



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

PRIME MINISTER'S
VETERANS'
EMPLOYMENT
PROGRAM

Paul Murray - former Sergeant, Australian Army

VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT TOOLKIT

A practical guide to planning your
transition to the civilian workforce



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HELPING YOU PREPARE FOR YOUR TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT

As a veteran, you will recognise that leaving the Australian Defence Force (ADF) is a period of significant change. Your ADF training and experience has provided you with an extensive range of skills, abilities, behaviours and attributes that make you a valuable employee. These talents are transferable between military and civilian life.

Some of the skills that you may find in demand in both the public and private sectors are:

- responsiveness
- problem-solving skills
- leadership and teamwork
- ability to work in high-pressure environments
- ability to rapidly adapt to new technologies.

This toolkit aims to assist with your transition to civilian employment by providing you with information on how to:

- translate your skills
- plan your transition to a civilian career
- apply for jobs
- adjust to the civilian workforce.

A good place to find more information to assist your transition to civilian employment is:

> veteransemployment.gov.au



Tim McEvoy - former Corporal, Australian Army

VETERANS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Australia boasts a military that is among the most highly skilled in the world and members of the ADF have access to world class training.

By the time you leave the ADF, you will have qualifications, training, skills and experience that make you a valuable member of the civilian workforce. When looking for a job, don't underestimate the professional learning and development you have gained from your service.

SKILLS YOU CAN BRING TO THE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE



PLANNING

Members of the ADF are trained to plan their activities, including implementing risk-mitigation strategies to ensure that even in difficult situations they are able to achieve the best results. They are trained to plan, execute and then debrief to ensure that 'lessons learned' are incorporated into planning for the next activity. Success depends on every member of the team working to execute their part of the plan.



COMMUNICATION

Clear, concise and accurate communication is vital for the effective operation of the ADF. Veterans can identify, articulate and share relevant information using well developed communication skills.



VALUES DRIVEN

Veterans possess values of integrity, loyalty, self-discipline and perseverance. They have a strong work ethic and their dedication and attention to detail ensures great results.



LEADERSHIP

Leadership is expected at all levels in the ADF. Veterans have experience working in and leading teams to achieve goals. Leading by example, veterans are expected to delegate, motivate, inspire and deliver results.



PROBLEM SOLVING AND CRITICAL THINKING

Members of the ADF are trained to use their knowledge, available facts and situational awareness to solve issues and problems. 'It can't be done' is not something you will hear from a veteran, as they are dedicated to finding a solution and delivering results regardless of the situation. Veterans are adaptable and flexible and used to operating in fast paced, changing environments.



TRANSFERABLE SKILLS


The skills, attributes and experience gained in the ADF are readily transferable to the civilian workforce. To assist in communicating this to prospective employers the core tasks performed by enlisted and officer ranks are provided in language used by the civilian workplace (see next page).

CORE TASKS AT RANK: ENLISTED RANKS

Over the next two pages you'll find the core tasks for each enlisted and officer rank expressed in the kind of language the civilian workforce is used to seeing.

The information provided here is a starting point to help you when preparing your application and in the interview process. You will need to build on this, you can find more detailed information to help you match and explain your ADF skills against priority skills for civilian employment.

> defence.gov.au/adf/adfctr/adf_transition.asp



SEAMAN (SMN)
PRIVATE (PTE)
AIRCRAFTMAN (AC)
AIRCRAFTWOMAN (ACW)

- Communicate effectively (verbally and deliver presentations)
- Comply with mandated policies, directives, governance requirements, standard operating procedures and work instructions
- Comply with workplace expectations in often complex, difficult and challenging environments


1



PETTY OFFICER (PO)
SERGEANT (SGT)
STAFF SERGEANT (SSGT)
SERGEANT (SGT)

- Effective and ethical leadership of a large team
- Apply expertise to training and development, delivery and assessment to develop and maintain organisational skills in individual staff and a large team
- Ensure compliance with policy, directives, instructions, regulations, standard operating procedures, and technical frameworks

4



ABLE SEAMAN (AB)
LANCE CORPORAL (LCPL)
LANCE BOMBARDIER (LBDR)
LEADING AIRCRAFTMAN (LAC)
LEADING AIRCRAFTWOMAN (LACW)

- Apply ethical leadership skills and knowledge in the workplace
- Lead and develop an effective workplace team
- Monitor, maintain and report workplace needs and training requirements


2



CHIEF PETTY OFFICER (CPO)
WARRANT OFFICER CLASS 2 (WO2)
FLIGHT SERGEANT (FSGT)

- Apply effective and ethical leadership across the organisation
- Develop skilled teams to meet organisational requirements
- Prioritise, allocate and manage the effective use of an organisation's logistics and resources


5



LEADING SEAMAN (LS)
CORPORAL (CPL)
BOMBARDIER (BDR)
CORPORAL (CPL)

