



Military Veterans in Retail: A Sound Business Decision

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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



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ABOUT THE PAPER

This paper is a collaborative effort between the National Retail Federation (NRF) Foundation and the Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University. This paper provides an overview of the employment opportunities in retail and the unique skills that veterans bring to the retail industry. It also shows how military job seekers and retail employers can effectively work together to identify opportunities for veteran job seekers within the retail industry. Highlighting previous work that outlines the business case for hiring veterans and applying those propositions to the retail industry specifically, we examine the practices of three retailers: Walmart, Disney, and Starbucks. This paper examines the three companies' unique military and veteran hiring initiatives, their evolution over time, their key differentiators, and common practices each company has leveraged to implement their military hiring strategies.

Military Veterans in Retail: A Sound Business Decision

BACKGROUND

The Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University (IVMF) has conducted extensive research on veterans and their value in the competitive business world. Notably, in 2012, the IVMF identified 10 research-based propositions that support the case for hiring veterans as a sound business decision. The IVMF brief, “The Business Case for Hiring a Veteran: Beyond the Clichés” (here forward, referred to as “The Business Case”), makes a research-based argument that veterans generally:

- are adaptable and able to work within dynamic and uncertain environments;
- exhibit high resilience;
- exhibit advanced team-building skills;
- exhibit strong organizational commitment over self;
- have and leverage cross-cultural experiences; and
- have experience and skill in diverse work settings.¹

are well-equipped to add corporate value as employees, this brief, supported by the NRF Foundation in collaboration with the IVMF, demonstrates how the many salient employment opportunities in the retail industry align with the knowledge, skills, and abilities that veterans commonly bring to today's workplace.

Specifically, this paper:

- **Underscores** why veteran employment in retail makes sense, the current supply and demand conditions in the retail industry, and how the conditions favor companies' veteran employment initiatives.
- **Highlights** the extent to which (and how) the IVMF business case propositions for hiring veterans applies to the retail industry.
- **Reveals** how retail industry-specific skills align with the additional skills and abilities that veterans bring to the retail workplace that were either (1) not addressed in the original business case, or (2)

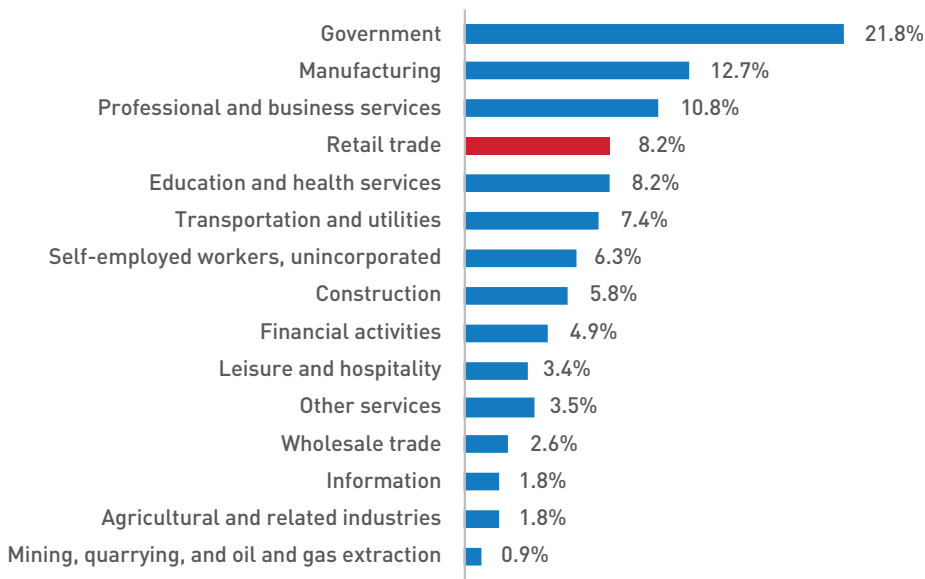
“For a military hiring initiative to be successful, employers must implement strategies that are proactive, thoughtful, and customized.”

- are entrepreneurial;
- assume high levels of trust;
- are adept at transferring skills across tasks and settings;
- have and leverage their advanced technical training;

The IVMF published the business case to demonstrate why hiring veterans is simply good for business. To date, no one has yet examined how these propositions apply within industries or has extracted lessons learned related to the acquisition, hiring, and retention practices specific to veterans. Drawing upon a body of evidence that suggests veterans



FIGURE 1: SHARE OF VETERANS EMPLOYED BY INDUSTRY, 2016



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016 average at www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/vet.pdf

can be addressed with more detail as they apply to retail employment.

- **Identifies** resources for companies, employers, and HR professionals to avoid stigma and develop their military and veteran hiring initiatives, leveraging best practices.
- **Reveals** lessons learned in veteran hiring and retention from retail industry thought leaders and human resource professionals at three leading retailers—Walmart, Disney, and Starbucks—with established military and veteran hiring initiatives.

WHY EMPLOYING VETERANS IN RETAIL MAKES SENSE

Notably, retail trade ranks fourth among the various industries that employ veterans (Figure 1).² Based on the success of

previous coordinated and strategic veteran employment efforts (e.g., The Veteran Jobs Mission and the Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring our Heroes initiative), there is an encouraging precedent that suggests that these numbers could be increased through strategic efforts orchestrated by industry leaders. Currently among all veterans, 8.2 percent are employed in "retail trade" as compared with 10.4 percent of non-veterans.³

Employment opportunity is largely a matter of supply and demand in the labor market. For transitioning service members, identifying opportunities based on demand is important, especially for those limited by time, mobility, and geographical location considerations in their post-service job search. As one of the nation's three largest industry employers, the variety and geographic availability of retail jobs may facilitate veteran employment across the country. In addition, according to the Bureau of Labor

Statistics, the number of jobs in the retail trade sector is projected to increase from 15.4 million in 2014 to 16.1 million in 2024. This reflects an annual growth rate of 0.5 percent, compared with an annual growth rate of 0.2 percent during the previous decade. The 764,600 jobs projected to be added are more than double the 306,300 jobs that were added from 2004 to 2014. Additionally, changes in the retail sector such as online shopping and self-checkout means that the need for certain jobs within retail will decrease while the need for others will increase.⁴

If these projections are accurate, a pipeline of available talent will be needed to fill these new, up-to-date positions. One way the retail industry can fill this demand is by recruiting and hiring transitioning service members, given that nearly 200,000 are transitioning each year.⁵

Even so, supply and demand is only one component of employment. The match between employer needs and job seeker skills is another. When we think retail, we think about tending a storefront or engaging in sales, yet employment opportunities in today's marketplace are increasingly diverse. In fact, nearly half, 45.3 percent, do not work in sales or a sales-related position.⁶ For example, with the advent of ecommerce and digital technology, new, innovative opportunities in retail are rapidly emerging.⁷ Retailers are including the use of digital strategies to increase sales and customer engagement; "big data" in retail is being used to study, understand, and predict market trends; and retail is relying on an array of digital technology such as cloud computing, analytics, digital marketing, cyber security, and social media.⁸ These emerging positions align perfectly for veterans, who may have relevant experience in the areas of logistics, acquisitions, operations,

procurement, supply chain management, cybersecurity, public policy, and technology, to name a few.

