A JOB SEARCH PROGRAM FOR POST 9/11 VETERAN

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By

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ABSTRACT

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The United States military structures its employment practices with the intent of ensuring that the majority of its members are young and physically capable of performing strenuous and often dangerous work. As a result, it has a very high employee turnover rate with the majority of its members leaving active duty within ten years or less from when they first joined the military. This program, in the form of a job search workshop, has been developed to address the needs of veterans who have left the military since the events of 9/11 and who wish to find part or full-time employment in the civilian labor force. It describes the particular characteristics, goals and challenges of military veterans in career transition and the developmental issues that may hinder this transition. The program draws upon appropriate career counseling, self-efficacy, and positive psychology theory in the formulation of the client population’s potential career related challenges and the development of effective interventions for helping them to realize their career goals. This project describes the job search workshop sessions and provides examples of session handouts and lists of online job search and career development resources.
CHAPTER 1

The Problem

This program is intended to assist U.S. military veterans who have left active service since 2001 and wish to find full or part-time employment. The program consists of an eight-session job search workshop that includes the assessment of the participant’s values, talents, and transferable skills and the practice of specific job search strategies such as finding job leads, resume development, and job and information interview practice.

The program will aim to improve both the participants’ jobs search ability and raise their job search self-efficacy. It will invest particular attention in “inoculating” job-seeking veterans against the inevitable setbacks they will encounter during the job search process. This inoculation is essential not only because of the current economic downturn, but because of the frequent and ongoing difficulty veterans have in communicating the value of the training and experience they acquired during military service to civilian employers (Vuori, 2005; ACE, 2010).

Statement of the problem

Military veterans in career transition, in particular the majority of those who did not attended college before leaving the service, often experience significant challenges and barriers to immediate civilian employment.

These challenges and barriers are a direct result of the substantial difference that exists between the socialization, culture, and requirements of the military world of work and those typically present in the civilian labor market (Clemens and Milsom, 2008). The forces shaping military career development, can be grouped into three general categories:
1) socialization and related work values; 2) transferability of skills and experience to civilian employment; 3) the potential impact that military service has had on a veteran’s current psychological and physical well-being. Some specific examples of the forces shaping typical military career development are the premium placed on strict obedience, respect for procedure and the chain of command, the development of highly specialized military skills seldom used in civilian employment (e.g. the operation and use of weapons), and the management of mental, emotional, or physical injuries resulting from exposure to combat conditions.

The federal government has created a rich array of resources, described later in this paper, to aid this population in its transition. However, even with these resources, veterans still face challenges in effectively marketing their skills, developing job search strategies, and persevering during a period of persistently high unemployment and low job growth resulting from the financial crisis that began in 2007 (U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, 2012). These challenges come into stark relief when the unemployment statistics of post 9/11 are compared with equivalent non-veteran populations. For example, as of this writing the unemployment rate for male post 9/11 veterans age 25 to 34 was 13.4 percent as compared to their nonveteran counterparts which was 9.5 percent (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012).

**Importance of the Problem**

Most people who join the military do not make it a career. For them, military service is most often a transition between high school and higher education or the civilian workforce, with the typical length of service being four years (Kelty, Kleykamp, & Segal, 2010).
While the proximate reasons for leaving active military service can include such issues as physical injury, family issues, or general job satisfaction (Kelty, Kleykamp, and Segal, 2010; Sanchez, Bray, Vincus, and Bann, 2004), it is part of the formal structure of the U.S. Armed Forces to promote a workforce dominated by young and physically fit service members. The chief mechanism for insuring this particular staffing demographic are physical fitness requirements and an “up-or-out” system that requires that an individual to earn promotion within a certain period of time or leave the service (Kelty, Kleykamp, & Segal, 2010).

As a result of the policies described above, Kelty, Kleykamp, and Segal (2010) state that “…virtually all military personnel will leave the service too young and with too small a pension to retire fully. They are thus likely, also, to transition to civilian work roles.”

Individuals join the U.S. military for a variety of reasons. Some of the popular ones cited in the media include economic incentives, patriotism, family tradition, acquiring new skills, and a desire for personal independence (Hasinger, n.d.). Researchers who focus on the concrete benefit of military service conclude that job security, generous benefits including health and childcare, free or subsidized housing, and the potential for a generous pension after twenty years of services are key motivators for enlistments (Kelty, Kleykamp, & Segal, 2010). Even for the majority who do not retire from the U.S. military, the Post-9/11 GI Bill provides veterans with substantial educational benefits such as 100% tuition and fee coverage and a monthly housing allowance (U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, n.d.). Veterans earn these benefits in return for often
working long hours, under dangerous conditions, with frequent deployments far from home (Segal & Segal, 2004; Danish & Antonides, 2009).

**General Characteristics of the Transitioning U.S. military veteran**

For the purpose of this paper, I define a veteran as someone who has served as a member of the United States armed services since September 11, 2001 and has received a discharge that makes them eligible for the educational benefits of the Post 9/11 GI Bill. This may also apply to members of the military reserve forces (e.g. Air Force Reserve) and the National Guard (U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, n.d.).

As a whole, the composition of the U.S military, and the subsequent veteran population, mirror the ethnic and socioeconomic demographic make-up of American society (Bicksler, Gilroy, & Warner, 2004). Non-Hispanic whites are less represented in the U.S. armed services than they are in the civilian workforce, but the differences are less significant when comparing the two groups based on the prime age for military enlistment (18-24). When looking at the prime age range for recruitment, 18 -24, non-white Hispanic males are somewhat underrepresented and African Americans are somewhat overrepresented (Bicksler, Gilroy, & Warner, 2004). Interestingly, statistics from the United States Department of Defense (DOD, 2007) show that women join the military at rates 10% higher than in the general population.

The vast majority of veterans, however, are men. Current figures from the United States Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010) show that 82% of Gulf War-era II veterans are male. This compares with a non-veteran male population of 44%. Another distinction is that most veterans are younger than the general population. To quote the same study, “Among recent veterans, 63 percent of men and 72 percent of
women were under the age of 35, compared with 37 percent of non-veteran men and 29 percent of non-veteran women” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). However, even though males make up the vast majority of veterans, it is important to note that the percentage of women veterans continues to increase, from 7.7 percent of the total U.S. veteran population in 2010 to an expected 14 percent by 2030 (Foster and Vince, 2010).

Regarding socioeconomic status, veterans are more likely to come from middle class rather than economically disadvantaged backgrounds. For instance, research by the United States Department of Defense (DOD, 2007) concludes that, “that those individuals coming from middle income communities (i.e., communities with a median income of between 42,040 - $51,127) enlist at the highest rate and that individuals coming from the poorest communities enlist at the lowest rate.”

Lastly, this population is much more likely to be married. Hogan and Seifert (2010), for example, estimate that the odds of being married were approximately three times greater for service members than for those who never served in the military.

**Consequences of the Problem**

As alluded to earlier, the demands of military life can cause significant stress for active service members and affect them even after they have left the Armed Forces.

Campbell and Noble (2009) provide an excellent framework for identifying and understanding military occupational stressors. They group these stressors into two broad categories. The first is the setting. Specifically, the deployment status (i.e. in garrison versus deployed) and the type of mission the service member has participated in (i.e. combat versus noncombat). The second broad category is a group of seven specific types of stressors. For example, the “work” category refers to such job content stressors as low
control and autonomy, limited task variety, and long work hours. “Psychological environment” is another category of specific stressors. This stressor encompasses such issues as combat exposure (e.g. killing) and being in situations where one’s survival is uncertain.

These stressors, individually and in combination, are occupational risk factors for several of the psychological and physical conditions. For example, veterans are, as a whole, at an increased risk for suicide. Male veterans were found to die of suicide at twice the rate of non-veteran males in the general population (Kaplan, Huguet, McFarland, & Newsom, 2007). Even more troubling is the finding that female veterans between the ages of 18 – 34 are nearly three times as likely to commit suicide as their civilian women counterparts who have never served in the military (McFarland, Kaplan, and Huguet, 2010).

Veterans and military service members are also at greater risk for the abuse of alcohol and alcoholism. One study found that for service members in the military reserve, National Guard personnel and younger service members exposed to combat “were significantly more likely to experience new-onset heavy weekly drinking and alcohol-related problems” such as binge drinking (consuming 5 or more drinks per day for men, 4 or more for women) and other alcohol related problems such as being hung over while working (Jacobson, Ryan, Hooper, Smith, Amoroso, Boyko, and Bell, 2008).

In addition, veterans deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan are much more likely to suffer from the “invisible wounds of war” such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), and major depression (Tanielian and Jaycox, 2008).
While the aforementioned dramatic stressors are typically identified with military life, an important general finding from one study is that even among service members stationed in the United States during peacetime, “military personnel were significantly more likely to report suffering from work stress than the general U.S. population (Planz and Sonnek, 2002)."

The issues detailed above are not meant to infer that all or even most veterans have suffered serious repercussion from their military service. Rather, the intention is to highlight some of the most notable challenges that veterans are more likely to struggle with than the general population.

**Limitation of this project**

The purpose of the program is to provide a detailed template for organizations and institutions that regularly help post 9/11 veterans as part of their normal services. Examples of such institutions include community colleges, local workforce development agencies, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Many of these service providers can be found by contacting the Department of Labor’s Local Veterans Employment Program (LVER) representative for a specific state.

The program may be used to enhance an existing job search workshop or to create one. It is not meant to be used with members of the veteran population who are challenged by significant physical, emotional, or cognitive issues that may have resulted from their military service. Further, while the program may be useful to veterans who served during earlier periods, it is primarily meant to assist veterans who have left the armed forces since 2001.
Definition of technical terms

**Career.** “Career is the combination of activities that is taking place in all of the life roles that one is playing at a specific time in his or her life” (Super, 1990).

**Career Development.** “Career Development is the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future” (Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners, 2004).

**Career Professional.** “This term includes career counselors, career coaches, career consultants, career development facilitators, and anyone else who is a member of NCDA and provides career counseling, career advice/advising, career coaching, career planning, job search assistance, and/or related services” (National Career Development Association, 2007).

**Career Transition.** The process of moving from one job or occupation to another.

**Job Search.** A process that includes a series of activities (self-assessment, goal setting, interviewing, etc.) aimed at locating and securing a position of employment.

**Military Deployment.** This term refers to the movement of armed forces and their logistical support infrastructure around the world and involves military men and women leaving their homes and families often for many months at a time.

**Occupation.** A group of similar jobs found in different industries or organizations (Sharf, 2002, p. 3).

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.** An anxiety disorder resulting from a traumatic event where “one is exposed to serious threat of injury, death, and then experiences
extreme fear, helplessness, or horror” which can lead to such symptoms as flashbacks or dreams of the traumatic event, hypervigilance for danger, and difficulty in sleeping, concentrating or controlling anger (Shiromani, Keane, & LeBoux, 2009).

**Strengths.** “A strength is the ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a given activity” (Hodges, 2005).

**Transition.** A transition is an event or non-event that results in change and is characterized by a change in roles, relationships and/or routines (Goodman, Schlossberg, and Anderson, 2006).

**Transition Assistance Program.** A program that coordinates the efforts of the Departments of Defense, Transportation, Labor, and Veterans Affairs in helping separating and retiring military personnel return to civilian life and employment (Bascetta, 2005).

**Traumatic Brain Injury.** Damage to the brain caused by an external force, such as the detonation of an explosive device (e.g. artillery shell), that disrupts or alters normal brain activity and “results in eventual cell death, although there may not be any visible signs of injury” (Church, 2009).