- Lead and manage small teams to achieve workplace goals and tasks
- Analyse directions and develop a plan to achieve goals and tasks
- Analyse risks to operations, task achievements and opportunities that present

3







WARRANT OFFICER (WO)
WARRANT OFFICER CLASS 1 (WO1)
WARRANT OFFICER (WOFF)

- Apply effective and ethical leadership across the organisation and in support of the senior executive level
- Use advanced communication skills with an executive team and the organisation
- Oversee and supervise the use of organisational, social and recreational resources to enhance deep-rooted professionalism and positive spirit in the workplace

6

CORE TASKS AT RANK: OFFICER RANKS



 **ACTING SUB LIEUTENANT (ASLT)**
 **SECOND LIEUTENANT (2LT)**
 **PILOT OFFICER (PLTOFF)**

- Learn and apply effective and ethical leadership with teams
- Support the development of teams
- Assist with planning and coordinating workplace activities in complex and challenging work environments

1



 **SUB LIEUTENANT (SBLT)**
 **LIEUTENANT (LT)**
 **FLYING OFFICER (FLGOFF)**

- Apply effective and ethical leadership of small and large teams
- Monitor and manage team performance, administration and welfare in the workplace
- Provide advice to senior managers to develop staff and achieve workplace goals and outcomes

2



 **LIEUTENANT (LEUT)**
 **CAPTAIN (CAPT)**
 **FLIGHT LIEUTENANT (FLTLT)**

- Apply effective and ethical leadership of large teams
- Contribute to and participate in management planning for contingencies and organisational goals
- Monitor, audit and ensure compliance with organisational policy and governance requirements

3

For more information on the recognition of transferable military skills, go to

> defence.gov.au/adc/adftcr/veterans.asp

For specific advice/questions associated with civil qualifications, contact the ADF Transition and Civil Recognition Project team


> adf.civilrecognition@defence.gov.au






 **LIEUTENANT COMMANDER (LCDR)**
 **MAJOR (MAJ)**
 **SQUADRON LEADER (SQNLDR)**

- Apply effective and ethical leadership and management to multiple teams
- Oversee and conduct complex organisational administration
- Manage and develop a resilient workforce able to work in complex, difficult and challenging environments
- Ensure organisational plans, actions and controls meet national / international standards and policy


4






 **COMMANDER (CMDR)**
 **LIEUTENANT COLONEL (LTCOL)**
 **WING COMMANDER (WGCDR)**

- Apply effective and ethical senior leadership to manage multiple, integrated large teams
- Oversee and conduct complex administration ensuring adherence to values and expectations
- Recognise and adjust to changing situations using flexible leadership
- Communicate effectively with staff, management and executive to inform, persuade, substantiate, negotiate or present information using all communication protocols
- Set the vision, purpose and goals, to focus and motivate all teams

5



 **CAPTAIN (CAPT)**
 **COLONEL (COL)**
 **GROUP CAPTAIN (GPCAPT)**

- Apply effective and ethical leadership and strategic management within a complex organisation
- Analyse, determine and report to the executive on current and future resource requirements to meet organisational goals and objectives
- Lead organisational strategic initiatives and reform
- Develop major goals to support organisational objectives
- Act as organisational executive representative in meetings, strategic planning or high-profile engagements

6

PLANNING YOUR TRANSITION INTO A CIVILIAN CAREER

You know that being well prepared is an essential part of ADF operations. Planning and being properly prepared to begin your new civilian career is important for a smooth transition.

Remember that the pathway to civilian employment can look different for every veteran.



TIPS FOR TRANSITION

START PLANNING EARLY

It is important to start working through what you need to do to transition as early as possible. **Don't wait until after you leave.** Engage with your local ADF Transition Centre run by the Defence Community Organisation so you understand the process, administrative requirements, employment and other support available to you and your family.

> defence.gov.au/dco/transition

There are a number of ways to network, such as meeting people through other people, through ex-service organisations, sporting or other interest groups, or by leveraging social media.

Networking is a two way street, it is a way of getting to know someone better and finding ways they might be able to help you and how you can help them in return. Chat to your military contacts and personal networks to let them know you're preparing to leave the ADF. Many veterans find the next step in their career is through networks.

START NETWORKING

Networking is about building relationships by establishing and interacting with people to exchange information and develop professional and social contacts. These relationships can be with both defence and non-defence contacts. Networking is not asking everyone you know for a job, but asking for information and advice to assist in your job search. Networking is an ongoing process; it requires persistence, organisation and goodwill.

SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Be honest with yourself about what you have to offer, and what that is worth to a civilian employer. Understand the salary packages and employment contracts offered by the employers in the industry you are interested in.

While you are highly qualified you should not necessarily expect to get the same rate of pay when you first leave the ADF. Recognise that your military pay rates include allowances to compensate for hardships unique to the ADF, and do not transfer to the civilian workplace.