Though it might not be obvious at first, we contend that these new, emerging occupations in retail can be a surprisingly good match for many employers and veteran job seekers. For example, consistent with the IVMF Business Case, veterans—by virtue of their military experience—are adaptable, often technologically proficient, and comfortable applying previously learned skills to new tasks and situations.⁹ They have demonstrated that they can keep pace with a rapidly changing and technology-oriented work environment because military experience exposes most individuals to, and trains them how to understand and apply, cutting-edge technology on an ongoing basis. In fact, several studies have shown that this exposure contributes to the ability to link technology-based solutions to organizational challenges and also

to the transfer of technological skills to disparate work tasks.¹⁰ Clearly, the retail industry has human resource needs that align with the diverse types of employment sought by transitioning veterans and the precise skills achieved as a result of their military service. Yet there remains an apparent disconnect. To pursue a career in retail, veterans must (1) know the types of available opportunities in the retail industry, (2) understand how to apply their prior training and experience to these roles, and (3) ultimately see themselves as a good match for employment in the retail industry. Likewise, employers in the retail industry may not intuitively understand the value veterans bring to the workplace or understand how a job seeker’s military experience prepares them for a retail-oriented role. Finally, stigma or erroneous beliefs about veterans may influence hiring decisions.

A starting point to address lack of familiarity is to (1) match the skills typified by veterans with those

identified as important for work in the retail industry to illustrate how the veteran-specific business case tenets correspond to the various retail-specific competencies, and (2) provide insight into how military-learned skills might apply to the skills required in a retail environment.

In the following section, we suggest areas of alignment between skills developed through military service and those that the retail industry in general considers to be important for successful employment.

**THE BUSINESS CASE FOR
HIRING A VETERAN—
APPLIED TO RETAIL**

Between the steady flow of transitioning service members and retailers’ current human resources needs, there is an obvious case for supporting veteran hiring in retail. Still, these conditions are not sufficient if the veteran job seekers do not convey the knowledge or skills needed to fill open positions. Additionally, employers, hiring

FIGURE 3: IN-DEMAND SKILLS

**IN-DEMAND SKILLS
COMPARED WITH SKILLS ENHANCED BY MILITARY SERVICE AND RETAIL SKILLS**

MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS CITED BY EMPLOYERS FOR WORKPLACE SUCCESS	SKILLS STRENGTHENED OR ENHANCED BY MILITARY SERVICE	SKILLS DESIRED BY RETAIL EMPLOYERS
Professionalism/Work Ethic	Work Ethic/Discipline	Motivation
Teamwork/Collaboration	Teamwork	Interpersonal Skills
Oral and Written Communication	Leadership and Management Skills	Integrity
Critical Thinking/Problem Solving	Mental Toughness	Dependability/Reliability
Ethics/Social Responsibility	Adaptation to Different Challenges	Adaptability/Flexibility
	Professionalism	Willingness to Learn

Source: For employers, see The Conference Board, Inc., the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Corporate Voices for Working Families, and the Society for Human Resource Management. (2006). *Are They Really Ready to Work: Employer’s Perspectives on the Basic Knowledge and Applied Skills of the New Entrants to the 21st Century U.S. Workforce*. For Service members, see C. Zoli, R. Maury, & D. Fay, *Missing Perspectives: Service members’ Transition from Service to Civilian Life — Data-Driven Research to Enact the Promise of the Post-9/11 GI Bill* (Institute for Veterans & Military Families, Syracuse University, November 2015).¹¹

managers, and HR professionals may have limited knowledge, biases, or stereotypes about the military, the training experiences inherent to military service, or how military work experience and learned skills apply to the civilian workforce.

Examination of retail-specific skills shows a significant overlap among the 10 business case propositions, the most desirable workplace skills, and the competencies identified by employers as important for work in retail. For example, as Figure 3 shows, many of the skills desired by retail employers overlap with the skills identified as most desirable by employers in general, and they are often the precise skills that are enhanced by military service.

Retail executives and HR professionals can leverage this information to:

- demonstrate the overlap in skills that veterans bring to the workplace;
- identify desirable skills and competencies needed for particular roles within the retail industry;
- identify needed workplace support such as training, mentoring, job shadowing, or education.

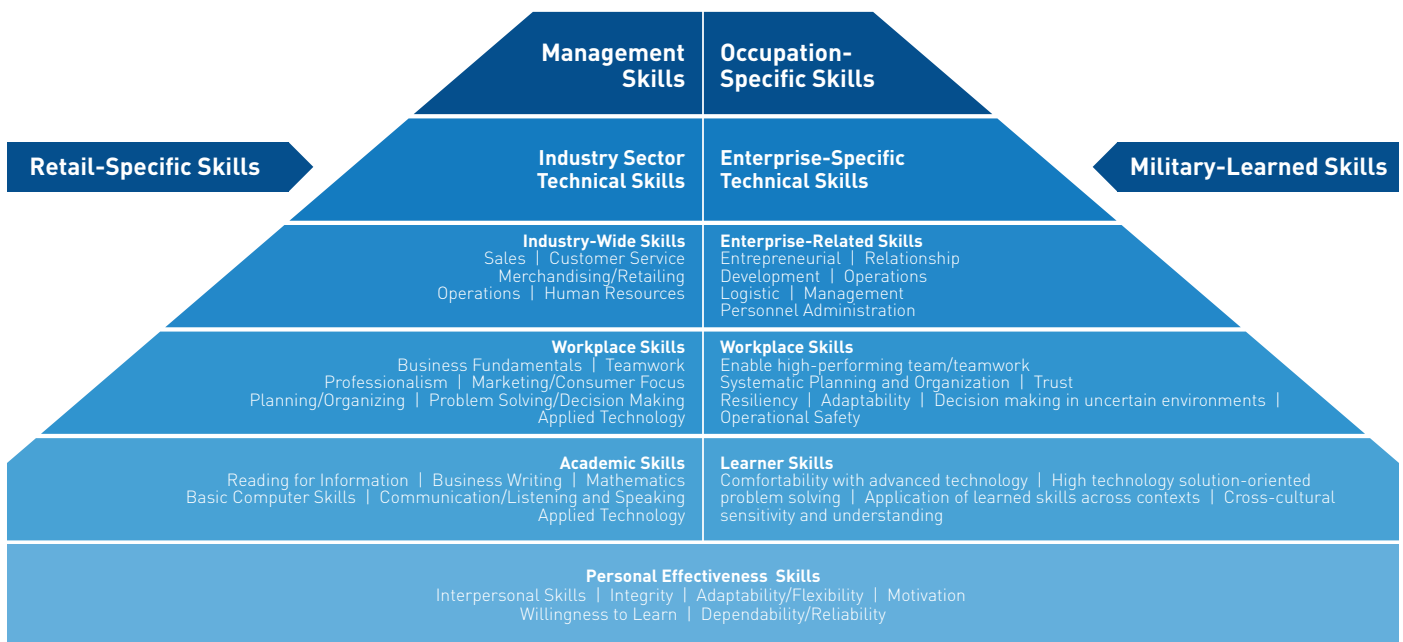
For the purposes of this paper, we have attempted to match military-learned skills (Figure 4, right side) to desirable retail-specific skills (Figure 4, left side).