**Veteran.** For the purpose of this project, a veteran is an individual who has been discharged since September 11, 2001 from the United State Armed Services, Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve, Army National Guard or the Air National Guard, and is eligible for Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits (U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, n.d).
Summary and Transition to Chapter 2

The U.S. military dedicates vast resources to recruit, train, and support its military personnel. In addition, it uses a rich array of symbols, incentives and disciplinary tools to have its members internalize a self-concept and worldview consistent with the organization’s goals and requirements. By comparison, the main governmental program dedicated to preparing service members to transition to civilian work, known as the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), though federally mandated, is often brief, uneven in quality and inconsistently delivered (Bascetta, 2005). These and other factors lead the author to conclude that the primary goals of the U.S. military is aimed at recruiting a young, able bodied workforce and the retention of a relatively small number of extremely well-trained and committed members. For those leaving the service, comparatively little commitment is devoted by the military to ensure their successful reentry to civilian work and social roles. The next section will discuss the client population, and their career developmental needs, in detail.
CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

Introduction

Transitioning from the military to the civilian world presents this client population with many challenges. This chapter will provide a summary of relevant adult and career developmental theories that can be effectively used in understanding and helping this population during this career and life transition. It will also review the research literature on the type of challenges and obstacles facing this client population, detailing the personal and career characteristics of military veterans, and how those characteristics affect their career developmental process. Following the literature review will be a brief examination of the main government sponsored programs currently in use to assist veterans with their career transition issues. Finally, the chapter discusses specific career interventions to meet the needs of this client population.

Career Development Theory

As will be discussed later in this chapter, there are many often interrelated factors impacting the successful career transition of this client population. The selection of a comprehensive and relevant career developmental theory can provide critical insight to understanding how these factors may interfere with normal career development of veterans and how to design an effective intervention to accelerate their career transition. Donald E. Super’s Life-span, Life-space theory of career selection and career evolution provides such a comprehensive and holistic theoretical framework.

Super’s Life-span theory views occupational choice as a lifelong process, and not an event. It is an ongoing and unfolding set of responses, proactively or reactively
chosen, in the face of changing circumstances, leading to the conclusion that, “careers really evolve over the years--they emerge from a person's experience” (Freeman, 1993). Super’s theory states that physiological, genetic, and geographical factors (country of origin) all contribute in substantial ways to an individual’s career development (Sharf, 2002). His theory is flexible yet structured. It captures both the linear progression of human development as well as the cyclical nature of human learning that comes from the evermore frequent career transitions that adults encounter in the modern world of work (Sharf, 2003; Savickas, 1997).

Specifically, his model emphasizes the use of the following elements in understanding career development.

- Self-Concept
- Developmental Stages and Tasks
- Career Adaptability
- Roles

Because of the nature of the proposed intervention, discussed in chapter three, particular emphasis will be given to how elements of Career Maturity relate to job search self-efficacy.

**Self-concept.** Central to Super’s theory is the self-concept. Self-concept refers to an individual’s subjective perception of “self” in relation to life circumstances. It is a relatively stable self-assessment of a potentially broad range of personal characteristics. These characteristics include, but are not limited to, one’s biological characteristics, occupational and recreational interests, values, aptitudes related to school and work, social roles, and how one is evaluated by others (Sharf, 2002). As an evolving product of
ongoing cognitive processes that are at work throughout the life span, “the self concept includes a set of self schemas, guided by our past experiences, that govern the development of our motives, aspirations, fears, inhibitions, and goals--our 'possible self”(Anderson, 1995). This project specifically aims to quickly enhance the target population’s experience of a “possible self” that is a capable job seeker offering marketable services in the civilian labor market.

**Developmental stages and tasks**

Super describes normal career development as taking place across one’s entire life span. This development can be divided into five stages: Growth; Exploratory; Establishment; Maintenance; and Disengagement (Sharf, 2003). Each of these stages is further broken down into substages. Progression from one stage to the next is achieved by successfully accomplishing specific developmental tasks. While the theory provides a linear framework for career development over the life span, with approximate ages for each, it also explicitly recognizes that transition from one stage to the next can be more a function of an individual’s personality and life circumstances. Super used the term “recycling” to describe the pattern of a person repeating the career stages listed above in a series of mini-cycles throughout his or her life. These stages are described below.

**Growth (birth to 15).** During the growth stage, which starts at birth and lasts until around the age of 15, the individual is concerned with developing their capacities, attitudes, and interests that will “prepare them to become planful explorers and knowledgeable deciders” (Savickas, 2001). The child at this stage begins to explore their immediate physical environment at home and school, and the social environment created
by family members and peers. These early experiences lead to a deepening awareness of the separate self and the need to plan for and create a future.

**Exploratory (ages 15-25).** In this stage, the young adults begins to investigate and narrow down career choices. They begin to compare specific information about themselves (e.g. how good they are with science subjects compared to others) and the world of work (e.g. the type of work one could do with a degree in chemistry or physics). This stage has three substages that further clarify the period of development. The three substages are crystallizing, specifying, and implementing (Sharf, 2003).

The crystallizing substage is a narrowing down process that introduces real world constraints, such as the income potential of a particular occupation or job, into the individual’s career decision making. It finds the individual attempting to match their own needs and abilities with the requirements of a specific type of work. Awareness of one’s values, interests, and skills help with this narrowing down process, as can the reflecting on previous work experiences (Sharf, 2003).

Typically, the specifying substage occurs during the early twenties, but for transitioning veterans, it may occur in the mid-twenties or even much later. During this substage the individual is choosing specific employers, jobs, occupations, schools, etc., in which to realize a vocational choice. This final selection process may include such active learning experience as part-time or volunteer work related to the chosen occupation or field of work (Sharf, 2003).

*Implementation*, the last substage of exploration, has the individual executing plans to qualify for entry into a job, which could include self-employment. These plans
can involve tasks such as job networking, creating and submitting resumes, conducting online job searches using the internet, and going on job interviews (Sharf, 2003).

The cycling and progressive nature of these three substages is relevant for veterans who most often set out to reformulate a very different self-concept from the one that has guided them during their term of military service.

**Establishment (ages 25-45).** During *establishment*, the individual shifts from how to enter into a particular occupation to how to advance in it. This stage’s progression is made up of three substages: *stabilizing*, *consolidating*, and *advancing*. Depending on the complexity of the occupation or field work, these stages may unfold over many years. As can be implied by the titles of the substages, the individual first seeks to *stabilize* by meeting at least minimum levels of job performance, then on to *consolidating* a reputation for a “dependable producer”, which sets the stage for *advancing* in an occupation or field to levels of higher pay and responsibility (Sharf, 2003).

**Maintenance (45-65).** The *maintenance* stage concerns sustaining one’s self-concept and present job status. Though the goal is to hold on to what one has, it is characterized by continual adjustments. The three main developmental tasks for this stage are *holding* on to one’s current position, *updating* skills to stay current in one’s field, and often *innovating* by acquiring new skills or moving into new areas of work to remain viable as employees at their current level (Sharf, 2003).

**Disengagement (65+).** The natural process of aging, with its physical and mental changes, often requires that the individual make adjustments to the type and intensity of work they participate in. These adjustments tend to lead to a natural “disengagement”
process. The developmental task at this time are *decelerating* (the reducing of one’s work responsibilities), *retirement planning*, and *retirement living*.

**Career adaptability.** Super and Knasel (1981) defined *career adaptability* as a “readiness to cope with changing work and working conditions (p.195). Unlike *career maturity*, an earlier construct which is associated with the adolescent’s transition from school to work and which occurs during a particular age or developmental stage, *career adaptability* addresses the often recurring challenges that arise in an often unpredictable fashion throughout the adult’s life span (Ebberwein, 2004). This later construct views the individual as acting proactively to changes in the environment and changes in his or her self-concept (Cairo, Kristis, and Myers, 1996), and includes such qualities as planfulness, exploration, information gathering, decision making, and reality orientation (Herr, 1992). In essence, career maturity refers to the “how” of making choices wisely.

**Roles.** Finally, Super’s theory explicitly acknowledges the social framework of the human lifespan by incorporating the needs we fulfill and demands placed upon us by our social *roles*. He gives prominence to six roles in particular: homemaker, worker, citizen, leisurite, student, and child (Sharf, 2003). At different times during an individual life span, one or a combination of these roles will take center stage in importance for the individual. Given that returning veteran’s are far more likely to be married, those working with this client population and the clients themselves can benefit from a conscious reflection on how to harmonize and reconcile the demands of different roles, such as worker and parent, during the job search process.

In summary, Super’s Life-span, Life-space theory, when made accessible through the use of terms and analogies familiar to the client population, can help veterans to take
a broad and holistic view of their own transition, and to see themselves as active agents in creating a new and promising future.

**Literature Review for the Population (This is an overview of the population)**

**The benefits of military service.** Why do people join the military and how might their service in the Armed Forces effect their transition to civilian life?

A review of the literature provides insight into the motivations behind those who join the all-volunteer military of the United States. For example, Woodruf, Kelty, and Segal’s (2006) research on active combat soldiers concluded that the motivations for serving in the military could be grouped into four broad categories: institutional (desire to serve, be patriotic, be adventurous, be challenged, and be a soldier); future-oriented (desire for a military career and money for college); occupational (need to support family and best choice available); and pecuniary benefits (desire to repay college loans and receive bonus money). Of these four categories, institutionally-based motivation was most strongly correlated to a high propensity to enlist in the military.

Griffith (2008), in researching the motives for serving in the U.S. Army National Guard also identified four factors whose content was very similar to those described by Woodruff et al (2006). The first factor he labeled, “wanting to experience military life,” had content resembling Woodruff et al.’s institutional factor. The second factor he labeled “wanting material benefits” was similar in content to Woodruff et al.’s pecuniary factor. The third factor, “wanting occupational development,” had content similar to Woodruff et al.’s occupational factor. Lastly, the content of Griffith’s fourth factor, “wanting future opportunities,” was similar in content to Woodruff et al.’s future-oriented factor.
Griffith’s (2008) results regarding enlistment motivation match those found by Woodruff et al. (2006), with the greatest percentage of soldiers surveyed (63.2 percent) stating that they had joined to experience military life. While the desire to experience military life was ranked highest, the desire for occupational development (58.4 percent) and material benefits (56.3 percent) also ranked high. Future benefits (e.g. career advancement, retirement) constituted the lowest source of motivation. Griffith (2006) concludes his research by stating the following:

In summary, study results suggest that intrinsic factors play a role in the recruitment, retention, and readiness of reserve soldiers. Intrinsic motivations to serve in the military can be seen as having both intangible and tangible aspects. Tangible aspects are associated with assisting and protecting others. Intangible aspects are associated with loyalty to goals and felt obligations to others, such as serving the country, experiencing military training and life, being physically and mentally challenged, and becoming disciplined and confident. These aspects more closely resembled Moskos’[1977] institutional orientation than an occupational orientation, including joining to obtain educational benefits, earn money, and receive money. (p. 255)

While the intrinsic motivation is a powerful predictor of who joins the military, the occupational development and material benefits contribute to the appeal of military service. These benefits can be quite substantial. Specific examples of these benefits include advanced technical and specialty training, tax-free housing and food allowances, health and dental care for service members and their family, and world travel (http://www.militaryhandbooks.com/).
Characteristics of Military Service That May Interfere with Civilian Career Development

**Educational deficits.** Less than 4% of enlisted service members hold a 4-year college degree. This contrasts with the officers who typically enter service with undergraduate or advance degrees. These percentages are significant because as of 2004, 84% of U.S. military active duty personnel were enlisted, with only 16% being classified as officers (Clemens and Milsom, 2008). This means that the majority of recent veterans seeking immediate employment will not have attended post-secondary education while, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009), 68.8 percent of their non-veteran peers who graduated from high school will have already enrolled in college or university.