Jason Marshall - former Sergeant, Australian Army

Tim McEvoy - former Corporal, Australian Army

TIPS FOR TRANSITION

PREPARE MENTALLY FOR THE CHANGE

The ADF environment is very different from the civilian environment. Make sure that you prepare by:

- talking to friends or family who have made the transition
- connecting with informal groups on social media that are set up by veterans as support networks
- taking advantage of transition information and services provided by Defence Community Organisation
- seeking professional assistance services tailored for transitioning veterans.

THINK ABOUT THE RIGHT CAREER FOR YOU

Consider what you want your next career to be, and research how to get there. You might not land there at first, but take the necessary steps towards your end goal. Career transition support is available through Defence Community Organisation.

> defence.gov.au/dco/transition

PRIOR LEARNING RECOGNISED

Engage with the ADF Transition and Civil Recognition Project for assistance with civilian recognition of your transferable military skills and training, including recognition of prior learning. The project team can also assist you to navigate the Vocational Education and Training environment and discuss options for obtaining further qualifications and understanding the skills you offer to civilian employers.

> defence.gov.au/adc/adfctr/veterans.asp

FIND A MENTOR

A mentor can play an important role in your transition and future career development. They can be a role model, coach or just someone to listen. A mentor who has experienced the transition process will be able to provide advice, guidance, share expertise and networks to assist you to adjust to the civilian workplace or to find employment. Your mentor could be from your organisation, an ex-service organisation, your networks or a professional organisation:

- find someone who has the strengths and skills you want to emulate
- study the person, get to know people who know them
- arrange an informal catch up, don't pressure them by asking them to be your mentor straight up
- contact them after your meeting and stay in touch
- let the relationship evolve organically.

CONSIDER THE IMPACT ON YOUR FAMILY

Questions you may consider include:

- Will work/caring responsibilities change?
- Where you would like to settle — is this a good place to find the type of work you would like to do, for the kids' schooling, and access to support?
- How will your change of career affect the family income and how will you and your family adapt to a possible reduction in salary when you first leave Defence?
- Do you need to consider changes to your housing when leaving Defence?

RESOURCES FOR TRANSITION

LEAVING THE ADF

Defence Community Organisation provides support to all ADF members and their families as they transition. ADF Transition Coaches are available to provide you and your family with personalised support to assist with all aspects of your transition planning. Attend an ADF Member and Family Transition Seminar or look at the **ADF Member and Family Transition Guide**, to find out more

> defence.gov.au/dco/transition

HOW TO WIN AND KEEP A CIVILIAN JOB

The Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business has a range of factsheets to support veterans to find and retain a civilian job.

> jobsearch.gov.au/jobseeker-info/employment-assistance-for-veterans

ENGAGE

Engage is an online portal that current, transitioning, and former ADF members, their families, and/or those involved in their support can use to locate support services.

> engage.forcenet.gov.au

CAREER TRANSITION ASSISTANCE SCHEME (CTAS)

Defence provide ADF members with support for their employment transition through CTAS. Support may include resume coaching, career coaching, approved absence and funding towards training and financial advice. You can access CTAS during transition and up to 12 months after leaving Defence.

> defence.gov.au/dco/transition/yourtransition/ctas.asp

OPEN ARMS

Open Arms Veterans & Families Counselling provides a range of services and programs to support transition.

You can contact Open Arms on 1800 011 046 to access free and confidential services.

The Open Arms **Stepping Out** program provides information and skills to manage the transition to civilian life.

> openarms.gov.au/who-we-help/transitioning

TRANSITION AND ADJUSTMENT TO CIVILIAN LIFE

Ex-service organisations offer support, information and advocacy services to support transition.

> dva.gov.au/contact/ex-service-organisations

DVA REHABILITATION

Subject to eligibility you may be entitled to vocational support under a DVA rehabilitation plan. The rehabilitation plan is tailored to ensure it meets your specific needs. Vocational support services could include:

- assistance to identify your work skills
- support to search and apply for jobs
- help with resumes and interviews
- guidance or counselling
- provision of incentives to employers
- retraining or further education
- work trials
- provision of aids and appliances.

> dva.gov.au/rehabilitation



Gayle Collie – former Flight Sergeant, RAAF

OTHER RESOURCES FOR MAKING A CAREER CHANGE

Career transition assistance for older people

> employment.gov.au/career-transition-assistance

Useful tips for making a career change

> seek.com.au/career-advice/making-a-career-change

ADVICE FROM VETERANS WHO HAVE TRANSITIONED

“ Don't just talk about it, put your foot down and do it, **focus on your transition plan.**”

– **TIMOTHY MCEVOY**
CORPORAL, ARMY

“ Have your end goal clear in your head, but don't expect to get there straight away. I found **reaching out and having someone who can mentor you** through the processes helps.”