MATCHING SKILLS LEARNED IN THE MILITARY TO RETAIL-SPECIFIC SKILLS

This model provides an illustration of the overlap in skills that potentially exists based on the desired skills for work in the retail industry and the competencies developed through military work experience.

To further demonstrate how a veteran's skills and attributes overlap with retail skills, we have taken individual items from the business case (left) and mapped them to specific skills identified using the Department of Labor's CareerOneStop's retail-specific workplace skills model (right). ■

FIGURE 4: RETAIL SKILLS AND MILITARY-LEARNED SKILLS



Source: Adapted from: <http://www.careeronestop.org/competencymodel/competency-models/retail.aspx>¹²

Veteran-Specific Business Case Proposition	Retail-Specific Skills
Veterans are entrepreneurial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exhibit self-direction Demonstrate initiative Demonstrate good work habits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish personally challenging achievement goals Employ personal skills to succeed Take initiative to increase the variety and scope of job assigned Take personal responsibility for achieving organizational objectives Take initiative to build customer base Choose an effective solution without assistance when appropriate
Veterans assume high levels of trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drug-free Security Clearance Accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exhibit ethical behavior Adhere to company policy and regulations to foster trust Practice honesty with regard to company time and property Promptness Compliance with policies Responsible in fulfilling work duties Attendance Take responsibility to accomplish work goals with accepted timeframes
Veterans are adept at transferring skills across contexts/tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematic planning and organization Flexibility/adaptability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the existence of a problem Define the problem Identify potential causes of the problem Analyze the problem Exercise good judgment Generate a number of different approaches to problems Evaluate the relative merits of the various solutions Choose and implement a solution
Veterans have (and leverage) advanced technical training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use technology Use appropriate methods and instructions to ensure equipment is used safely and without damage to the equipment
Veterans are comfortable/adept in discontinuous environments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis on safety Systematic planning and organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of company policies and procedures Handling questions, problems, complaints Tracking inventory Knowledge of relevant federal, state regulations (e.g., health, safety, security standards) Knowledge of procedures for handling or reporting emergency situations (e.g., violent behavior, accidents, fire)
Veterans exhibit high levels of resilience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ability to work under pressure and to meet deadlines Flexibility/adaptability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entertain new ideas Negotiate with others to resolve conflicts and settle disputes Change gears in response to unpredictable or unexpected events Willingly embrace new approaches when appropriate and discard approaches that are no longer working
Veterans exhibit advanced team building skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to work as a team member and/or a team leader Leadership training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orient, train, and mentor colleagues Observe and measure individual and team performance Inspire the team through effective communication
Veterans exhibit strong organizational commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards of quality and commitment to excellence Client- and service-oriented Mission-oriented Commitment to community and service-oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model selling and service behaviors Inform staff about promotions and rewards programs Use business acumen techniques for revenue generation and expense control to optimize profit Support a store culture that promotes and builds customer satisfaction and loyalty Execute service expectations Resolve customer complaints
Veterans have (and leverage) cross-cultural experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to get along and work with a variety of people Have a global outlook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross-cultural awareness Respect diversity
Veterans have experience/skill in diverse work-settings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to conform to rules and structure Familiarity with records and personnel administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate with others to resolve conflicts and settle disputes Use good manners Act fairly — treat others with honesty, fairness, and respect

THE BUSINESS CASE IN PRACTICE: CASE STUDIES

Thus far, we have noted that the labor market conditions are ripe for the retail industry to support veteran employment. We also have revived an already compelling business case for hiring veterans by pointing to its alignment with retail industry-specific skills. However, we also argue that for a military hiring initiative to be successful, employers must implement strategies that are proactive, thoughtful, and customized to their specific business goals to achieve the best possible outcomes.

To understand this further, we examined the efforts of three leading retailers with demonstrable commitments to veteran hiring initiatives: Walmart, Disney, and Starbucks. The IVMF research team followed a comparative case study design to investigate their recruitment, hiring, and retention practices. Data collection involved a combination of phone and in-person semi-structured interviews with key leaders, human resource professionals, and veteran employees within each of the three companies. The interviews were lightly structured around IVMF's 10 "business case" propositions to capture organization-specific best practices on hiring and retaining veterans, yet were also open enough for the teams to share other noteworthy insights. The team then compared findings across organizations to identify common patterns or insightful variations in hiring and retention practices.

Each of the participating companies developed and utilized unique veteran hiring strategies that can provide helpful information to other interested retailers in developing, planning, and implementing their own veteran hiring strategies. We highlight their

unique strategies and common best practices that have resulted in successful implementation below. Note, however, that each of the companies represented here are considered large in scale (number of employees, budget, and earnings). Each company also has financial, human, and philanthropic resources devoted to veteran hiring and other related social, education, and economic empowerment initiatives aimed at the broader military community. Companies and businesses interested in implementing military and veteran hiring strategies are unlikely to have resources on the magnitude discussed here. Nonetheless, most of the information, ideas, and strategies can be scaled to smaller companies based on the resources available.

Throughout this study, several common themes emerged from the case research. To highlight them further, we have organized the remaining sections as follows:

- First, we provide brief individual case narratives that offer more detailed discussion of each company's veteran-facing initiatives.
- Second, we outline a list of common practices across the three companies.
- Third, we conclude with recommendations to the retail industry. ■

¹Companies are presented sequentially in order based on when their military hiring initiative began.



OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

Starbucks describes its engagement in military and veteran hiring initiatives as relatively new and notes that the company is continually evolving as it works with its “partners” (Starbucks shorthand for its employees) as well as community-based, government, and veteran service organizations. Starbucks’ focus on supporting veteran and military spouses began in 2007 with the introduction of the Armed Forces Network (AFN), an internal affinity group founded to create connections between military-affiliated partners and their families. The Starbucks AFN is open to all partners and their families who are veterans or supporters of the military community, and is focused on finding meaningful opportunities that support veterans’ transitions to civilian employment, fostering a military-friendly culture that strengthens connections, and embracing military partners and their families.