**Frequent relocation’s effect on social and professional networks.** A distinct feature of military life is the likely relocation of the service members and their spouse while working in the U.S. military. Drummet, Coleman, and Cable (2003) point out that members of the military and their families, move almost twice as often within the United States and four times as frequently internationally as other Americans.

**Potential sources of psychological and physical trauma resulting from exposure to combat.** The duration, intensity of the war, and the geographic scope of operations have all contributed to a large number of American service persons being exposed to both events that leave profound psychological and physical wounds that are not immediately apparent. Hoge, Auchterlonie, and Milliken (2006) report that in one survey of Army personnel in Iraq, 95% of them had observed dead bodies or human remains and 48% were responsible for the death of an enemy combatant. That same survey had 89% of respondents saying that they were attacked or ambushed while serving
in Iraq. These traumatic events often result in such psychological conditions as depression and PTSD (Karney, Ramchand, Osilla, Caldarone, & Burns, 2008).

In addition to emotional trauma, combat exposes service personnel to injuries caused by improvised explosive devises (IEDs) which may result in a condition known as traumatic brain injury (TBI). TBI can cause a host of physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effects. Outcomes can range from complete recovery to permanent disability and death (Department of Defense, Traumatic Brain Injury Website, http://www.pdhealth.mil/TBI.asp). One study reported that approximately 22% of the wounded service members in Afghanistan and Iraq have experience TBI (Okayed, 2005).

In summary, the result of exposure to combat can result in significant physical, emotional, and mental impairments that are not visible to the eye but may impede a veteran’s timely and successful transition to life and work in the civilian world.

**Specific Career Issues that May Arise with Transitioning Military Veterans**

While the post 9/11 U.S. veteran population is broadly representative of American society as a whole, several factors differentiate veterans from the general population in ways that may interfere with the typical progression of civilian career development and the transition to non-military employment. One of these factors is the level of educational attainment achieved before leaving the military.

As discussed earlier, the military can be broadly divided into two groups; officers and enlisted service members. Unlike officers, enlisted service members, who make up more than three quarters of the military, typically entered the U.S. armed forces soon after high school and leave the service without having earned an undergraduate degree (Clemens and Milsom, 2008). This means that the majority of recent veterans seeking
immediate employment will not have attended post-secondary education while nearly 70% of their non-veteran peers who graduated from high school, and with whom they may be competing with in the job market, will have already enrolled in a college or university (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009).

Another impediment to civilian employment is a veteran’s potential or ongoing relationship with military service. For example, many participants in a Rand Corporation study felt that employers discriminated against them because they feared that as veterans, serving in the reserves or National Guard, they might be reactivated and be forced to leave their jobs for long periods and with little notice (Farmer et al., 2011).

As members of the military in recent years, today’s veterans have often experienced frequent and lengthy overseas deployments. Given that one’s social and professional networks are positively related to time spent in one location and often aid in finding employment (Gunn, 2005), the frequent moves of military personnel may mean they have less development networks to help them find work when compared with their peers who did not serve in the military (Drummet, Coleman, & Cable, 2003). Furthermore, traumatic events resulting from military service, and their psychological and physical consequence such as PSTD and TBI, can hinder veterans in building new relationships once they do leave the military (Bowling, & Sherman, 2008).

Perhaps the most direct barrier to veterans seeking post military employment is translating their military experience into something civilian employers recognize and value, a difficulty that is compounded by the limited non-military work experience of many veterans who were recruited out of high school (Farmer, Jaycox, Marshall, Schell, Tanielian, Vaughan, and Wrenn, 2011; Bouman and Coleman, 2009). For example,
Kleykamp (2009) found that in tests pairing veterans with non-veterans applying for the same position by faxing resumes, veterans whose military work experience consisted of combat arms specialties (e.g. demolitions, armorer, etc.) were significantly less likely to be scheduled job interviews by employers than non-veterans who had administrative experience. These results held even though both groups were equivalent on other key employment-related characteristics (e.g. all applicants had bachelor’s degrees from a local noncompetitive college). A quote from one veteran in the study by Farmer et al. (2011) best summarizes the challenges faced by veterans in marketing the skills they acquired in the military to civilian employers:

One of the big misconceptions…coming out of active duty [is that] you walk on water. Companies are going to be coming to find you. They’re going to be recruiting you. [You] never really had that reality check, that…you’ve been out of the mix for years. And what you’re doing is not relevant to what’s going on in the civilian world. And they are more impressed with your Microsoft certification than they are with your leadership time. (p. 10)

Because of the factors discussed above, in particular those related to veterans who served in the enlisted ranks, veterans may need additional support in articulating and acting upon a civilian self-concept to achieve satisfying work life outside of the military.

**Groups and Institutional Support for Transitioning U.S. Military veterans**

As part of the formal process of leaving the military, the Department of Defense is legally required to provide pre-separation counseling to all military personnel no later than 90 days prior to their separation from the military. Some of the legally mandated counseling includes information about the following: education and vocational
rehabilitation benefits, selective reserve options, job counseling, job search and placement information, relocation assistance services, counseling on the effects of career change, and financial planning (Bascetta, 2002).

In addition, the Veterans Education and Benefits Expansion Act of 2001 require that all branches of the military provide pre-separation assistance workshops, referred to as the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), to aid military personnel separating from the Armed Forces and transitioning into civilian life. These workshops are usually conducted over 2 or 2 ½ days.

However, it is not required that separating service personnel attend one of these workshops. According to Bascetta (2002) only 53% of service members take advantage of this particular support, with the separating members of the U.S. Army having the second lowest participation rate, 33%, of all branches of the military. Further, Bascetta (2002) goes on to provide examples of the variability in quality and access to these workshops depending which military branch is offering the training and other variables (e.g. remote oversees military base versus major military facility within the United States). In addition, research conducted by the United States Government Accountability Office, the investigative arm of Congress concluded that, “…isolating the impact of transition assistance on employment, education, and other outcomes is difficult because of data inadequacies and methodological challenges. Only two program evaluations from the early 1990s evaluated the effectiveness of transition assistance on employment and provided limited information.” (Bascetta, 2002, p.2) This is contrasted with demonstrated long term effectiveness of the interventions on which this project’s workshop is most

**Target issues for the proposed population**

The goal of this program is to address the entire career development process but in an accelerated manner and with a specific emphasis in translating the client population’s self-assessment and career exploration activities into the identification of viable employment options while also raising the program participants’ job search self-efficacy.

With the above framework in mind, the goals of this program are the following:

1. To increase participants’ self-awareness by exploring their individual self-concept, interests, abilities, strengths, values and lifestyle requirements.

2. To have participants explore and examine viable employment options, using increased self-awareness to facilitate career decision-making.

3. To have participants identify possible internal and external barriers to their individual career transition and to develop specific strategies for managing or overcoming these barriers.

4. To become familiar with the job search skills and behaviors required to effectively execute this process, and to practice these skills in such a way as to increase participants’ job search motivation and self-efficacy.

**Theoretical Approaches for the Career Issues**

**Self-efficacy.** Albert Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory, specifically his formulation of the construct of self-efficacy, provides a particularly useful organizing
framework for designing a program to help this population achieve its immediate career goals.

Bandura (1995) defined self-efficacy as, “the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations” (p. 2). Another way of saying this is that self-efficacy is an individual’s belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation or in performing a task. It is the answer to the question, “Can I do this?” Self-efficacy influences the choices we make, the effort we put forth, and how long we persist when we confront obstacles and setbacks (Bandura, 1982; Pajares, 1996; Schunk, 1995). Bandura (1997) contrasts self-efficacy with more global self-appraisals, such as a self-esteem, when he says that perceived “self-efficacy is concerned with judgments of personal capability, whereas self-esteem is concerned with judgments of personal worth.” (p. 11)

Bandura (1982) identifies four sources affecting self-efficacy:

- Mastery experiences
- Vicarious experiences
- Verbal persuasion
- Physiological state

*Mastery experiences* refer to the successful performance of a task. *Vicarious experiences* result from seeing people that you consider as similar to yourself succeed at a task through sustained effort. *Verbal persuasion* is achieved by the positive encouragement and evaluations of others regarding an individual’s actions toward reaching a goal. Lastly, *physiological state* is an emotional reaction (e.g. elevated heart rate, sweating, worry), and the interpretation an individual gives them, can impact self-
efficacy, with the skillful management of one’s stress and the raising of one’s mood being positively correlated with higher feelings of confidence (Bandura, 1984). Though Bandura (1984) identifies mastery experiences as the most influential mechanism for raising self-efficacy, this project’s intervention is designed to maximize the influence of all four of the elements described above. For example, the progressive natures of the learning exercises, from simple to challenging, increases the likelihood of positive mastery experiences, while the supportive and non-competitive nature of group activities contributes to vicarious experiences.

Given the specific focus of this project is job-search behaviors (e.g. resume writing, interviewing for a job, etc.), and the documented and positive link between these behaviors and job search self-efficacy (Eden, and Aviram, 1993; Vinokur, and Schul, 1997; Wanberg, Kanfer, and Rotundo, 1999), the self-efficacy element of Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory provides the foundational framework for this project’s intervention, the job search workshop.

**Holland’s Career Development Theory.** Veterans leaving the military may have only limited exposure to civilian occupations and occupational environments. Further, their experiences in the military world of work may have not provided them with the language to readily translate their interests and skills into civilian employment choices (Clemens & Milsom, 2008). Under such circumstances, veterans may find the process of identifying and evaluating the almost endless range of potential jobs and occupations in the civilian labor market overwhelming. Holland’s theory of vocational personalities provides one well-regarded approach to addressing these particular barriers to effective career exploration and decision making. It does this by providing a user-friendly
language for describing vocational personalities and work environments and linking these constructs to widely used and comprehensive interest assessments, such as the Strong Interest Inventory® (Nauta, 2010). The results of these interest assessments can then be used to deepen or broaden the client’s career exploration by using a rich array of free online occupational informational databases (e.g. the United States Department of Labor’s Occupational Information Network or O*NET).

Holland’s theory is built on the goal of matching the work that one does with one’s vocational personality, where vocational personality is defined as the self-assessments of one’s interests, preferred activities, values, abilities, beliefs, and other characteristics (Nuart, 2010). The theory further asserts that vocational personalities can be divided into six types, also referred to as Holland Codes, which can be used to describe both persons and work environments.

The six personalities and work environment types are as follows:

- Realistic
- Investigative
- Artistic
- Social
- Enterprising
- Conventional

As a group, these personality types are usually referred as RIASEC; an acronym using the first letter of each type’s Holland code. Summarized below is an overview of each personality type drawn from the work of Brown (2007, pp. 33-37) and
supplemented with sample occupations found on United States Department of Labor’s O*NET.

**Realistic.** The realistic person is likely to enjoy athletic or mechanical tasks. The preference is for work with objects, machines, and tools, plants or animals, or to be outdoors. They may be described as masculine, unsocial, emotionally stable, and materialistic. Realistic environments typically emphasize concrete and practical activity; the use of machines and tools; persistence and physical movement. Some occupations associated with this type are cooks, painters, security guards, commercial pilots, and oral surgeons.