– **DAVID SERONG**
PRIVATE, ARMY

“ Look at the social media community and look at a workplace that already has a military family there. **You will already have a connection that way.**”

– **LINDA PORTER**
SERGEANT, ARMY

“ The experiences that you are exposed to early in your career are **foundational to what you can work on outside the military.**”

– **KATHRYN BURR**
LIEUTENANT, NAVY

Dale Marsden - former Private Australian Army, David Serong - former Private Australian Army, Liam McKenna - former Bombardier, Australian Army.



CASE STUDY

FROM LEADING SOLDIERS TO LEADING TEAMS

HISTORY OF SERVICE

Paul joined the Army in 1991 as an apprentice fitter and turner. He enjoyed a 25 year Army career. As an armourer Paul worked on artillery and armoured vehicles across locations in Australia and overseas. Paul mastered his trade early in his career. Over the following decades, he built on these skills with state-of-the-art Army training across a range of disciplines. He became skilled in areas such as organisational leadership, continuous improvement and change management.

Paul reached a point in his Army service where he needed to consider the next chapter of his career. He wanted to leave his Army career on a high and continue to grow in the civilian workforce. Paul undertook what was to be an extensively planned and executed transition process.



Paul Gibbs CSM - former Warrant Officer Class One, Australian Army

CHALLENGE

Paul left the Army as a highly competent and skilled soldier. Twenty-five years of military experience did not specifically train Paul for the basic interview and resume skills he needed, but it did provide him with the necessary skills for him to be able to demonstrate his knowledge and capabilities throughout the process. After being offered the job, Paul had to find a different way to manage a team in a civilian environment.

OUTCOME

- Paul applied his military skills to his civilian job interview and went on to secure a senior management position at Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics.
- Paul was confident going through the selection process for the job. He recognised there was a difference between how he managed soldiers to how he needed to manage civilians. Paul used mentors to help him adjust his management style to suit his new environment.
- Paul owes his success in the corporate world to the training he received in the Army. His training set him up to succeed on the outside. He says, "The courses and support services provided by Defence are second to none and have set me up to succeed in the corporate world."
- Paul believes that finding a mentor is key to a successful transition. This type of support will help a veteran succeed in the first few months of a new job. "Adapting to the new context is hard," he said.
- If Paul could give one piece of advice to anyone looking to leave the Defence Force, it would be, "Time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted. Research, research, research."

HOW TO APPLY FOR JOBS

Think about your transferable skills and experience and what industries could use your skills. You may need to consider whether you need further training to get where you want to go.

If you are stuck and unsure of what types of positions would best suit your needs and skills, talk to a Defence Community Organisation ADF Transition Coach.

Also, don't be afraid to think outside the box. If there is not a demand or opening for the type of work you really want to do, you may be able to plan a pathway to your preferred job. You may also consider going into business for yourself.

JOB SEARCH TOOLS FOR VETERANS

Seeking out job opportunities in today's employment market needs to be multi-faceted. Employment opportunities can be identified through:

- Job Boards and Career Websites
 - such as Seek, Jora, Indeed, CareerOne, Glassdoor, AllJobs, JobSearch or APS Jobs (for government jobs)
- Social media networking
- Recruitment Agencies
- Company Websites
- Job Fairs
- Referrals
- Cold Calling

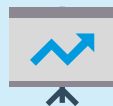
EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS



A government site providing specific information to assist veterans to get and keep a civilian job.

> jobsearch.gov.au/jobseeker-info/employment-assistance-for-veterans

JOB OUTLOOK



Job Outlook provides information about Australian careers, labour market trends and employment projections.

> joboutlook.gov.au

JOBACTIVE



A government job website that connects employers and job seekers. You can search for vacancies that have a 'Defence Force Experience Desirable' flag using the advanced search function of the website. This website includes information on the labour market, employment planning tools and detailed guides on government assistance options.

> jobactive.gov.au

APS JOBS



A government website listing jobs vacancies in the Australian Public Service. It also provides links to vacancies in the Australian Parliamentary Service and other State and Territory Government vacancies. You can sign up for job alerts and save job ads.

> apsjobs.gov.au

JORA



The Jora job search engine, enables you to identify job vacancies which have been flagged as having 'Defence experience desirable'. To identify these jobs, hit 'Search Jobs', in the left hand column under the heading 'Job Type' select more. You should then select 'Defence experience desirable', this will display job vacancies listed with this indicator.

> au.jora.com

SEEK



Seek is an online job marketplace, where you can search for job vacancies and create a profile to attract interest from prospective employers. You can also find employee reviews of organisations as well as information and templates to help you with your job search.