Over time, the Starbucks Armed Forces Network (AFN) has evolved into dozens of chapters across the country.

Along with the growing success of the Starbucks AFN, the company made a commitment in 2013 to hire 10,000 veterans and military spouses by 2018. In two years Starbucks has hired more than 6,500 veterans and military spouses, surpassing its halfway hiring goal. More recently, Starbucks has begun convening like-minded businesses, nonprofits, and government leaders to collectively examine veteran and military spouse hiring practices and to further develop its own internal veteran and military spouse hiring strategy.

Additionally, recognizing that nearly 70 percent of Starbucks partners are students or aspiring students, Starbucks' commitment to its military and veteran partners now includes full tuition reimbursement for military families through a collaboration with Arizona State University (ASU). Starbucks, which had already offered a tuition-free education to eligible U.S. partners through the [Starbucks College Achievement Plan](#), announced in November 2015 it would be providing partners who are current or former members of the U.S. Armed Forces with an additional tuition-free education to extend to a spouse or child, recognizing that many veterans are already able to pursue tuition-free higher education through use of the GI Bill. More than 5,500 partners already take advantage of the Starbucks College Achievement Plan education benefit in partnership with Arizona State University.

ASU, with nearly 4,200 veterans and 1,000 military family members enrolled at the university, also demonstrates a strong commitment to veterans and military families through scholarships and the Pat Tillman Veterans Center, and has been

named one of the nation's "Best for Vets" colleges by the Military Times.

Starbucks, military and veteran initiatives are not limited to employment. Starbucks collaborates with the [Schultz Family Foundation](#)—the company's philanthropic sister organization—on military-focused efforts across public, private, and nonprofit sectors related to employment and support of the military community.

Starbucks and the Schultz Family Foundation brought participants together in October 2015 for a day-long conference called the Muster (a military term for the process of accounting for members of a unit, generally after a battle) to develop a collaborative blueprint focused on the transition from military service to civilian careers and the role of veterans and military spouses in local and national service. These efforts continued in April 2016 with a larger collaborative event with JPMorgan Chase and the Veterans Jobs Mission coalition, with a convening of more than 300 business, nonprofit, and government organization leaders.

As part of its pledge to hire, honor, and strengthen veteran communities, Starbucks has introduced several military-focused initiatives and benefits, including:

- The opening of more than 35 strategically located Military Family Stores that put an emphasis on hiring veterans and military spouses, and work closely with veteran service organizations such as Blue Star Families, The Mission Continues, Team Red White and Blue, and the USO to provide services and training and host gatherings relevant to active military and veterans

- [Patriotic green aprons](#) presented to Veteran and Military Spouse partners in recognition of their service and commitment, which sparks connection and conversation with customers
- [Armed Forces Network expansions](#) to include Starbucks partners in dozens of cities around the U.S.
- [Military Mondays](#), a program which began in a Starbucks store, through which William & Mary law students and professors offer their expertise to resolve veterans' disability-compensation challenges. Read more here:



[Paying Tribute and Creating Opportunity](#). Military Mondays is now being expanded nationally to offer support through other veteran service organizations partnering with Starbucks such as Blue Star Families to offer spouse support and financial services

- A pay-for-service-benefit which covers up to 80 hours of pay each year for service obligations and is intended to provide paid time off to ease the transition and travel between military service and the return to work.

- Onward to Opportunity (O2O), a no-cost career skills program (no use of GI Bill Benefits) offering in-demand, industry-validated training and credentials to transitioning service members and all active-duty spouses. O2O provides in-person and online training to the next generation of leaders of America's economy. Employer partners are engaged throughout each phase of O2O delivery by assisting in curriculum design, interacting with participants as they progress through the program, and identifying specific career paths and interview opportunities within their company that align with the skillsets of graduates.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A veterans and military affairs (VAMA) team focuses on strategic veteran and military spouse initiatives and building a strong internal veteran culture.

Separately, the Military Talent Acquisition Team is comprised of dedicated military recruiters who travel to key focus cities across the country including Seattle, Washington, D.C., and Austin, Texas, to lead relationship-building efforts with more than 80 military bases across the country and overseas. This team also supports the growing Starbucks AFN by attending hiring fairs across the nation that attract veterans and military spouses.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

Initiatives began internally with leadership support, followed by buy-in from partners and decision makers across the company. Key markets were

RESOURCES AND COLLATERAL MATERIAL

- › Website portal specifically for veterans and military family members
- › Military Skills Translator
- › Military Career Fair Guide
- › Learning Cards
- › Training Guide and Sourcing Guide
- › Partner Forums and Immersion Training

identified and strategic efforts have been largely focused on those geographic locations that have a high percentage of military consumers. The team kick-started hiring efforts by attending military hiring events and collaborating with veteran service organizations and other experts. Information gleaned from these experiences was then leveraged for the development of structured recruitment and training processes and materials. To ensure it is reaching all military-connected potential employees, Starbucks utilized data about military families, including military spouses, to create a general profile of the talent pool. Starbucks' in-store efforts also focus on geographic locations where customers have a military affiliation (e.g., near key military installations). Employment efforts attempt to turn transitioning veterans and military spouses into successful potential job candidates.

KEY DIFFERENTIATORS

Starbucks' military and veteran hiring initiatives have focused on both military family members as well as veteran partners. These efforts focus on specific aspects of employment including offering a stable employment

situation and geographic flexibility to accommodate family members when they transfer to a new location. Their focus has been targeted on strategic locations and markets with high military populations. Within these locations, Starbucks has developed a "military family store" designation which allows veteran service organization (VSO) and military service organization (MSO) partners to engage with each store and offer services and a gathering place to meet, and to leverage the Starbucks brand for good.

BEST PRACTICES

Starbucks has engaged in significant proactive outreach to government leaders and military- and veteran-serving organizations, as well as collaboration with other business leaders who have a mutual interest in hiring veterans and military spouses. Specifically, Starbucks has worked collaboratively with VSOs, MSOs, business entities, and other business leaders to ensure transitioning service members and their families are employed in positions that are a true fit for their skillset and will lead to a successful and meaningful career path.

CHALLENGES

Fewer than 5 percent of Americans have a direct tie to Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans, and only 12 percent of servicemen and women believe the U.S. public understands their service and sacrifice, indicating a significant divide between our military and civilian populations. This divide leads to a challenging transition from military to civilian life and has broader economic and societal implications. Starbucks is faced with the challenge of helping to bridge this military-civilian divide and educate the general public on the significant potential veterans and military spouses have to become the next generation of America's private and public sector leaders.

BUSINESS CASE

Starbucks believes veterans bring considerable teamwork and leadership experience to the workplace and are poised to be the next generation of America's leaders. Businesses can recruit this top talent and leverage the invaluable skills they bring to the table, including the ability to work as a team, a disciplined approach to work, a commitment to respect and integrity, and the ability to perform under pressure, adapt quickly, and persevere.