**Investigative.** The Investigative personality type likes to observe, learn, investigate, evaluate or solve problems. They put a high value on math and science, are curious, creative, and studious. They can be described as scholarly and introverted. Typical occupations for the investigative type are software engineer, chemical engineer, architect, veterinarian, and website developer. Environments conducive to the investigative personality stress analytical or intellectual activity aimed at trouble-shooting or the creation and use of ideas rather than working with people directly. Dental laboratory technician, fire investigator, police detective, and surgeon are samples of the types of work and occupations associated with this vocational personality type.

**Artistic.** Individuals whose personality types fall under the heading of Artistic are concerned with finding an outlet for self-expression. This self-expression may take the form of imaginative or creative activities related to visual or performing arts, writing, or any number of tasks that allow for innovative or intuitive action. They prefer work environments that value the use of personal, subjective criteria in the evaluation
information. Job titles associated with the Artistic type include actor, singer, technical writer, and animator.

**Social.** The Social type finds satisfaction in working with people to enlighten, inform, help, train, or cure them or otherwise use their social and communication skills. They are generally focused on human relationships, and enjoy social activities and solving interpersonal problems. Preferred social environments emphasize teamwork and allows for significant interaction with others. Typical careers for this type include teacher, counselor, and occupational therapist.

**Enterprising.** Similar to the Social type, the Enterprising type also likes working with people, but with the intention of influencing, persuading, performing, leading or managing people for organizational goals or economic gain. They prefer work environments that focus on what can be had from people and where the interpersonal style is rewarded with the attainment of money, power, and status. Enterprising types characteristically like occupations that equates pay for performance, like bartenders, real estate brokers, sales managers, and lawyers.

**Conventional**

The last of the personality types, Conventional, prefers to work with data and carry out tasks using detailed, socially prescribed and sanctioned procedures. They may have clerical or numerical ability and relatively less verbal ability. Best-fit environments for the Conventional type put a premium on repetitive operations that have clearly defined steps and that deal with the processing verbal and mathematical information in a systematic, concrete, and routine way. Cashiers, reservation agents, accountants,
statisticians, are just some of the occupations with a significant proportion of Conventional types.

This theory does not assume that people, or work environments, are exclusively one type. To account for heterogeneous reality the theory allows for a describing a person or environment as a combination of type in descending order of preference. For example, describing someone as Social, Realistic, Investigative, etc, with the strongest interest preference being the Social type, and the lesser type preference listed in descending order.

In addition to the RIASEC framework summarized above, Holland theory has five explanatory constructs that help conceptualize and direct the use of this theory with clients, four of which have particular relevance for applying this theory with a veteran population. These four constructs are congruence, differentiation, consistency and identity. A description of these four constructs follows:

**Congruence.** This term refers to the degree of match between an individual’s personality and the characteristics of a work environment. The closer the match, the more “congruent” a relationship exist between the person and the occupation. Holland theory asserts that the greater the congruence between person and work environment, the more likely the individual is to experience satisfaction, performing better and persisting longer than if he or she were in an incongruent environment.

**Differentiation.** The more well defined an individual’s interests and competences, or a work environment’s required activities, the more clearly associated with a particular Holland code they become. Persons and environments with strongly defined characteristics are considered to be well “differentiated.” Because most people
have a variety of interests, they will tend to be described by one, two, or three Holland codes, ranked in order of descending preference. Similarly, occupational settings often require or give scope to skills that include several personality types and thus are also best described with a combination of Holland codes.

**Consistency.** The construct of “consistency” is used to describe the relationship of each of the personality types to one another. It measures the degree to which one type may have similar or overlapping characteristics with another. For example, personality types that enjoy working with people, such as Social and Enterprising have a higher degree of “consistency” with each other than either type has with the Realistic, which prefers not to work with people but would rather spend time with machines or technical tasks.

**Identity.** The construct of “identity” refers to the clarity and stability of a person’s goals and self-perceptions and a work environment’s goals and expectations. Regarding the individual, the clearer a person’s plans, the more realistic the strategies for their implementation, and the more grounded in experience and factual information they are, then from Holland’s perspective, the more certain that person’s identity is.

**Analysis and Application of Holland’s Career Development Theory**

Holland’s career development theory argues that both people and environments have distinct and meaningful characteristics that set them apart from other people and environments. While acknowledging the uniqueness of each individual and work situation, his typology of six descriptive codes (i.e. RIASEC) nonetheless can be used to define and discuss the salient features of a person’s interest and potential competencies and work environments demands. These codes, and their combinations, provide a prism
that makes the complexity of career exploration more manageable and focused, and
decision-making based on self-understanding more certain.

In addition to the RIASEC, the elements of Holland’s theories that apply to
military veterans in career transition include constructs of congruence, differentiation,
and identity, which have previously been described.

In applying this career theory, an important admonition is to remain
consciousness of the impact that occupational isolation may have had on this population’s
vocational personality. For instance, those entering the U.S. military as enlisted personnel
take a multiple choice test known as the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery
(ASVAB), which is used to determine what military jobs they qualify for. Once placed in
a position, such as “cargo specialist” or “indirect fire infantryman,” a service member
may not have an opportunity to explore a broad range of activities or be encouraged to
reflect on the transfer of their military skills to a civilian working environment (Clemens
& Milsom, 2008). Given this potential deficit in the developmental experiences of some
veterans, the result of an assessment that uses Holland’s RIASEC topology, such as the
Strong Interest Inventory ®, can help members to more confidently identify and pursue
potential job or career options in the civilian labor market by helping them to clarify,
articulate, and if necessary, redefine the meaning of their vocational personality.

Positive psychology and “strengths” framework. In addition to the theories
already discussed, the branch of psychology know as positive psychology, in particular
its application using the “strengths” paradigm developed by the Gallup Organization, can
provide an additional tool to assist and empower veterans with their career transition and
job search.
Positive psychology is the scientific study of how people achieve happiness and mental satisfaction, with the intended goal of helping individuals to lead the most productive lives possible (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). One of the architects of positive psychology, Martin Seligman, Ph.D., states that prior to World War II, “psychology had three distinct missions: curing mental illness, making the lives of all people more productive and fulfilling, and identifying and nurturing high talent” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It is called “positive” psychology in order to emphasize the aspects of the human condition that have in recent decades often been neglected by psychology; what is right with people and how to identify and nurture an individual’s strongest qualities; it is not meant to imply that the rest of psychology is negative (Gable & Haidt, 2005).

Three overlapping domains provide an organizing framework for research in positive psychology: the “pleasant life” of positive subjective experience; the “good life” of engaging primary activities that elicits feelings of immersion, absorption, and flow; and the “meaningful life” associated with the well-being that comes from giving back to something larger and more permanent than the self (Vella-Brodrick, Park, & Peterson, 2009). According to Clifton and Harter (2003) of the Gallup Organization, one powerful, practical, and efficient method for positively impacting all three of these domains in people’s lives is by helping them to identify and productively use their unique “talents”, where talents are defined as “…our naturally recurring patterns of thought, feeling or behavior, that can be productively applied.” They go on to state that by, “refining our dominate talents through skill and knowledge, we can create a strength—the ability to
provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a given activity” (Clifton & Harter, 2003).

The Gallup organization has developed an assessment, commonly referred to as *StrengthsFinder2.0®,* which measures the presence of talents in 34 general areas referred to as “themes.” The StrengthsFinder assessment offers insight into what themes an individual has and how to best utilize them in their education, life, and career (Hodges, 2005; Clifton & Anderson, 2002). For example, one of these themes, referred to as “developer”, describes a person’s innate ability to recognize and cultivate the potential in others. People with this theme see individuals as works in progress, remaining alert to small signs of improvement, which they foster and derive satisfaction from witnessing (Rath, 2007, p. 89).

The use of the “strengths” framework and the StrengthsFinder assessment are both key elements of this project’s proposed interventions. Specifically, the results from the StrengthsFinder assessment, along with assistance from the program’s facilitators in interpreting and understanding the results, will help the transitioning veteran to define his or her particular forms of excellence, how to apply it in the job search process, and ways to articulate their unique combination of strengths in terms of past accomplishments and potential value to a future employer.

**Summary of Theoretical Approaches**

The benefit of using Donald Super’s Lifespan theory is that it provides a holistic and process-oriented perspective for viewing career choice and development. His theory sees the person as living and acting in the context of physical, biological, social, economic, mental, and emotional forces that need to be considered when deciding how
best to help someone with career issues. Its process elements emphasize both the linear attributes of physical and social development and the cyclical reality of repeatedly entering, mastering, and transitioning out of one social role or situation and into another, be it starting a new job or leaving the world of paid employment entirely. In particular, his theory of the self-concept provides a powerful tool for understanding and helping clients to actively choose, plan, and act on vocation opportunities that they are more likely to find satisfying.

Super’s work has been criticized regarding its applicability to cultural and ethnic minorities. For example, Leong and Brown (1995) point out that it “appears incontestable” that Super’s career theory is based on research with primarily white, middle-class men, calling in to question its validity in capturing universal patterns of career development and choice among diverse populations (p. 146). They make the additional criticism that Super’s theory, along with other current career choice theories, assume that most career choices are the outcome of internal (i.e. psychological) factors while not articulating the impact of how “poverty and unfair discriminatory social practices” unjustly shape “the opportunity structure to the advantage of a few cultural groups and to the disadvantage of many others” (Leong & Brown, 1995, p.148). Nonetheless, Super’s model still provides a comprehensive and valid model for understanding many of the career challenges facing this particular population.

Similarly, Holland’s widely applied and tested theory of career development makes available a very user-friendly approach for identifying, evaluating, and making decisions about potential occupations (Brown, 1987; Spokane, 1985). It characterizes persons and environments as a single set of six distinct types, which have been described
in detail earlier in this chapter, and assumes that persons are most satisfied, successful, and stable in a work environment that is congruent with their personality type. While there has been controversy over just how strong the correlation is between the “person-environment fit” and job satisfaction, after an extensive review of the literature, Spokane, Luchetta and Richwine (2002) conclude that there is a consistent modest relationship between these two factors which the research may actually underestimate (p. 400).

The use of the “strengths” framework, an application of the broader discipline of positive psychology, supports this project’s objectives because it goes beyond helping veterans to find employment with decent pay and work conditions. By focusing on what one does well naturally, strengths-based development seeks, in addition to accelerating the process of career choice and job search, to help participants of the program to identify and wisely use their individual strengths and talents in such a way as to contribute to ongoing and proactive satisfaction and engagement in the world of work. In summarizing some of the findings of this strengths-based approach, Hodges and Clifton (2004) stated that “strengths-based development has been linked to positive outcomes in a variety of studies across a range of domains” which includes “increase in employee engagement.”

**Specific Interventions for Transitioning U.S. military veterans**

The primary goal of this project is to help veterans by providing a program that has concrete, meaningful and realistic career objectives, raises their job search self-efficacy, and inoculates them against the disappointments and inevitable setbacks of the job search process. To achieve these results, this program, delivered in a multi-session workshop, incorporates a series of interventions that can be grouped into three broad categories: group process; cognitive restructuring; and skill development.
The category group process, deals with the creation of a learning environment that fosters feelings of safety, mutual support, and risk-taking consistent with established practices for the facilitation of psycho-educational groups (Corey et al., 2010, p.12). Specific intervention under this category include workshop leaders skilled in enacting active learning processes; the use of partner and triad exercises that emphasize supportive listening to and sharing of personal fears, concerns, talents, and achievements related to the world of work; the reduction of anxiety and the normalizing transitioning process through group sharing of experiences in the military and in searching for work as a veteran.