> seek.com.au

JOB SEARCH TOOLS FOR VETERANS

RECRUITMENT/EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES



Another way to find a job is through a recruitment/employment agency. There are numerous players in today's market, including some agencies who specialise in placement of veterans or in filling jobs in specific industries. Recruitment/employment agencies manage job placement across both government and private sector organisations and provide a twofold service by:

- Identifying suitably skilled people to fill a specific vacancy
- finding positions for job seekers who have registered with them

Depending on the type and nature of the position, payment to the recruitment agency is usually by way of a fee or commission paid by the employer.

There are also agencies who offer pathways into apprenticeships.

ADF TRANSITION



Defence provides comprehensive transition services, including assistance with preparing for civilian employment, through the provision of career coaching, assisting with identifying support services and Job Search Preparation workshops.

> defence.gov.au/dco/transition

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT COMMITMENT



The Veterans Employment Commitment allows businesses to make a public commitment to support the employment of veterans. The Commitment is open to all Australian businesses that would like to benefit from the skills and experience of our ex-service men and women. You can browse the list of businesses that have signed the Commitment to identify veteran-friendly employers based on their location, industry and business size.

> veteransemployment.gov.au/show-your-commitment/commitment-supporters

SELF-EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE



An Australian Government site that provides advice to people interested in running a new small business and who may be eligible for New Business Assistance with NEIS — New Enterprise Incentive Scheme.

> employment.gov.au/self-employment-new-business-assistance-neis

STUDY



If you want a new career, you could consider undertaking further study. The governments Study Assist site provides Information for students about government financial assistance for further education.

> studyassist.gov.au

SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKING

Businesses use social media networks such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to promote their business and connect with customers. They are also increasingly using social media networks to connect with like-minded business professionals and identify potential employees.

Whilst there are a variety of social media networking sites for business professionals, LinkedIn is one of the leaders in social media networking for professionals and allows you to be introduced to and collaborate with other professionals.

GETTING STARTED WITH LINKEDIN

Sign up, create a profile and you'll be able to connect with past, present and future colleagues, discover job opportunities tailored to your skill set and uncover insightful content to inform your career and development.

BUILD YOUR PROFILE

On LinkedIn you'll get out of it what you put in.

- Create your profile — your profile makes you more visible to potential employers and recruiters. LinkedIn uses your profile data to display you in searches for key words and to suggest relevant job opportunities.
- Include a photo — dress to suit the type of role you are interested in. This may be the first image of you a prospective employer will see.
- Write a great personal pitch for your summary that highlights your strengths and the kind of opportunities you're looking for.
- List your work experience, highlight key achievements and document any specific projects you worked on.
- Provide your education history, and add all the skills you want to be known for — your connections can provide endorsements of these skills, which boosts your discoverability.

LinkedIn can function as an online resume. You can modify your privacy settings to control how you appear on LinkedIn.

START CAREER PLANNING AND NETWORKING

You can find other veterans by searching LinkedIn (try searching for "Australian Army"). Do this by clicking in the search bar, select *People* from the drop-down menu, then click *All filters*, where you'll find the *Past companies* filter. This will help you identify where other veterans are now working. If you want to know more, you can connect with a person or reach out through a private message. Similar to other social networks, LinkedIn has groups that you can join based on various interests, which can help with making connections and planning your next steps.

SMARTER JOB SEARCHING

You can search for and apply for jobs on LinkedIn, which is why filling out your profile is a great idea. You'll see jobs that match your previous experience and skills. You can also let recruiters know you're looking for new opportunities. This could lead to recruiters contacting you about potential jobs, which you can then weigh up and consider. Even a short-term engagement could be a stepping stone or a foot in the door. If you find a particular company that you're interested in, you can follow the company page, which will ensure you're kept up to date with latest news, as well as any job openings that come up.

YOUR APPLICATION

Depending on the industry and type of position you are applying for, you are likely to need a **resume** and **cover letter**. It is normal practice to send out your resume with an accompanying cover letter. The cover letter is your introduction to the employer and creates the first impression. It should be tailored to the particular position you are applying for and summarises your claims (why you would be good) for the position.

Some organisations may require you to prepare and submit your application online.

Defence Community Organisation have a variety of support services available to help you to transition to civilian employment. There are also a range of commercial providers who charge a fee for service, who can assist you with preparing your application and interview coaching.

COVER LETTER WRITING TIPS

A cover letter highlights your resume, it should:

- be presented in a business letter format
- be brief and professional; 2 – 3 paragraphs
- be addressed to a specific person
- identify the position you are seeking
- connect your skills and claims to the position
- demonstrate why you are the ideal candidate for the position
- close by offering to elaborate on your application at interview and thank them for taking the time to consider you.