RESOURCES AND COLLATERAL MATERIAL:

- Website portal specifically for veterans and military family members
- Military skills translator
- Military career fair guide
- Learning cards
- Training guide and sourcing guide
- Partner forums and immersion training ■



OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

Disney's veteran employment efforts began in 2012 under the direction of chairman and chief executive officer Bob Iger. Early efforts included the development of a cogent business case for hiring veteran job-seekers. Through research, operating entities within the company projected hiring commitments with the overall combined goal of hiring 1,000 veterans company-wide over three years (starting in 2012). Primarily, the focus was to enable segments to define reasonable targets and set a "reachable goal." Eventually the initiative evolved into a larger strategy beyond its initial goals which focused exclusively on hiring. These additional efforts included preparing veterans for jobs, skills building, online workshops, and career-focused website tools for both job seekers and interested employers.



The Walt Disney Company

HEROES
★ **WORK** ★
HERE

Employ excellence.
Hire veterans.

One key component of these early efforts was the addition of hiring “expos” in several cities across the country which focused on building the company’s brand as a veteran-friendly employer within the veteran community. These expos were offered for free and led to online efforts to create a veteran-specific website. Additionally, these early efforts included public service announcements that featured veteran employees who spoke about why Disney was a good place for veterans to work. As the program expanded, Disney hired a dedicated human resources associate focused on veteran hiring.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

Disney described a “three-pronged strategy” centered on (1) veteran hiring, (2) assisting transitioning service members, and (3) Disney’s philanthropic resources. Specifically, The Walt Disney Company leveraged the Disney Institute, the arm of the company that teaches professional development courses in leadership, training, and customer service. Regarding hiring and veteran transition, Disney utilized its intellectual capital by developing and delivering customized content on lessons learned about veteran recruitment, selection, and training. This material was developed through strategic and intentional partnering with Department of Defense (DoD), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Labor (DOL), The White House, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Hiring our Heroes initiatives. These efforts ultimately culminated in a one-day summit where best practices and lessons learned were shared among interested participants. The program has been duplicated several times over the past few years, engaging new partners with each event.

KEY DIFFERENTIATORS

Disney has adopted a “one person at a time” approach: Instead of focusing exclusively on a dedicated military hiring team, Disney empowers the entire recruiting team by building training curricula to educate those with limited exposure to the military. The intent of this approach is to provide training to those making hiring decisions so they have the foundation of knowledge to understand behaviors and norms in the military and how those norms might impact how interviewees behave during an interview or at other points in the hiring process. Recruiters received mandatory training with a slightly different focus on the military landscape, and some high-level information about translation of military skills. Disney created a military skills translator that helps veterans develop civilian language to describe military-specific experience. To further advance the initiative, Disney has provided highly individualized working relationships with recruiters utilizing personal relationships and social networks. Unlike some competitors focused on veteran hiring, Disney limits its participation in job fairs, citing that they are not necessarily positioned to extend on-the-spot job offers, and instead focuses the company’s efforts on providing personalized service and attention to individual veterans and their unique needs.

BEST PRACTICES

Disney is not exclusively focused on hiring military within its own company. Instead, while it already focuses on veteran hiring, it also

uses assets and resources to assist veterans in preparing for the civilian workforce and helping other companies develop effective veteran hiring initiatives. Disney extends its reach through its philanthropic efforts, investing in multiple organizations that align with the

CHALLENGES

Disney described several challenges related to its veteran hiring initiatives including:

- › Identification of veterans
- › Tracking of retention data
- › Balancing the goal of providing individualized service to veteran and military affiliated job-seekers while also maximizing the reach and impact of their efforts

Disney brand. Disney also has military-specific branded material on its website with a dedicated portal for veterans. Materials on the website are diverse and include training materials for veterans and military job seekers, information for employers wanting to learn more about veteran hiring, and military skills translators, as well as a search function for jobs with Disney and its subsidiaries.

CHALLENGES

Disney described several challenges related to its veteran hiring initiatives including (1) identification of veterans, (2) tracking of retention data, and (3) balancing the goal of providing individualized service to veteran and military-affiliated job-seekers while also maximizing the reach and impact of its efforts.

RESOURCES AND COLLATERAL MATERIAL

Disney has a dedicated, veteran-specific portion of its website: [Heroes Work Here](#), which includes:

- A military skills translator
- The ability for veterans to enter their military occupational specialty (MOS), which aims to match them with a compatible occupation at Disney
- Video clips highlighting Disney employees with prior military experience
- Descriptions of Disney's engagement specific to the military community, including Blue Star Families, The Mission Continues, USA Cares, and Boys and Girls Clubs of America
- Opportunities for student veterans and recent graduates
- Descriptions of Heroes Work Here events, including trained experts from the initiative discussing best practices for helping veterans make a successful transition from the military to the civilian workforce

- Learning and development modules and materials focused on job-specific skills such as networking, interviewing, resume writing, and military transition

EXTERNAL PARTNERS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Mission Continues, Blue Star Families, Student Veterans of America (SVA), U.S. Chamber of Commerce, American Corporate Partners, USA Cares ■

The banner features a close-up of a soldier's face on the left, wearing a helmet and camouflage. The background is a dark blue field with a large, glowing white star. In the center, the text "Employ Excellence. Hire veterans." is written in a white, serif font. On the right, there is a statue of Walt Disney holding Mickey Mouse's hand. At the bottom, a row of logos is displayed: "The WALT Disney Company", "Disney", "ESPN", "PIXAR", "abc", "MARVEL", and "LUCASFILM Ltd".



OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

Dedication to military families and veterans is part of the corporate culture at Walmart and traces back to its founder, Sam Walton, who served as an Army captain from 1942 to 1945. His brother, Bud Walton, co-founder of Walmart, also served during the war as a Navy bomber pilot in the Pacific. John Walton, Sam's son, proudly served as a Green Beret medic in Vietnam and was awarded the Silver Star for bravery in combat. These experiences found their way into the family business from the beginning. The executives and veteran employees we interviewed noted striking similarities to the military in Walmart's work culture, processes, and procedures.



For example, employees mentioned an employee performance evaluation process similar to the military (e.g., regular evaluations using specific criteria and feedback from superiors), while others reported how the company is sensitive to their commitments as members of either Reserve or National Guard units. Other employees described receiving individualized career guidance that enabled them to find positions in the company where they were able to learn new skills while still relying on the skills and experience they had gained from their prior military experience.

While military experiences are highly valued and considered closely aligned to the performance objectives of the company, executives and employees both noted purposeful, proactive, and intentional thought to placing military-connected employees into roles that fit their individual interests and skills rather than placing them exclusively into positions that align only to their prior military experience. Employees in particular noted these individualized placement efforts as a company strength because they focused on a combination of their personal aspirations, personal fit with a particular position, and demonstrated applied skills.