Cognitive restructuring of the participants’ career self-concept is promoted by leading them through progressively more challenging role playing exercises (e.g. mock job interviewing, cold calling for job leads) with the facilitators’ support and positive reframing of the outcomes in ways that encourage participant motivation and resilience. Every session also includes group problem solving. For example, teams of three-group member identify and respond to employers possible concerns about hiring someone with little civilian work experience. Both the role playing and group problem exercises provides frequent and rich opportunities for direct and vicarious leaning by participates.

Lastly, the identification of one’s marketable skills, finding job leads, learning how to create and customize a resume, practicing how to contact and present oneself to employers, and interview effectively all fall under the heading of “skill development’ which will be taught in this project.

While the three categories of interventions above have been presented sequentially, in practice they often occur simultaneously, synergistically reinforcing each
other. All the specific interventions listed in this section have documented effectiveness in promoting positive employment outcomes when used in job search workshops (Vuori, Price, Mutanen, & Malmberg-Heimonen, 2005).

**Transition to Program Implementation Procedures and Workshop Outlines**

The proposed program focuses intensely on developing those attributes and skills that are most closely related to job-search success and career satisfaction. It emphasizes the application of job search skills under increasingly challenging conditions in a well-structured, well led, and supportive group environment. Sessions will allow for individual participants to identify and articulate how their own unique combination of talents, skills, and experiences make them potential valuable employees. Evaluation of the effectiveness of this program results not only from pre and post client surveys, but is structured into each of the workshop session based on the verbal feedback of the participants. All of these factors have been put in place to ensure that the program fulfills its goals and objectives while simultaneously being open to corrective feedback from participants.

The details of the program, its structure, procedures, and supportive materials, are presented in chapters three and four.
CHAPTER 3

Procedure (Justifying the Program)

Introduction to the Program

This chapter will outline an eight-session job search workshop for veterans who have left the U.S. military as of 2001 and who are looking for immediate employment. It will justify the program’s rationale, organization, goals, behavioral objectives, sequencing, and required materials.

The program is constructed so that it can be delivered by any group that has or can recruit an instructor with the requisite expertise of working with groups. The facilitator’s expertise should include the ability to lead a group so that its members feel comfortable around each other and are supported in taking responsibility in actively participating in shared tasks as well as individual work. Some of the specific skills that the facilitator will need to accomplish these ends include attending to and acknowledging group member behavior, giving and receiving feedback in the group, and keeping the group on task in accomplishing its goals. Three documents created by the Association for Specialist in Group Work (ASGW), the ASGW Best Practice Guidelines (ASGW, 1998), the ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (ASGW, 1999), and the ASGW Professional Standards for the Training of Group Workers (ASGW, 2000), provide clear guidelines for the competencies required to facilitate this type of program, and how these competencies may be acquired. The “Staffing “ section of this chapter provides additional information on the requirements for this program’s group facilitators.
This program is especially suited to organizations such as community colleges, which regularly provide services to veterans, and whose relationship with this population would facilitate the process of marketing, recruiting, and selecting appropriate group participants.

**Justification of the Program**

Leaving the military can be a very demanding and stressful life transition. By leaving the military, the veteran is not only saying goodbye to friends and familiar places, but to a way of life that is often at odds with the civilian world of work. Research shows transitioning veterans face a host of emotional, social, and practical challenges during this process. Some of those challenges may include:

- Developing a primary identity other than as a soldier
- Difficulty relating to and connecting with those who have not served in the military and experienced the stresses and dangers of active service
- Finding importance and meaning in experiences and ideas that are not “life-or-death”
- Learning and negotiating the structural and procedural differences between military and civilian culture
- Learning to make a much greater number of personal and professional decisions outside of the context of the highly structured and constrained framework of military life
- For those who may have seen or been involved in combat, coping with the emotional and physical injuries resulting from his or her military service
- Boredom (e.g., missing the adrenaline rush experienced during combat or dangerous training situations)
- Having difficulty returning to or renegotiating his or her role as spouse and/or parent

To help this population effectively navigate and move through the transition from a military to a civilian way of life, a range of government, educational, and non-profit organizations have created specific career-related programs. A review of these programs indicates the elements likely to significantly increase job-search self-efficacy and improve employment outcomes. This program is structured specifically to provide additional attention to those elements that are associated with an increase in job search self-efficacy and positive employment outcomes.

**General Program Goals and Behavioral Objectives**

The National Career Development Association (NCDA) has developed a framework to describe the personal competencies individuals should have in order to successfully manage their careers throughout their lives (NCDA, n.d.). This framework is organized around three domains: Personal Social Development (PS); Educational Achievement and Lifelong Learning (ED); and Career Management (CM). These three domains organize the content of career development, with each domain having goals, eleven in total, which define broad areas of career development competency.

While this program draws its goals from each of the career domains described above, it emphasizes the achievement of learning in the career management (CM) domain as it relates to recognizing one’s transferable skills, writing a resume, interviewing for a job, and finding and pursuing employment leads.
Recruitment of Participants

This program is aimed at returning military veterans who have a strong desire to find immediate employment in the civilian labor force. It is constructed so that it can be delivered within the framework of a student development course at a community college or by any other sponsoring agency, non-profit or governmental, that has adequate accommodation for a group of 9 to 12 participants, not including two facilitators.

Recruitment of participants can be accomplished by posting advertisements on websites of organizations serving veterans as well as direct e-mail notification to those previously identified as veterans and provided their e-mail addresses. More creative strategies may include the use of social media (e.g. Facebook groups).

Pricing structure will vary depending on the availability of grants or other subsidies. Evidence of military service may be required.

Veterans who apply to this program should receive an individual screening interview, in advance of any program group sessions, in order to assess if they have the motivation and skills necessary to contribute and benefit from this type of psychoeducational group. Couch (1995) has described a four-step screening procedure that can be applied to assess the suitability of candidates for group work. The four steps of this process are: identify the clients’ needs, expectations, and commitment; challenge any myths and misconceptions participants have about group work; convey information about what to expect as a group member (e.g. confidentiality, roles, etc.); and screening the person for group fit. Integrated into this four-step process is a list of reasons that group therapy would contraindicate, examples of which include cases where the potential member is in crisis, suicidal, suffering from brain damage, or is extremely hostile.
(Couch, 1995). Even if a client does not exhibit behavior on a list of contraindications, the facilitator must still use his or her best judgment to answer this essential question posed by Corey et al. (2010, p. 115), “Should this particular person be included in this group at this time with this group leader?”

**Necessary Materials, Staffing, Facilities, and Equipment for Program**

Listed below are the materials, staffing, and equipment, necessary to execute this program.

**Supplies**

A “Veterans in Transition” binder with dividers for each of the program’s sections will hold all of the program’s handouts, results of session exercises, and assessment reports.

**Text**

- **StrengthsFinder 2.0:** (Tim Rath, 2007). A computer based “strengths” assessment with an accompanying book.

**Handouts**

- Handout: 1.1 Skills Identification Handout
- Homework Handout: 1.1 - Taking StrengthsFinder 2.0
- Handout: 1.2 - Identifying Your Transferable Skills
- Handout: 2.1 - Talent Vs. Skill and Experience
- Homework Handout: 2.1 - Taking the Strong Interest Inventory
- Handout: 5.1 - Who Do You Know in this Career?
- Homework Handout 5.1 - Job Search Methods
- Handout: 6.1 - Critical Target Job Deconstruction
- Handout: 7.1 - Informational Interviewing for Success
- Handout: 7.2 - Resume and Cover Letter Peer Review Form
- Handout 7.3 – Resume Checklist
- Handout: 8.1 Job Interview Guide

Assessments

- Vista Card Life/Career Cards © - A card-based values assessment
- Transferable Skills Questionnaire (Handout 1.2, see above)
- Strong Interest Inventory (SII). - A computer-based interest assessment

The values assessment is part of the Vista Card system. This system is composed of 75 cards listing a broad range of values. Participants will be asked to sort the cards into gradually smaller groups until they are left with their top ten values. They will then be asked to prioritize those values, discuss them in small groups, give examples of those values in action, define and record the result. The transferable skills questionnaire provides an extensive list of non-job specific skills and roles that participants may have developed while in the military, through academic coursework, internships, volunteering, or other life experiences which can be applied from one occupation or industry to another. The results of this questionnaire are then used with an additional form that allows participants to link their transferable skills to specific achievements from their past
so that they can concretely demonstrate in a resume or during an interview how their skills can be an asset to future employers.

StrengthsFinder 2.0 is an assessment tool developed by the Gallup Organization that is intended to identify a descending list of an individual’s innate abilities. These abilities are labeled “talents” by the Gallup organization and defined as “a recurring pattern of thought, feeling or behavior that can be productively applied.” If developed, this innate talent can become a strength, which Gallup defines as a predictable source of excellence in the performance of specific tasks.

Occupational interests will be assessed using the Strong Interest Inventory (SII). The results of this assessment is a series of codes based on John L. Holland’s six factor topology (e.g. enterprising) listed in descending order an individual’s preference for particular work tasks and environments. The combination of the top three scores will be used to evaluate jobs under consideration by the client and/or to generate additional employment options.

Online Resources

- O*NET OnLine (online.onetcenter.org) - Free government career information database
- Occupational Outlook Handbook (www.bls.gov/OCO/) - Free government career information database
- Career One Stop (www.careeronestop.org) – Free government career resources and workforce information database
Staffing

Two skilled group facilitators are required primarily because many of the workshop’s exercises are preceded by the facilitators acting out employment scenarios where they take turns playing the role of interviewee and interviewer. Having two competent facilitators allows for the quick, accurate and reliable modeling of both effective and ineffective social skills. This type of “modeling”, supported by the consistent and effective use of “positive persuasion” and the skillful managing of the stress level of participants as they are challenged with progressively more difficult yet still positive mastery experiences, is a key element for enhancing the development of participants’ job search self-efficacy (Bandura, 1982; Vinokur, and Schul, 1997). Given the above requirements, facilitators should ideally have a master’s degree in career counseling that included coursework and supervision in group counseling. Facilitators could also be recruited from individuals meeting the following conditions: they are familiar with career and job search issues; have previously assisted in teaching the program several times; and have received coaching and supervision in the facilitation of the process and content of this specific workshop from facilitators with the previously outlined education and experience.

Facilities and other equipment

Because the program involves participant groups of between 9 and 12 students, often working in groups of three, a room that can comfortably hold twice that number and which allows for an adaptable floor plan (i.e. the seats are movable) is a minimal requirement in order to allow for the flexible and quick transition from whole group to triad exercises that are an essential feature of this program. Tables, either attached to
individual chairs or light enough to be moved easily by the session’s participants, are also necessary to facilitate writing and various mock interview exercises.

Because several of the sessions involve exercises and/or assessments that require a personal computer and internet access, at least one internet station per participant and one for the instructional team needs to be available. A free standing flip chart or dry erase board, if a built-in one is not already part of the room’s furnishings, is needed to record participants’ responses to various questions posed during group discussions. Not essential but potentially useful is access to an overhead projector linked to a personal computer and connected to the internet. This would allow for the use of PowerPoint slides and viewing of multi-media career-related material available on the internet. Access to restrooms and accommodations for participants with physical limitations should also be confirmed.