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

An Australian Government site that provides tips and templates:

for resumes

> jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/resume-templates-why-and-how

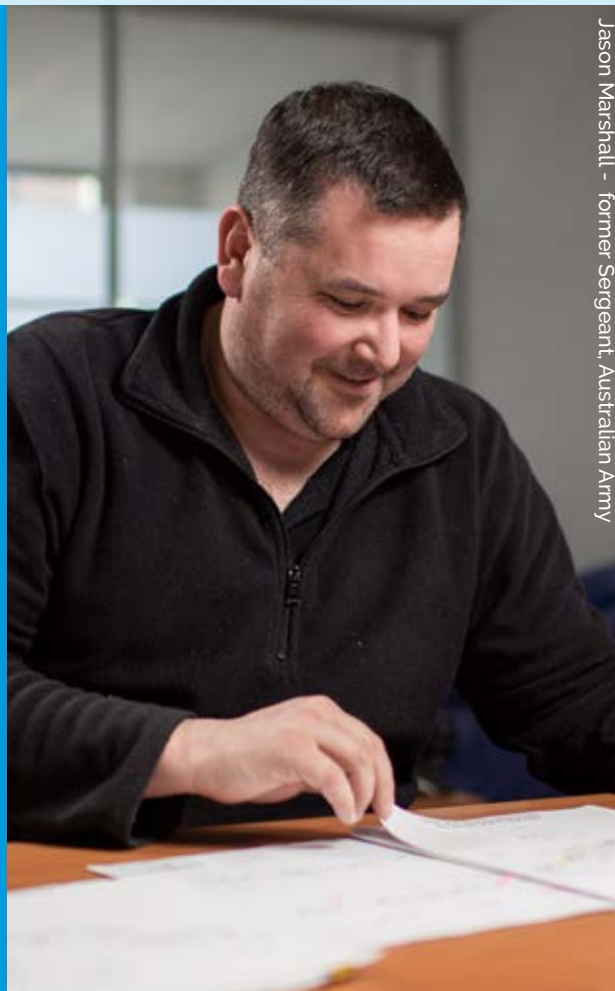
for cover letters

> jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/what-cover-letter-and-why-do-i-need-one

SEEK: RESUME TEMPLATES

This is an Australian online job site that also provides tips and templates for resumes. Seek is an online version of print employment classifieds.

> seek.com.au/career-advice/free-resume-template



Jason Marshall - former Sergeant, Australian Army

YOUR APPLICATION

RESUME WRITING TIPS

A resume is a 2-5 page document that summarises your work experience and qualifications. It is an important marketing tool that job seekers use to communicate their value to employers.

One of the hardest things about writing your resume is being able to translate military specific capabilities into civilian skills. Use the skills translator resources at pages 4 and 5 to get a better understanding about what experience you have to offer an employer.

For example, a former Warrant Officer could claim that they can; analyse workplace development needs and provide advice to the executive for the ongoing development of all staff and teams.

When writing your resume and applying for civilian jobs, it's important to use your skills and experiences to demonstrate your strengths and the unique skills that make you an attractive applicant.

PREPARE A DRAFT

It is never too early to prepare your resume. You will then have a draft you can easily tailor when you find a position you want to apply for.

ASK FOR HELP

Do some research to find out what support is available to help with your application. Is there someone who can act as a mentor and provide useful tips on how to present a positive angle on your experiences? It is also worth asking a few non-military friends to read and comment on your resume. They can tell you if they understand the way you have expressed your skills and experience from what you have written and point to areas that require clarification. You can also access professional assistance.

TARGET YOUR RESUME

Tailor your resume for each job and take into account the needs of the organisation. Review the job specifications carefully and make sure you have described how you meet the job criteria. Make sure your previous military positions showcase your achievements and don't only list your duties. By highlighting your key skills, you will be more likely to get to the interview stage. Refer to pages 4 and 5 'Core Tasks at Rank' for information about how to articulate your military skills using civilian language.

QUANTIFY YOUR MILITARY EXPERIENCE

The best resumes include specific and measurable achievements. Think about the contribution you made in your previous roles and use actual examples including numbers to illustrate the size and nature of your role. For example, consider the value of any equipment you were responsible for, or the number of people you managed. Explain how you achieved your successes and include any recognition you received.

YOUR APPLICATION

RESUME WRITING TIPS

DEMONSTRATE EVIDENCE OF YOUR ABILITIES

Focus on how you will show the employer that your skills are relevant to what they are looking for. Review your experiences and think about how they can be used as examples of transferable skills, such as teamwork and organisational abilities.

REWRITE MILITARY JARGON INTO EVERYDAY LANGUAGE

Think about the language you use and how it will be understood by a civilian employer. You should avoid using acronyms. Translate any jargon into language that the employer can understand and revise any sections that are lacking clarity.

REMOVE OUTDATED OR SENSITIVE INFORMATION

It's important to showcase the skills that are sought-after in today's employment market, so limit use of unnecessary references to obsolete technologies. Also omit any unnecessary or controversial information that is irrelevant to your ability to perform in the new role. Remember that you cannot include classified information.