Unlike other companies with whom we spoke, an articulated or defined company-specific business case for hiring veterans didn't seem necessary; instead, employees described a military-friendly culture that evolved naturally as part of the fabric of the organization. For example, there are employees with a variety of military backgrounds at all levels across the organization, including those who have transitioned from active duty military and those continuing to serve as part of the Reserve and National Guard.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

Although military values and hiring have been implicit within the Walmart brand since its inception, the company became significantly more engaged in military and veteran-related issues following the events of 9/11. While initial efforts within the company focused primarily on support efforts to

to meet the changing needs of veteran employment performance objectives of the company. These efforts include integrating Walmart's consumer brand, its reputational interests, and its employment brand as they pertain to veterans and military families. For example, knowing that military and veteran-related issues were important to its customer base

“Walmart's Veterans Welcome Home Commitment launched on Memorial Day 2013. Now, more than 170,000 new veteran associates have been hired and more than 22,000 have been promoted since joining the Walmart team.”

deploy service members and some military hiring initiatives, in recent years Walmart's military programs have broadened to include dedicated human and financial resources devoted to military hiring, the development of print and electronic messaging material focused on the military community, and substantive philanthropic efforts that are both national and community-based. In 2008, Walmart appointed designated leadership support for its own veteran hiring initiatives. The company hired a senior director of military programs, focused on acquiring and developing veteran and military-connected talent across the company. As Walmart's veteran initiatives matured and expanded, the senior director role evolved and has continued

as well as its military employees, executives recognized that through its military and veteran hiring initiatives, philanthropic efforts, and community involvement, it could simultaneously “do good” while benefiting its consumer brand.

Walmart has made concrete and visible commitments to hiring veterans. Walmart's Veterans Welcome Home Commitment launched on Memorial Day 2013. Now, more than 170,000 new veteran associates have been hired, and more than 22,000 have been promoted since joining the Walmart team. Walmart extended this initial hiring commitment on Memorial Day 2015 with a goal to hire 250,000 veterans by 2020.

However, efforts to assist veterans are not limited to a hiring initiative. The company has committed its resources to multiple philanthropic community-based efforts. Individual stores are now empowered to support local organizations through discretionary grant making or giving, aligned to military and veteran-related nonprofits. Recent efforts have also focused on diversifying the Walmart supply chain, which includes veteran-owned businesses among a variety of other diverse groups.

Because it sees itself as part of the communities in which its stores are located, Walmart chooses to support those organizations and efforts that further cement a sense of community and collective impact through a variety of philanthropic efforts. For example, the Walmart Foundation awarded \$6 million to support Goodwill's Operation: GoodJobs program. Because of the success of a \$1 million pilot program, in 2013 the Walmart Foundation expanded its support with an additional \$5 million grant enabling the training of more than 4,800 veterans and military family members. In November 2015, as part of a Veterans Day initiative, Walmart partnered with several military and veteran-serving groups (IVMF, Blue Star Families, Team Rubicon, Team Red, White & Blue) to launch Greenlight a Vet, a campaign to encourage visible support of veterans and military family members by displaying green lights outside their homes and in their workplaces as a show of gratitude for the military service of over 2.5 million military families.

KEY DIFFERENTIATORS

Walmart has made a sustained, long-term commitment to veteran and military family hiring, as well as fostering a veteran-friendly culture. Executives describe trying to cultivate a work culture of authentic commitment to veteran and military

hiring without regard to receiving external credit or recognition. It is because of these efforts that veteran employees describe feeling valued for their individual and job performance versus being singled out for their military service. Employees interviewed said they each received individual attention that led to placing them in the right position, career advancement track, and mentor partnership within the organization. The veteran employees interviewed portrayed a culture that treated them as individuals with job-specific skillsets as opposed to being singled out and matched with jobs that focused exclusively on their military background. There is also a strong focus on servant-leadership—consistent with military service—that includes a variety of opportunities for employees to participate in company-sponsored community service.

Walmart is one of the largest employers of military families in the country, and actively seeks out military spouse employees. Walmart's website has a dedicated section with data that pertains to the military lifestyle, military families, and the employment challenges they face. It also participates in the DoD's Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP), which enables it to share job opportunities with military spouses and participate in a collaborative community of companies, also committed to military spouse hiring. As part of its involvement, it has guaranteed positions for military spouses who are moved to a new location as a result of their uniformed spouse's service.

Additionally, within the company there is a virtual (online) military community, and Walmart has developed a "Veterans Champion

Program," a formal, institutionalized onboarding process whose goal is to assist veteran associates in their transition to Walmart and its work environment, while in the process setting them up for success and increasing their confidence in themselves as well as the company.

Moreover, on numerous occasions, Walmart has been nationally recognized for its military hiring efforts. This includes making the Military Times 2014, 2015, and 2016 "Best for Vets" distinction list, which recognizes an employer's

RESOURCES AND COLLATERAL MATERIAL

- » Website portal specifically for veterans, military family members, National Guard Members, and student veterans
- » "Find your Fit" tool to assist job seekers in finding appropriate jobs within the company

commitment to connecting with veterans and offering an environment for success (including company policies related to veterans, reservists, and their families), recruiting efforts, and the organization's culture. Additional awards in 2015 included the Lincoln Award and an award from the Diversity Journal for doubling initial hiring goals and working with veteran-owned businesses.

BEST PRACTICES

Walmart offers individualized career planning which is, by design, not explicitly focused on the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). Rather, Walmart focuses on each individual employee's career aspirations, and encourages them to

develop their own “personal brand” which connects military skills with skills obtained in the civilian workforce. Walmart works to show veterans that the skills they obtained in the military are applicable to the company’s business objectives but also unique and transferable to many departments. On the Walmart website, there are two ways to begin this process: The first allows veteran

making important decisions, and communication experience). After answering a set of questions, the tool provides examples of positions in the company that align with the answers provided. The website profiles a number of individual employees across a range of positions, explaining their roles within the company both through written descriptions and video clips.

leverage the range of resources and services Walmart already offered. They acknowledge that this model is not necessarily scalable to smaller companies with limited resources, but that interested businesses could emulate aspects of its veteran and military spouse initiatives, duplicated on a smaller scale. For example, smaller companies could educate hiring managers on military-related issues, develop strategic relationships with partner organizations, participate on military related coalitions, or volunteer time working with military-affiliated organizations. Other challenges are tracking recruitment and retention rates for veteran and military employees due to legal and procedural challenges around using military identifiers. Likewise, the company acknowledged a commitment to hiring military spouses, but noted that at times it has had more difficulty reaching this population, facilitating successful transfers to new locations, and providing flexibility for every situation given the complexity of the military lifestyle.

“The Walmart website has dedicated sections for both veterans and military spouses, including a “Find Your Fit” tool which guides users through a number of prior experiences and ultimately shows suitable positions within the company that match those experiences.”

job seekers to search for positions within the company, and the second connects them with a career counselor that will assist them with finding a position that matches their individual skills and experience, career aspirations, and personal brand.