**Overview of Sessions**

The modular format and clearly defined learning outcomes of this program would make it suitable for use in both postsecondary institutions and any other sponsoring agency that could meet the previously described requirements for space, equipment, and facilitators. Potential participants will be screened before admittance to the program to determine if the program meets their needs and verify their degree of readiness to participate in and complete the program.

Each session will take three hours, including at least one 15 minute break. The program is delivered over a series of eight sessions. It would be preferable to have one session per week so participants have adequate time to complete homework assignments and to reflect and integrate the lessons learned from a particular session.
Session 1: Orientation and Self-Assessment of Values and Transferable Skills

- Introduction of Facilitators
- Overview of the Program
- Participant Introductions
- Values Card Assessment and Discussion
- Transferable Skills Questionnaire and Discussion
- Homework: Complete StrengthsFinder 2.0 Assessment and Potential Career Assignment in Text

Session 2: Self-Assessment of Strengths

- Overview the “Strengths” Philosophy and Framework
- Review and Discussion of Participants’ Top Five “Strengths”
- Various Exercises Related to Application of Participants’ Individual Strengths
- Homework: Complete Online version of Strong Interest Inventory

Session 3: Identifying Potential Jobs/Occupations for Job Search

- Explanation of Holland framework of personality type (RIASEC)
- Strong Interest Inventory Interpretation

Session 4: Identifying and Overcoming Job Search Obstacles

- Review and Discussion of Employment Case Studies
- Exercise to Identify Individual Obstacles to Employment
Exercises to Identify Individual Solutions to Employment Obstacles

Homework: Develop draft of “elevator speech” and complete list of personal contacts.

Session 5: Finding Job Openings

- How to Find Job Openings
- How to Identify and Expand Job Search Network
- Developing Networking Skills

Session 6: Practicing Networking Skills and Building a Resume

- Participants Practice Networking Exercise
- Discussion about Use and Structure of Resumes
- Resume Building Exercises
- Homework: Handouts on Building a Resume

Session 7: Resume Review and Information Interviewing

- How to Evaluate and Improve Resumes
- Informational Interviewing

Session 8: Mock Job Interviews and Final Reflection

- Mock Job interviewing
- Review and Final Reflection on process and content of the session
- Awarding of Certificate of Completion
Summary and Transition to Chapter 4

The primary objective of this program is to provide returning military veterans who have a strong desire to find immediate employment in the civilian labor force with a clear framework for the job-search process, give them direct experience in the application of job search skills, and to use this framework and experience to instill in them the ability to persist in applying these proven job search strategies and techniques in the face of disappointment and rejection. Central to the effectiveness of this program is the social learning theory known as self-efficacy. Banduri (1982) defines perceived self-efficacy as being “concerned with judgments of how well one can execute courses of actions required to deal with perspective situations.” It posits a relationship between an individual’s appraisal of his or her competency in a specific domain of activity (e.g. searching for a job) and the degree to which they will initiate, exert effort toward, and persist in a behavior aimed at reaching a goal while encountering obstacles and setbacks (Bandura, 1977). Bandura (1977) lists four sources for self-efficacy expectations: performance accomplishments; vicarious experience; verbal persuasion; and physiological states. All four sources are integrated into the learning experiences provided by this project’s program design. Programs with a similar framework and rationale specifically aimed at raising job-search self-efficacy have had well-documented and received positive evaluations for effectiveness (Vinokur, Schul, Vuori, & Price, 2000; Vuori, Price, Mutanen, & Malmberg-Heimonen, 2005).

This chapter has provided an introduction to the program, its justification, general goals and behavioral objectives, ways to recruit participants, and finally the necessary
material, staffing, facilities, and equipment for its implementation. The next chapter will
describe in detail the goals, objectives, and activities of each section of the program.
CHAPTER 4

The Program

Session 1

Orientation and Self-Assessment of Values and Transferable Skills

Goals

- To create a safe learning environment that fosters group cohesion, productivity, and job search self-efficacy
- To be exposed to ineffective and effective interview strategies
- To become consciously aware of values, and transferable skills
- To see how the above information can support the process of career transition and job search

Objectives

- Participants will become familiar with fellow session participants through the use of an icebreaker exercise where they interview and introduce a fellow group member.
- Participants will observe and evaluate two brief skits, the first showing an ineffective interview followed by an example of an effective interview.
- Participants will individually complete the value card sort procedure using Vista Cards© and discuss and interpret the results in groups of three. They will then share before the session how these values have and can play a part in their future work and in the job search process.
- Participants will identify transferable skills that they have acquired during any activity in their life (jobs, classes, projects, parenting, hobbies, sports, etc.) and how those skills are related to what they potentially want to do in their next job.

Materials

- Flip chart or dry eraser board

Handouts

- StrengthsFinder 2.0 by Tom Rath for each participant
- Value Card sets for each participant
- *Cool Careers for Dummies* by Marty Nemko, 3rd Edition, for each participant
- Internet connection and login access to CPP, Inc. to take the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) online
- Handout: 1.1 Skills Identification Brochure
- Handout: 1.2 Identifying Your Transferable Skills
- Homework Handout 1.1 - Taking StrengthsFinder 2.0.

**Session Activities**

**Section I: Introduction**

- Facilitators introduce themselves, welcome participants and do housekeeping issues (sign in, name tags, bathrooms, “check-in” and “check-out” process, etc.).
- Review agenda for the day and discuss group rules and norms (e.g. confidentiality, being on time, regular attendance, how to give and receive supportive feedback, the need to take reasonable risks regarding self-disclosure and job search activities, etc.).
- Group icebreaker exercise where the class is broken down into pairs and asked to interview each other. Information collected: name; job interest; special skill, interest, or characteristic; and what they want to learn during the program.
- Partners from icebreaker activity introduce each other to the class. As participants introduce themselves, facilitators link the students’ stated learning goals to the session content.
Section II: Interview Demonstration

- Facilitators perform two job interview skits. Skit one shows an ineffective job interview. Following the skit, the whole group gives feedback on what they thought about the interview and how might be improved.
- Facilitators perform a skit of an effective interview. Following the skit, the class is asked to describe the differences between the two interview skits and what made the second skit much better than the first.

Break: 15 minutes

Section III: Values Assessment

- Students use a pack of Value Cards to identify ten top life values.
- In groups of three, group members take turns defining what of their top values mean to them and how they have shown up in work/volunteer situations.
- Facilitators ask the class as a group what they found useful about describing their values using “concrete” examples and how they might use this technique in an interview.

Section IV: Transferable Skills

- Facilitators ask the class as group who has heard of “transferable skills” and to define the concept in their own words. A facilitator then presents a standard definition of transferable skills, soliciting examples of such skills from the group.
- Facilitators review the benefits of knowing one’s transferable skills for both job search and for career development.
- Facilitator provide one or two examples of his or her own transferable skills, and then provides Handout 1.1 Skills Identification Brochure.
Using the above handout, participants work individually to identify 1 or 2 “concrete” examples of how they used “a strength” to solve a problem or improve a situation at their previous work in the military.

Facilitators lead brief class discussion where some participants volunteer to share their answers to the above exercise.

In groups of three, participants practice delivering a “concrete” example of a transferable skill in a mock interview format playing the roles of applicant, interviewer, and observer in turn.

Ask participants what they found useful about describing their skills using “concrete” examples and how they might use this technique in an interview.

**Section V: Closing**

- Review topics covered during the session
- Request feedback from participants about what they found useful and what they would have wanted done differently.
- Preview next session’s content
- Review homework assignments for taking StrengthsFinder 2.0 and identifying two or three careers using material found in Chapter 2 of *Cool Careers for Dummies*. 
Session 2
Self-Assessment of Strengths

Goal

- To become consciously aware of how their top 5 *Strengths* (using the Gallup Organization definition of that term) interests information can support the process of career transition, job search, and employment in a new job.

Objectives

- Participants will identify their top 5 “signature themes” by completing the StrengthsFinder 2.0 assessment before next session.
- Participants will develop a personal definition of each theme, identifying how they have already used their themes successfully and how to consciously use and demonstrate these themes during the job search process.

Materials:

- Results from StrengthsFinder 2.0

Handouts:

- Handout: 2.1 *Talent Vs. Skill and Experience*

Session Activities:

Section I: Participant Check-in

- Each participant answers the prompt: “How are you feeling today and what’s one thing that you’ve learned in the previous session that might be useful in your job search?”

Section II: Session Review and Preview

- Facilitators review key concepts from last session dealing with values as source of motivation for success and transferable skills as means of offering value in the labor market.
Facilitators review agenda for current session dealing with “Strengths.”

**Section III: Overview the Strengths Philosophy and Framework**

- Facilitators discuss between fixing weaknesses and building “strengths.”
- Facilitators review the following key assumptions behind the strengths framework: behaviors can be learned versus some behaviors can be learned but many are impossible to learn; those best in a role deliver the same outcomes using different behaviors; weakness fixing prevents failure; strengths building leads to success.
- Provide Handout 2.1 Talent Vs. Skill and Experience
- Discuss the definition and difference between strengths, talents, skills, and knowledge.

**Section IV: Demonstration and Sharing of Strengths/Talents in Action.**

- Facilitators review the results from his or her own StrengthsFinder 2.0 assessment, selecting one or two top personal “strengths”, reads the definition for that strength provided in the StrengthsFinder report, then provides an answer to the following prompt: “Where did I use one of my top five strengths today? What would others have seen to let them know that I was using this strength?”

**Section V: Participants Discuss and Share their Strengths/Talents in Action**

- Participants individually briefly answer the following prompt in writing: “Where did I use one of my top five strengths today? What would others have seen to let them know that I was using this strength?”
- Facilitators separate the class into sub-groups based on sharing a common strength.
The participants are divided into sub-groups with the same strength are asked to share how they used their strengths today. The diversity of answers by people sharing the same strength will show the whole class how the same strength can be expressed in a many different ways.

Taking turns in groups of three, participants share and record the answer to this prompt: “How and to what degree were you using one or more of these top five strengths while on active duty?”

**Break:** 15 minutes

**Section V: Using Strengths/Talent During the Job Search**

- In groups of three, participants take turns sharing their answer to the following scenario: “You’re attending a job fair, career fair or career expo by yourself. How might you use one or more of your strengths to make a positive impression on a recruiter?”

- Facilitators ask for volunteers to share the answer to the previous question, selecting two to three respondents.

**Section V: Closing**

- Review topics covered during the session
- Request feedback from participants about what they found useful and what they would have wanted done differently.
- Preview next session’s content
- Review homework assignments to complete and online version of the Strong Interest Inventory.
Session 3

Identifying Potential Jobs/Occupations for Job Search

Goals

- To become aware of how their interests can be related to various occupations.
- To see how the above information can support the process of career transition, job search, and employment in a new job.

Objectives

- Using the results from their Strong Interest Inventory and the Holland framework of personality type (RIASEC), participants will explore and identify how their dominant patterns of interests are reflected in past and potential occupations and transferable skills.
- Practice interviewing using concrete examples of transferable skills and signature themes.
- Participants will targeting three specific jobs/occupations for additional research

Materials:

- Result for Strong Interest Inventory

Session Activities:

Section I: Participant Check-in

- Each participant answers the prompt: “How are you feeling today and what’s one thing that you’ve learned in the previous session that might be useful in your job search?”
Section II: Session Review and Preview

- Facilitators review key concepts from last session dealing with Strengths/Talents – a source of personal excellence and satisfaction at work and life.
- Facilitators review agenda for current session dealing with the Strong Interest Inventory.