CHECK FOR ERRORS

Carefully check your resume for any errors in typing or formatting. Ask someone you trust to proofread the document before sending it to a recruiter or employer.

CHECK YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

Hiring managers and recruiters will often research your social media presence. Make sure the information on your resume and social media are consistent. Also consider how you represent yourself on social media such as through Facebook and Twitter.

Defence provides a range of career transition support through the Career Transition Assistance Scheme
 > defence.gov.au/dco/transition

For practical advice on applying for jobs in the Australian Public Service
 > www.apsc.gov.au/veterans-employment-program

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A RESUME



PERSONAL DETAILS

- Name
- Email address
- Phone number (preferably with voicemail)
- Residential address
- Level of security clearance



AN INTRODUCTION

- Opening introduction that gives a high-level overview of your key skills and experience as it relates to the particular job you are applying for.



REFEREES

- You need at least two referees for every job application. Ideally referees should be people you reported to in your most recent positions.
- Always ask permission before including anyone as your referee. You can protect the privacy of your referees by writing "Referees: available on request".



WORK HISTORY OVERVIEW

- List your most recent position first and then work backwards. This would include the different positions you held throughout your military career.
- For each position include the dates you were in that role, and a brief overview of what you were responsible for doing.
- Consolidate information wherever possible. For example, if you did the same role on multiple different postings, list this as one entry, along with the tasks completed, and then note the different dates and locations. Doing this will prevent your resume from becoming too long — the ideal length is 2-5 pages.
- If you have relevant experience in volunteer roles, include these as well.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- List any formal qualifications you have, starting with your highest level of achievement. This can include educational qualifications, professional accreditations, licences or certificates.
- Include the full name of the qualification and the institution that awarded it, as well as the date finished.
- Don't forget to get a record of your military education and training before you leave the ADF.

THE JOB INTERVIEW

Like the application, interview preparation is essential. It demonstrates your skills to prospective employers and helps them identify if you are a good match for the position. It's your job to help the person interviewing you understand how you'll apply your skills to the job they have advertised.

KNOW THE EMPLOYER

Research the organisation, learn as much as possible about its:

- services
- products
- priorities
- values
- culture
- structure.

Understand how the position you have applied for fits in the organisation and how you can contribute to helping to achieve its goals. Review the job advertisement and job description to understand as much as you can about what it is looking for. Gather information about the organisation from its website, annual reports, press releases, social media and through your networks.

THINK ABOUT YOUR LANGUAGE

In the military you were part of a team and therefore 'we' did such and such is how you are used to conveying your success. At interview ensure that you explain what your personal contribution was. Change your language from 'we' to 'I'.

MAKE TIME TO PREPARE

The style of interview can vary depending on the type of role and the organisation. The interview may be a formal one-on-one, telephone, panel, online, video or group interview or may comprise of an informal chat either face-to-face or over the telephone. Some interview processes may involve multiple rounds and could be a combination of online questionnaires, group testing or face-to-face interviews.

The employer will want to hear from you, not only to better understand the information in your resume but to get a sense of your personality and how you would fit into their organisation. Make sure your examples are relevant to the job or interview questions. Think about what you can bring to the role and business that will set you apart from others. Think and prepare any questions you may want to ask. Generally, it is not appropriate to ask about salary until you are offered the job.

DRESS TO IMPRESS

First impressions are very important, so think about how you want to present yourself. Find out the dress code for your prospective employer.

BE ON TIME

Never be late for an interview. Allow enough time to arrive 10 to 15 minutes early. This gives you time to compose yourself, review your resume and notes and think about how you might approach the interview.

THE JOB INTERVIEW

LISTEN, AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

Make sure you listen to the specific question and ensure that your answer and examples are relevant to the job or interview question. While it's important not to get too detailed, describing your specific qualifications, training and other specialised experience will give you an edge over other applicants.

AVOID USING RANKS, MILITARY ACRONYMS, AND OTHER MILITARY JARGON

Practice translating military language before the interview. Also review the job description closely and match your military experience with the experience and skills required and discuss those attributes thoroughly.

DESCRIBE SITUATIONS IN THE MILITARY IN WHICH YOU ACHIEVED YOUR END GOAL

Employers often ask job seekers to tell a story about past job experience to assess how candidates will conduct themselves in new positions. Be prepared to outline one or two brief examples of how you put your skills into practice and how these skills translate into the job you are applying for. It is important to focus not just on the actions you took, but also on the outcomes that you achieved.

It may assist you to use the **STAR** method to answer questions. Frame your answer by outlining the:

- **Situation** – set the context by describing the circumstance where you used the skills or qualities and gained the experience.
- **Task** – what was your role?
- **Action** – what did you do and how did you do it?
- **Result** – what did you achieve? What was the end result and how does it relate to the job you are applying for?