The Walmart [website](#) has dedicated sections for both veterans and military spouses, including a “Find Your Fit” tool which guides users through a number of prior experiences and ultimately shows suitable positions within the company that match those experiences. Walmart’s “Find Your Fit” tool is unique in that, instead of focusing on military occupational specialty (MOS) code, it focuses on acquired skills based on military experiences, personal interests, and previous job experiences (e.g., managing people,

Portions of the website allow job seekers to explore employment options based on whether they are a transitioning veteran, a student veteran, a spouse, or a member of the National Guard or Reserves. Finally, on its website, Walmart clearly articulates its commitment to military-affiliated job seekers, describing recognition the company has received and its philanthropic efforts.

CHALLENGES

Walmart executives stressed that the company’s veteran hiring initiatives were, by design, embedded and integrated with broader talent acquisition and diversity efforts instead of stand-alone initiatives. These initiatives were intentionally integrated with existing programs and services to

RESOURCES AND COLLATERAL MATERIAL:

- Website portal specifically for veterans, military family members, National Guard members, and student veterans
- “Find Your Fit” tool to assist job seekers in finding appropriate jobs within the company

EXTERNAL PARTNERS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

AmericaServes, Blue Star Families, NC Serves, Student Veterans of America (SVA), Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP), Coalition for Veteran Owned Businesses (CVOB) ■

Summary of Key Findings and Common Practices

Salient themes across the companies included:

Enduring Organizational Commitment

Each company had leadership commitment and executive level “buy-in” before implementing a veteran hiring strategy. Commitment was further developed through strategic training of staff including hiring managers, human resources employees, and supervisors. Each company also has strategic philanthropic efforts in addition to employment-specific efforts.

Enterprise-Wide Strategies

Each company described efforts to scale their veteran and military employment programs based on resources, business case, and the ability to successfully implement a strategy. For example, Disney discussed its efforts to hire veterans, but also leveraged its resources to help veterans find employment in general. Walmart described efforts focused on hiring every interested veteran, whereas Starbucks identified strategic locations with military-heavy populations to focus its efforts. In addition, Starbucks also targets its employment efforts to military spouses based on demographics and data. All companies have developed training materials, collateral material, and web-based material focused on veteran employment.

An Enterprise-Wide Commitment to Corporate Responsibility

The companies interviewed for this paper described their efforts to hire military or veteran employees as a process that necessitates an initial leadership commitment, followed by developing employee support through internal training, and finally cooperating with community-based partners. They

admitted that, ultimately, a boost to their consumer brand would be a positive outcome, but was not necessarily the original intent. Veteran employees interviewed described the importance of this sincerity and genuine commitment—the kind that could be observed through organizational policies, commitment of resources by the company, and a perception that the company had taken time to understand the military community in order to achieve a successful transition from the military into a civilian work environment.

Strategic Implementation of Training Initiatives to Advance the Business Case and Minimize Stigma

Having a strong business case outlines the organizational value of hiring veterans. However, stigma regarding the veteran population can undermine that business case if it is not addressed. Because only 1 percent of the U.S. population currently serves in the military, hiring managers, HR recruiters, and others in the workplace responsible for hiring decisions, training, and performance measures will often have limited knowledge of the military. Each of the companies included in the case studies acknowledged the important role of training in their military hiring initiatives in order to increase knowledge to prevent stigma, and indicated they had taken steps to develop, integrate, and deploy training in their companies. Training varied from specific training for recruiters and HR professionals to more general training for all employees. Training topics include understanding military culture, translating military skills to the civilian workplace, behavior

that might be expected during interviews with military candidates, how to accommodate employees with disabilities, and issues related to spouse employment. All three of the companies indicated they had established relationships with community-based partners to foster communication and increase their understanding of military culture in general as well as specific issues in a particular community.

Leveraging Internal and External Peer Networks

All three companies described having established both informal and formal peer networks, within their organization, to allow veterans and military employees to engage with one another. Likewise, they also detailed developed strategic community-based partnerships with veterans and military service organizations. These organizations assist with increasing understanding of the ongoing needs within the community, sourcing talented applicants, and enabling cross-sector collaboration and philanthropic efforts.

Willingness to Course-Correct

Each company spoke of their military employment efforts as an evolving and constantly changing process that has been re-evaluated and developed over time. For example, Starbucks continues to develop training for its employees and recently expanded a scholarship program for its military and veteran employees. Walmart initially supported community-based events such as military-oriented parades, but has evolved into supporting more targeted and strategic outcome-generating efforts. Disney has focused on providing employment assistance

as opposed to hiring initiatives only. They have also developed online tools and information sharing conferences, as well as leveraged resources such as intellectual capital to assist other interested employers in developing veteran hiring initiatives.

Retention is One of Many Measures of Success

All three companies discussed the issue of retention and acknowledged that there is limited company-specific data in this area, partially due to legal and policy related issues specific to veterans' self-identification. Walmart described retention efforts that focus on a highly individualized process of working with employees to understand their career interests and placing them accordingly. It noted it was largely up to the employee and the supervisor to work together collaboratively over time to establish a customized career trajectory that aligns the employee's personal interests, skills, and abilities to appropriate positions within the company that puts those skills to good use. Walmart described using a two-pronged approach to retention, recognizing that some employees separate from the military with the intent of beginning a second career whereas others are simply looking for a job to provide income, a temporary position to attend school or explore career options, or to determine what their next step is after the military. In the latter case, Walmart defines its success as providing a stable opportunity to earn income and contribute to the company, develop a loyal customer, or enable that veteran to contribute to the community. For those who intend to begin a second career as a Walmart employee, a more individualized career track is defined and more targeted retention measures are used.

Similar to Walmart, Starbucks also noted that only a portion of

its employees are interested in a long-term career in the company, but instead may be trying to temporarily earn extra income, gain work experience, attend school, or establish community connections through employment. Consequently, employee turnover is expected: For example, Starbucks noted that veteran and military spouse employees, because of

interested businesses in developing its own veteran hiring initiatives.

What was clear from these interviews is that business or firm-specific measures of return on investment (ROI) are needed as retention metrics, but are only useful when they are tailored to a company's business case. In other words, retention is one ROI

“Having a rotating cadre of high performing veteran and military spouse employees at any given time may be more appropriate to their overall mission, and the goals of their employees, than retaining those employees over time.”

their focus on customer service and community, bring value to the company by reinforcing the company values to fellow employees and customers. Thus, having a rotating cadre of high-performing veteran and military spouse employees at any given time may be more appropriate to their overall mission, and the goals of their employees, than retaining those employees over time.