Section III: Introduction to the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) and the Holland Codes

- Facilitators explain how a person’s interests can be described in terms of six personality types and work environments and how these six categories provides a powerful method for matching a person’s interests with job opportunities and more.
- Review each of the six personality types and work environments associated with the Holland Codes.
- Points to highlight include the following: people of the same personality type working together in a job tend to create a work environment that fits their type; the six categories of work personality type can also be used to describe a working environment; people who choose to work in an environment similar to their work personality type are more likely to be successful and satisfied.

Section IV: Selecting Job Search Targets using SII Results

- Facilitators have the class go through the “theme descriptions” section and, for the first three rows, highlight or underline those terms under the “interests,” “work activities,” “potential skills,” and ”values” that they feel describes them.
Facilitators have participants compare the results of that SII with the careers already identified by the career clusters selected during their homework assignment.

Facilitators has participants comment on any patterns that they have observed between the jobs that they’re currently considering and some of the occupations listed in the Occupational Scales section for their top three Holland codes.

Using the information from the previous week’s homework assignments and/or from their Strong Interest Inventory, participants select three target careers/jobs that they would like to use in their job search.

Break: 15 minutes

Section IV: Continued

In groups of three, participants take turns explaining what they like about the 3 careers/jobs they have selected for their job search process in terms of their values, skills, Strengths, and interests.

Section V: Closing

Review topics covered in the session.

Request feedback from participants about what they found useful and what they would have wanted done differently.

Preview next session’s content.

Review homework assignments Cool Careers for Dummies (pp. 225 – 266, 173-225) in order to better answer the following questions:

- What is the long-term outlook for this industry?
o What do you find noteworthy or positive about a specific employer on your target list?

o What is the general outlook for the occupations/jobs (growing or declining) on your target list?
Session 4
Identifying and Overcoming Job Search Obstacles

Goal

- To identify perceived obstacles to employment and develop strategies for overcoming them.

Objectives

- Participants will identify two to three perceived obstacles to their employment in the civilian labor market.
- Participant will work out specific strategies for overcoming the above identified perceived obstacle to their employment in the civilian labor force.
- Participants will practice applying the above specific strategies in mock interview exercises.

Session Activities

Section I: Participant Check-in

- Facilitators ask each participant to answers the following prompt: “What is one thing that you learned in the previous session that might be useful in your job search?”

Section II: Session Review and Preview

- Facilitators review key concepts from last session dealing with interests as they relate to occupation choice and work satisfaction.
- Facilitators review agenda for current session dealing job search obstacles.

Section III: Identifying Employment Obstacles

- Review the following hypothetical case study: Tim is 32 year old, and served as army sergeant and platoon leader. He has served in the military since graduating
from high school, spent two years in Afghanistan, and has just recently left the service. He does not have a bachelor’s degree and does not want to pursue one at this time, but wants to find immediate employment in the local community.

- The class is asked to answer the following questions: “What should Tim focus on sharing during an interview? What do you think Tim is worried about regarding his ability to get and keep a civilian job?”
- Answers are recorded on a dry erase board or flip chart.

**Break:** 15 minutes

**Section IV: Identifying Personal Obstacles**

- The class as a whole is asked to share their greatest challenges or perceived obstacles to civilian employment, with responses being recorded on dry erase board/flip chart. The facilitators add additional observations from the literature if they are not brought up during discussion.

**Section V: Overcoming Personal Obstacles to Employment**

- Participants practice analyzing fears by taking examples of “obstacles”, then translating them into “employers’ fears” and, as a class, brainstorm ways to overcome or defuse the employers’ fears by answering the following question: “What could you do or say to defuse or overcome the employer’s fear?”
- Evaluate, from the employer’s point of view, how to address employer’s potential objection to hiring veterans might be answered by using “concrete examples” from their transferable skills and Strengths profiles.

**Section VI: Demonstration of Overcoming Personal Employment Obstacles During an Interview**
Using solutions from the previous exercise, the facilitators demonstrate in a mock interview effective and ineffective ways to identify and overcome employers’ fears of employing veterans. Participants are asked to offer suggestions on how to improve on “interviewee’s” responses.

**Section VI: Overcoming Personal Employment Obstacles During a Mock Interview**

- In groups of three, participants will take turns playing the role of interviewer, interviewee, and observer. The interviewee will be asked a series of questions linked to an “obstacle/employer fear.”

- As a close, participants will debrief the preceding triad interview exercise by answering questions such as the following: “How did you feel about the exercise? If you were an employer, how would you have evaluated the solution to the particular employer fear given during the interview?”

**Section V: Closing**

- Review topics covered in the session

- Request feedback from participants about what they found useful and what they would have wanted done differently.

- Preview next session’s content

- Review homework in chapter 8, page 226 of Cool Career for Dummies and create a draft of a “winning pitch” to present at the next session. Participants are also asked to identify and bring to the next session a list containing the name and contact information for at least 10 people they can contact about a job (pg. 228).
Session 5
Finding Job Openings

Goals

- To become familiar with and practice several strategies for uncovering and pursuing job openings through personal networking and information interviews.
- To become aware of several sources for online and print job leads.

Objectives

- Participants will complete the Who Do You Know in this Career form which is based on the U.S. Department of Education’s Career Clusters Model.
- Participants will demonstrate the ability to ask other group members for contacts working in a variety of occupations.
- Participants will develop and demonstrate a “job pitch” highlighting their personal accomplishments, talents, and skills.
- Participants will develop a list of at least three personalized responses to the specific barriers they believe would make it difficult for them to ask for job leads.

Materials

- Handout: 5.1 Who Do You Know in this Career

Session Activities

Section I: Participant Check-in

- Facilitators ask each participant to answer the following prompt: “What is one thing that you learned in the previous session that might be useful in your job search?”
Section II: Session Review and Preview

- Facilitators review key concepts from last session dealing with identifying and planning how to overcome potential obstacles to employment.

Section III: Connection Between Your Personal Network and Future Employment

- Review statistics that show that approximately 25% of people who find a job do so through a referral made by a personal contact (e.g. friend, former employer, etc.)

Section IV: Exploring How Your Personal Network Can Help with Job Search

- Participants will fill out a “Who Do You Know in this Career Form” by circulating in the room and asking classmates for the name of at least one person who they know who works in each of the Career Clusters, recording the information on their form along with who gave them the reference to that person.

Section V: How to Contact a Personal Contact about a Job Lead and Deliver a Job “Pitch”

- Facilitators, one playing job applicant and the other the contact, conduct two role plays, one ineffective and one effective, and ask for class feedback on what was done well and what could be improved.

- Facilitators review “Coming up with a winning pitch” and “Speaking to a lead” on page 226 and 234 respectively from Cool Careers for Dummies.

- In groups of three, participants will take turns sharing their “pitch” and asking for constructive feedback on improving it.

Break: 15 minutes

Section VI: Practicing the Delivery of Job “Pitch”
In groups of three, participants will take turns playing the role of jobs applicant, contact, and observer in order to practice delivering their “pitch” aimed at finding job leads.

The interviewee will be asked a series of questions linked to an “obstacle/employer fear.”

At the end of each round participants playing the contact or acting as the observer will give the participant playing the job applicant brief feedback on areas of strength and areas for potential improvement.

Section VII: Practicing Networking Skills

In groups of three, participants will practice their networking skills by taking turns playing the role of job-seeker, the contact, and an observer until each participant has played all roles twice. While this is a practice exercise, the job-seeker will be using their actual job “pitch” and legitimately looking for a job lead when interviewing the participant playing the contact and the contact will be providing real, not made up, information.

Following the exercise, participants will discuss their reaction to the exercise as group. The facilitators will use prompts such as, “How did it feel to be asked by the other person for a job lead?” and “What are some of the reasons that people might like being asked for job leads?” The facilitators should record responses on a dry erase board or flip-chart.

Section VIII: Anticipating and Responding to Job Search Setbacks

Facilitators lead participants in discussing what makes it difficult to ask for a job lead, using such prompts as “What makes it most difficult to ask for a job lead?”
• Responses are recorded on dry erase board or flip-chart, leaving enough space between answers for step two of this exercise.

• In step two of the exercise, facilitators lead a class discussion about how to overcome the difficulties identified in step one using prompts such as “What are some of the ways that these difficulties can be overcome and which ones will you personally use?”

Section V: Closing

• Review topics covered during the session

• Request feedback from participants about what they found useful and what they would have wanted done differently.

• Preview next session’s content

• Review homework assignment for Homework Handout 5.1: “Job Search Methods” that provides a thorough list of categories (e.g. professional associations) for finding job leads.
Session 6
Practicing Networking Skills and Building a Resume

Goals

- To practice networking skills, learned in Session 5, for uncovering and pursuing job openings through personal networking and information interviews
- To learn how resumes support the job search process
- To learn the basic types of resumes and the basic elements of a resume
- To start the process of creating a resume
- To become more familiar with conducting an efficient job search online

Objectives

- Participants will demonstrate a job “pitch”, developed during Session 5, which highlights their personal accomplishments, talents, and skills.
- Participants will discuss the purpose of resumes.
- Participants will review the typical sections found on a resume, and advantages and disadvantages of a chronological versus a functional resume.
- Participants will conduct an online job search using a job aggregator site and locate at least three (3) listings for jobs/occupations they identified during Session 3 and save the results as a Word document.

Materials

- PC workstations/Laptops with internet access

Handouts

- Handout 6.1 Critical Target Job Deconstruction
Session Activities

Section I: Participant Check-in

- Facilitators ask each participant to answers the following prompt: “What is one thing that you learned in the previous session that might be useful in your job search?”

Section II: Participants Practice Networking Exercise

- In groups of three, participants will repeat this exercise from Session 5 in which each class member takes a turn playing the role of job-seeker, the contact, and an observer until each participant has played all roles at least once. While this is a practice exercise, the job-seeker will be using their actual job “pitch” and legitimately looking for a job lead when interviewing the participant playing the contact and the contact will be providing real, not made up, information.

- Following the exercise, participants will discuss their reaction to the exercise and compare their experience from doing the exercise in Session 5. The facilitator will use prompts such as “How did it feel doing this exercise again?” “Was it easier, harder, or about the same to ask some for a job lead?” and “Please explain.” The facilitators should record responses on a dry erase board or flip-chart.

Section III: An overview on Resumes, Their Purpose and Content

- Facilitators asks the class the following sequence of questions and records their responses on a dry erase board or flip chart:
  - What is the purpose of a resume?
  - How do employers use resumes?
  - Does every job require a resume?
  - When you think about writing your own resume, how do you feel?
The following points should be covered during the group discussion: that the purpose of a resume is to get an interview; that it summarizes your qualifications by demonstrating that you have the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to solve an employer’s problems or improve their business; that it can act as a “calling card” for anyone you meet while networking (e.g. informational interviewing).

Facilitators review key concepts from last session dealing with how to find job leads using your personal network and the homework dealing with using online resources to find job openings.

Facilitators review agenda for current session dealing with job “pitch”, creating resumes, and online job search.

Section IV: Review Sections Found on a Typical Resume and the Major Types of Resumes

Facilitators review the following elements found on a resume: name and contact information; career objective (optional); education and training; work experience; skills; achievements/interests (optional); memberships (optional); reference (“available upon request”).

Facilitators review the differences and uses of chronological and functional resumes.