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR INTERVIEWS

SEEK: JOB INTERVIEW TIPS

This is an Australian online job site that also provides job interview tips.

> seek.com.au/career-advice/job-interview-tips

SOME INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT

Why do you want to work for our organisation?

Why should we hire you?

What do you consider to be your greatest strengths as they relate to the position? What are your weaknesses?

Tell me about a difficult situation you faced and how you dealt with it?

For Defence industry positions — tell me how your military experience has prepared you for this position?

Tell me about when you went above and beyond what was expected of you?

What are your long term career goals?

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

It is normal to feel disheartened when you don't get a job you have applied for, particularly if it's a job you really wanted. Try not to take the rejection personally, give yourself some time to deal with any feelings of disappointment and use the experience as a learning by:

- asking for feedback - both positive and negative feedback is worthwhile.
- reflecting on your interview – think about what you could have said differently or how you might have presented differently.
- practicing your interview techniques – you should consider practicing in front of a mirror, practicing with someone or recording yourself.
- revising your approach – think about what you should change to improve your performance.

Stay positive and remember winners are just people who keep trying.



Jason Woodcoe - former Flight Lieutenant, RAAF

THE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE

Ways of thinking and behaviour in the military can be quite different from those of the civilian workforce. For example, the civilian workplace can be much less structured than the military workplace. Other differences can include dress standards, language, the formality of verbal and non-verbal communication, openness to opinions, and leadership styles — so it is important to be prepared for a period of adjustment.

TIPS FOR ADJUSTING TO THE CIVILIAN WORKPLACE

WORKPLACE CULTURE

Cultures can vary across workplaces, so it can be a learning curve for all new staff, not just those moving from the ADF. Remember that you may not always get it right the first time. This is okay, but expect and be open to receiving feedback.

LANGUAGE

Just as in the ADF, all workplaces use unique jargon and acronyms. Take time to get to know the jargon in your new workplace, and avoid using military jargon. You are likely to be moving into a more diverse workforce with a range of different sensitivities, and so language that may be acceptable in the ADF, such as swearing and the use of nicknames, will usually not be acceptable in the civilian workplace.

COMMUNICATION

In military culture, personnel are often referred to formally as "sir", "ma'am", or by rank. However, in the private sector, using formal titles like these can make some employees uncomfortable. While it is always important to be polite, rank or position are much less important in the civilian workforce, and it is more acceptable for civilians to refer to co-workers, regardless of their position, by their first name.

LEADERSHIP STYLE

It is more common in the civilian workforce for employees to expect to be listened to and heard, and they will not respond well to being given orders or harsh reprimands. Employees are encouraged to think for themselves or act on their own initiative. In the civilian workforce, a successful leader can be more an influencer than a commander.

STANDARDS OF DRESS

While civilian companies require their employees to dress appropriately for the job, they often allow for some personal flexibility. There are often no strict uniform guidelines, but there may be some dress requirements. For example, staff may be required to cover their tattoos, especially when dealing with customers.

ACCEPT DIFFERENT WORK STYLES

People with a military background have a strong commitment to safety, teamwork, direct and clear communication and task completion. While employers value this, they are sometimes willing to ignore reduced levels of productivity to maintain harmony in the workplace and retain their workforce. Take the time to think about the different work styles of colleagues and management.

TIPS FOR ADJUSTING TO THE CIVILIAN WORKPLACE

MILITARY UNDERSTANDING

A very small percentage of the Australian population has served or are serving in the military. Aside from the families and friends of service members, many have no understanding of what you did or the culture of the military. Your co-workers will try to relate to you and they usually have the best of intentions, but they likely have no first-hand knowledge. Get to know the workplace and the people in it, and be conscious that any suggestions you may offer for change or improvement soon after you start may be met with negativity. It is important to establish relationships with your colleagues by sharing some of your experiences and personal history. This will build trust, but will take time.

MANAGING YOUR OWN CAREER

In the ADF you did not have to actively plan your career — you may have been recommended for promotion, different roles and opportunities. Although it can be daunting, you will be in charge of your own career in the civilian workforce, including proactively promoting yourself and planning your career. It is important

for you to actively seek feedback, particularly when you first start in a job. In larger organisations you will have opportunities to move between teams, into different parts of the business or into senior roles. It is completely up to you to decide how to use these types of opportunities.

MANAGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS

The civilian workplace can vary dramatically from the military. You should expect differences in the pace and structure of the civilian workplace. You need to accept, and be prepared for, a period of adjustment and learning when you commence in a new role.

BUILD WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

Interpersonal relationships are key to getting ahead. Be positive, look for opportunity to share your skills with your new co-workers. Additionally, seeking out other veterans in your workplace and in the wider community can provide you with an opportunity to find mentors and further job opportunities.



Linda Porter – former Sergeant, Australian Army



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