law enforcement; nuclear powerplant security; bodyguard; Homeland Security; private detective; hostage negotiations; film consultant

So join the ranks of former Presidents George Bush Sr. and Jr., Fedex CEO Fred W. Smith, astronaut Susan Helms, publisher Malcom Forbes, talk show host Montel Williams, sports legend Yogi Berra, and Senator John McCain, just to name a few notable veterans. You'll be in good company!



i n a nutshell:

Market your military transferable skills to be a more desirable job candidate and employee:

- **Draw correlations between military and civilian demands**
- **Instill employer confidence**
- **Qualify for more opportunities**
- **Emphasize job leadership, foster respect and excellence**
- **Demonstrate creativity, clarity, and fortitude under pressure**

Remember, focus on what you bring to the table, and how you can add value to an employer's business. Lima Charlie!