Finally, because Disney's approach to hiring veterans goes beyond just hiring people to fill positions, it does not focus on retention as an exclusive measure of success. Rather, it values modest and realistic hiring goals that enable provision of individualized career planning and externally focused efforts that leverage the company's intellectual assets to assist

measure that is often discussed regarding hiring initiatives, but it may not be the most useful or appropriate measure depending on business needs and goals across companies. For example, one way companies can measure success is to identify military “strategic hires” at the recruiting stage and subsequently leverage their military-learned skills to confer competitive advantage. Additionally, metrics that might be helpful include the number of military job seekers who are recruited as well as the number of military job seekers who are interviewed and ultimately hired.

CONCLUSION

Individual industries such as retail have the clearest understanding of available employment

opportunities, the types of employees that are successful, and the credentials and skillsets necessary for employment and advancement within its sector. With the support of trade organizations such as the National Retail Federation, companies can proactively facilitate smooth transitions for veterans by: highlighting timely opportunities, growth areas, and geographic hiring needs; facilitating networking opportunities; and identifying pathways to employment.

Proactive, industry-focused efforts are impactful for veterans in particular because only a small portion (1 percent or less) of the U.S. population has served in the military.¹³ Job-seeking veterans may be at a disadvantage if employers misunderstand their level of expertise, misjudge their capabilities, or underestimate the extent to which their military-related experiences are transferable to civilian roles. Industry-specific information is especially important because veterans themselves may have trouble translating their military experience into relatable civilian terms. Likewise, stigma about military service may contribute to poor hiring decisions, so ensuring that those making hiring decisions in your organization are educated about the military is equally important. Veterans may also enter the civilian workforce with legitimate gaps in skills, experience, credentials, or education that must be developed before they are employable. When combined with an industry-wide commitment, retail employers who have an interest in hiring veterans, a clear understanding of military culture, and the unique value veterans bring to the workplace can more effectively leverage their strengths, use targeted strategies to minimize deficits, and

10 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE RETAIL INDUSTRY

Based on our case studies, we propose the following 10 recommendations:

- 1 **Utilize** the general business case to develop a company-specific mission statement that outlines the retail-specific business case for hiring veterans by identifying key roles where veterans may have unique skillsets that are compatible with positions open within your company.
- 2 **Develop** an accurate description of your company with a focus on the retail-related skills veterans are likely to have. Include economic and geographic opportunities, career trajectories, and projected pay scales to attract veteran employees who match the the skills you are looking for.
- 3 **Utilize** retail-specific trade networks, publications, and events to publicize successful veteran hiring initiatives and solutions to overcoming barriers, share best practices, and identify company-specific opportunities that leverage veteran and military experience.
- 4 **Identify** company-specific areas of opportunity in collaboration with stakeholders (e.g., military installations, veteran and military service organizations, industry partners, state workforce development programs) in the veteran community. Focus on aligning open positions with skillsets common to transitioning veterans in particular geographic locations using common language to describe military skillsets in civilian terms.
- 5 **Establish** enduring partnerships with veteran service organizations, military installations, and workforce development agencies to facilitate initial sourcing of veteran employees and veteran hiring. Identify emerging and relevant issues specific to certain geographic locations or types of businesses within the retail industry.
- 6 **Outline** key opportunities in your company, growth areas, and paths to employment, particularly those that map to military career paths.
- 7 **Work** with your human resource team to encourage military cultural competence and enable pathways to employment for qualified veteran candidates. Encourage the team to create job descriptions that allow job-seeking veterans to understand the level for which they are currently qualified and how they can advance if desired.
- 8 **Identify** and publicize pathways to achieving employment at various levels within your organization (e.g., educational opportunities, mentorships, on-the-job training, scholarships, certifications).
- 9 **Establish** additional metrics that may be better suited to the realities of the current industry climate. Military veterans are often goal-oriented and respond well to clear established metrics for success which may include retention figures.
- 10 **Encourage** the use of existing training materials in the development, planning, and implementation of veteran and military hiring initiatives to minimize stigma and avoid poor hiring decisions.

successfully attract and retain a pipeline of veteran talent.

We hope that this paper encourages retail executives and leaders to consider how they can collectively encourage employment of veterans and avoid stigma within their own organizations and within the industry at large, and clearly conveys areas of opportunity and growth in addition to identifying opportunities that align with the knowledge, skills, and abilities that veterans bring to the workplace. Current market conditions coupled with a strategic focus from industry leaders that employ leading strategies and best practices (discussed in the individual case studies) can provide the impetus for the retail industry to take a proactive leadership role, leverage strong veteran skillsets, and effectively align employment opportunities for mutual benefit of retail businesses and veterans alike. ■



Reinforce the Business Case for Hiring Veterans: Develop a Strong Training Program to Combat Stigma

For some service members and veterans, especially those dealing with the impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and other invisible injuries, employment can be one critical component of recovery. In the workplace, employees, including veterans, want to be valued for their unique abilities, strengths, and talents. When planning and implementing a military hiring initiative, it is important to train staff to know the facts about veterans and military job seekers including information about invisible injuries such as PTSD and TBI, as well as information about the type of training and education that is typical of military job seekers. Stigma can only be eliminated when people are aware of their own beliefs and commit to changing erroneous attitudes and stereotypes.

What is Stigma?

Lack of knowledge, awareness, exposure, education, or training may lead to stigma or erroneous negative beliefs about a group of people. With regard to veteran hiring, stigma can contribute to poor, uninformed, or, worse yet, discriminatory hiring decisions.

RESOURCES

Several toolkits and resources have been developed to educate and inform employers about veteran and military hiring. Some of the salient recommendations from these resources include:

- Assess current processes and explore options including veteran-specific actions into your onboarding strategies
- Develop an understanding of military culture and experience
- Cultivate an understanding of military occupations, training, and certifications to better understand how they compare to civilian occupations
- Establish your company and its job application process as veteran-friendly
- Learn the facts about hiring veterans with invisible wounds such as PTSD and TBI

The **U.S. Department of Labor** has developed a toolkit, [America's Heroes at Work](#), to provide a reference for employers. The toolkit includes the following:

- Answers to common employer questions about veteran and disability employment
- Workplace accommodations
- Costs, liabilities, and return on investment
- Stigma and employees with psychological health injuries and mental health concerns
- Staff training and disability-friendly workplaces

The [Job Accommodation Network](#) (JAN) provides free consulting services for all employers, regardless of the size of an employer's workforce. Services include one-on-one consultation about all aspects of job accommodations, including the accommodation process, accommodation ideas, product vendors, referral to other resources, and ADA compliance assistance. Private businesses can access JAN services in a variety of ways.

[Veteran Job Mission Employee Resources](#) provides collective best practices from the Veteran Job Mission (formerly 100,000 Jobs Mission).

[Society for Human Resource Management Support from Behind the Lines: 10 Steps to Becoming a Military Ready Employer](#) offers a 10-step plan to implement a veteran hiring strategy.

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