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A Guide to an Effective Military Transition

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Workshop Agenda

- Build a strategy
- Build a transition team
- Follow Up



Separation from the Armed Forces

- Opportunity to leverage military skills, values and leadership abilities
- Separation is a known event; consequently, one can plan for it
- Utilize the same tools of planning taught in the military; this time turn them inward



Step 1: Start by Building a Personal Transition Plan

- Your plan will have four elements:
 - 1) Strategy statement
 - 2) Timeline
 - 3) Personal brand
 - 4) Build a Network



Strategy Statement:

- Purpose of the Strategy Statement: broad framework that will provide a baseline from which alternatives are evaluated
- Construct this statement using the acronym SMART:
 - S=specific
 - M=measurable
 - A=attainable
 - R=Realistic
 - T=Time bound



Timeline:

Step 2: Prepare a timeline. This will align your goal with your separation date

- If time permits, start this process 24 month out
- Review your education, do you need any certifications?
- The resume is a critical, start to experiment with styles



Personal Brand:

Step 3: Craft your personal brand that emphasizes your core competencies

- Perspective employers will form an opinion based upon your brand
- Build it around your unique attributes and skills
- Incorporate your military experience into your brand



Network:

Step 4: Construct a network within the company/organization of interest

- Networks flow in both directions, you need to offer something as well
- Build in time so the network can mature into a relationship
- Follow up! Like a relationship, you must nurture it. That is your responsibility



Military Transition Team:

- Just as the military accomplishes all tasks as a team, this operation is no different
- The team has five members:
 - 1) Cheerleader
 - 2) Candid Advisor
 - 3) A Veteran who has made the transition
 - 4) A person with the company of interest
 - 5) An educator or professor



Cheerleader:

- Finding your dream job is not easy and you will experience highs and lows; the cheerleader will pick you up during the low points
- This person needs to be aware of your goal and timeline as they will keep you focused on the task



Candid Advisor:

- This person is not afraid to give you harsh criticism
- When you get caught up in a moment of excitement, this advisor will be the one that provides a “reality check”
- Must be aware of your strategic plan so they can pull you back on course



Veteran who has made the transition:

- Learn from their mistakes
- Asked to be introduced to their network
- Allow this Veteran to become your mentor
- Let them guide you down the road they have already walked



Person in the company of Interest:

- This is a product of the time spent researching companies
- This is the starting point of building a network
- Consider social media, another tool that will assist
- YOU must maintain this relationship; schedule phone calls, keep notes, send thank you cards
- This will blossom into a relationship



Educator or Professor:

- Do not shy away from the academic world
- This might be a professor that has an interest in helping Veterans
- This is a tremendous source for the latest trends of a given field
- This is another opportunity for a network



Summary:

- The most frequent question I receive from Veterans is; “How did you get a job with The Walt Disney Company?” The information in this workshop is the process that I applied. You have the operational skills to do the exact same thing; take what the military has taught you and turn it inward. This time, the operation is finding your next career. Thank you for your service.

Kevin Preston, COL, USA (Ret.)

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Questions?

Thank You!