Facilitators review agenda for current session dealing with job “pitch”, creating resumes, and online job search.

Section V: How to Use a Job Search Aggregators to Create a Targeted Resume

Facilitators distribute the contents of Handout 6.1 “Critical Target Job Deconstruction.”

Facilitators review the following benefits of using a targeted resume:
More job interviews and doing better on those interviews

Seeing very clearly that all jobs exist to solve and avoid problems

Seeing how the job you are applying for contributes to the “bottom line”, whether measured in financial or non-financial terms, for a specific organization

Sharpening participants’ understanding of what employers look for when they hire people for this job

Break: 15 minutes

Section VI: Searching for Job Listings using Simplyhired.com Job Aggregator

- Participants will launch an internet browser and go to the job search aggregator www.simplyhired.com.

- Lead by the facilitators, participants will individually follow steps 1 through 5 from Handout 6.1.

- Selecting one of the job titles/occupations identified from their homework Handout 5.1, The Cool Career Yellow Pages section of Cool Careers for Dummies, or the results of their Strong Interest Inventory results, participants will search for at least two job posting that match their target job title/occupation and save the job postings using the instructions given in step 1 of Handout 6.1 Critical Target Job Deconstruction.

- Participants will then be prepared, if called on, to share with the group the following three pieces of information: a single requirement that is common to both of the job postings found; identify a problem and challenge that might come up while fulfilling this requirement while on the job (e.g. requirement: reports
customer feedback to management, including any signs of customer
dissatisfaction. Challenge: Customer is upset but has difficulty stating problem
clearly); an example of how the participant has successfully tackled a similar
issue in the past.

Section VII: Creating a Behavioral Profile of Best and Worst of Applicant for the Job

- Facilitators review steps 6 through 7 from Handout 6.1 Critical Target Job
  Deconstruction.
- Taking turns in groups of three, participants share and record the answer to this
  question: “Consider one requirement from you’re your target job and recall the
  best person you have ever known doing that that aspect of the job?”
- Next, participants share and record the answer to this prompt: “Consider one
  requirement of your target job and recall the worst person you have ever known
  doing that aspect of the job?”
- Facilitators ask for volunteers to share their answers from the preceding exercise.

Section V: Closing

- Review topics covered during the session.
- Request feedback from participants about what they found useful and what they
  would have wanted done differently.
- Preview next session’s content.
- Review homework assignments regarding the following: Handout 6.1; resume
  advice from Cool Career for Dummies found on pages 245-259; how to locate
  and use the “Write a Resume” tutorial of the veterans section of the
  Careeronestop website (http://www.careeronestop.org/militarytransition/) in order
  to write a draft resume and bring at least seven copies to present at the next
  session.
Session 7
Resume Review and Information Interviewing

Goal

- To learn how information interview can support the job search process.
- To practice information interviewing.
- To review and improve their own resume

Objectives

- Participants will identify and discuss several benefits of using information interviewing (getting current, local, and detailed information regarding their job search; expanding their professional network).
- Participants will practice performing and receive feedback on their information interviewing skills.
- Participants will review their draft resume and practice how to systematically improve it.

Materials

- Participants will bring seven draft resumes based on Session 6 homework assignment.

Handouts

- Handout 7.1 - Informational Interviewing for Success
- Handout 7.2 - Resume and Cover Letter Peer Review Form
- Handout 7.3 - Resume checklist
Session Activities

Section I: Participant Check-in

- Facilitators ask each participant to answer the following prompt: “What is one thing that you learned in the previous session that might be useful in your job search?”

Section II: Session Review and Preview

- Facilitators review key concepts from last session dealing with finding job leads through networking, resumes, and online job search.
- Facilitators review agenda for current session dealing with information interviewing.

Section III: The Definition and Benefits of Information Interviewing

- Facilitators ask the class who has heard of information interviewing and would be willing to define it in his or her own words.
- Facilitators elaborate on student’s definition with the following formal definition: “An information interview is a meeting that you arrange to talk to someone in the industry, career or organization that interests you.”
- Facilitators then ask the class to identify some of the ways an information interview can help with a job search. Examples of useful answers include the following: to explore careers and clarify one’s career goals; to discover employment opportunities that are not advertised; to expand one’s professional network; and to identify personal professional strengths and weaknesses.

Section IV: Practicing Information Interviewing Skills
Participants are instructed to select two to three information interviewing questions from Handout 7.1 to be used in the following exercise.

In groups of three, participants will take turns practicing their information interviewing skills. The three roles are contact, informational interviewer, and observer.

Unlike most of the other exercises, participants are playing themselves and drawing on their actual experience. The contact will discuss a job that they had (preferably a civilian position if it was held within the last five years).

After the exercise, the facilitators will ask the participants to share reactions to their experience playing the contact and being the informational interviewer.

**Break:** 15 minutes

**Section V: Peer Review of Draft Resume**

In groups of three, participants review fellow group members’ resumes using Handout 7.2 before sharing the results with each other one person at a time.

Participants will rotate into new groups of three, repeating the same procedure described above, until having received feedback from at least six participants.

**Section V: Closing**

Review topics covered in this session

Request feedback from participants about what they found useful and what they would have wanted done differently.

Preview next session’s content: mock job interview
- Review homework assignments to revise draft resume using comment from classmates and Handout 7.3 and bring at least three copies of the revised resume to final session.
Session 8
Mock Job Interviewing and Final Reflection

Goal

- To learn how peer feedback can improve the quality of a resume, and identify elements that make resumes more or less effective, and to apply this knowledge toward improving their own resumes.
- To practice effective interviewing techniques and strategies in a realistic way and to receive constructive feedback on interviewing strengths and the areas they may need to improve upon.
- To review and reflect on personal growth during the program and how to concretely apply what has been learned to the job-search process.

Objectives

- Participants will practice giving and receiving constructive feedback on how to improve their own and fellow participants’ resumes based on Handout 7.2.
- Participants will conduct mock interviews and will demonstrate the four important elements of the job interview described in the lesson plan (e.g. responding to behavior based questions).
- Participants will reflect on the entire course and identify concrete next steps for their job search.

Materials

- Each participant will bring three copies of revised personal resume from Session 7.
Handouts

- Handout 7.2 - Resume and Cover Letter Peer Review Form
- Handout 8.1 – Guide to Interviewing

Session Activities

Section I: Participant Check-in

- Facilitators ask each participant to answer the following prompt: “What is one thing that you learned in the previous session that might be useful in your job search?”

Section II: Session Review and Preview

- Facilitators review key concepts from last class dealing with information interviewing and resume writing.
- Facilitators review agenda for current session dealing with mock interviewing.

Section III: Resume Review and Feedback

- In groups of three, participants will review each other’s revised resumes from Session 7, one at a time and, using Handout 7.2, identify the strengths and areas that may still need improvement for each document.

Section IV: Introduction to Job Interviewing

- The facilitators ask participants as group to share what they think the purpose of an interview is, with the facilitators recording responses on dry erase board, flip chart, etc.
- If not mentioned in the participants’ answers to the above prompt, the facilitators should include the following points about the purpose of a job interview: to see whether your talents, abilities, interests and direction are a good fit for the job, the
company, and the company’s mission; to see if you would fit in with the other employees.

- The facilitators then follow up by asking the participants as a group to share what challenges they expect to face during an interview.

- As before, the facilitators record responses on dry erase board, flip chart, etc. Some common fears that can be added if not raised by participants include feeling rejected, embarrassed, humiliated, or disrespected.

- Facilitators review key concepts from last session dealing with values as source of motivation for success and transferable skills as a means of offering value in the labor market.

Section V: Job Interview Demonstration

- Facilitators demonstrate a complete interview with the assistance of a class participant.

- Elements to be demonstrated by the facilitators include the following:
  - Greeting and icebreaker
  - Responding to one substantive behavioral interview or work background questions (e.g. “Can you give us a specific example of how you handled a conflict situation with a co-worker?”), “What in your background do you feel would be of benefit if you had this position?”).
  - Asking questions about the position and or company
  - Closing the interview by sharing how impressed the interviewee was with the company/organization, summarizing how the interviewee’s skills and
strengths are a good fit for the job, and express your enthusiastic interest in the position.

- Thanking the interviewer for the meeting and asking what the next step in the decision process would be.

- Facilitators asks participants what they felt was done well and what could have been done better by the interviewee during the interview.

**Break: 15 Minutes**

**Section IV: Mock Interview Practice in Groups of Three**

- In groups of three, participants will take turns playing the role of the “job-seeker”, the “interviewer”, and an “observer” until each participant has played all three roles once.

- Participants will provide their revised resume to the interviewer when playing the role of job-seeker.

- While this is a practice exercise, the job-seeker will be using their actual job history and qualifications when interviewing with the participant playing the “interviewer” and the “interviewer” will do his or her best to provide realistic and plausible information about the position being applied for.

- Facilitators ask each participant to share what they found useful about the exercise and what they paid attention to when playing the job-seeker versus the interviewer versus the observer role.

**Section IV: Final Mock Interview Practice with Session’s Facilitators**

- The Facilitators will take the role of “interviewer” and interview each class participant briefly (no more than ten minutes)
• The interviewee is expected to demonstrate the same skills covered in the previous exercise (e.g. responding to at least one substantive behavioral interview or work background question)

• Each member will receive supportive feedback following the mock interview.

• Class participants who are not being interviewed will be asked to observe and write down one positive aspect of the interviewee’s performance that they may be asked to share at end of each interview.

Section IV: Group Reflection and Award Ceremony

• Facilitators lists the major area covered over the eight weeks on a dry erase board or flip chart and then leads class in sharing answers to questions like the following:

  o What range of feelings came up for you during the experience? When were you surprised? Frustrated? Pleased? Affirmed? Disappointed? Angry…?

  o What are you learning from this? What difference does that make to you? What do you understand differently now? What is important about what you have learned?

  o Now, what will you do with what you have learned?

  o What might be a first step in your job-search? Can you do this tomorrow? If not, what do you need to do first?

• Facilitators should especially emphasize the benefits for the group of questions because they focus on participants creating a job search plan consisting of
achievable steps that can be done in a day, rather than huge steps which take days or weeks to accomplish.

- Facilitators conclude the session by handing “Certificates of Completion” to each participant, one at time, and thanking them for their hard work, active participation, and wishing them well.
CHAPTER 5

Project Evaluation

Introduction

This chapter’s purpose is to provide a brief but comprehensive evaluation of the suitability of this program for post 9/11 veterans in a career transition. Three professionals working in the field of career development were asked to review chapters three and four to determine the program’s utility, currency, structure and quality as it relates to helping the target population achieve career transition to civilian employment. The author gratefully acknowledges the generosity of these reviewers in giving their time and expertise to evaluate the project’s workshop design.

Background and Experience of the Field Evaluation Group

The reviewers for Chapters 3 and 4 of this project were Jenni Helfrich, Denise Leong-Brattain, and Mary Robins.

Evaluator #1, Jenni Helfrich, is the current Director of Strategic Communication and Emerging Markets at California State University Sacramento’s (CSUS) College of Continuing Education Administration and has an Applied Doctorate in Educational Leadership from CSUS. She has had extensive experience working with this project’s target population as part of CSUS’ continuing education program and was a co-presenter of a workshop at the 2008 International Career Development Conference entitled, “Troops to Work…Increasing the Speed to Employment for Returning Military and Their Families.”

Evaluator #2, Denise Leong-Brattain, earned her Master of Arts Degree in Counseling from Loyola Marymount University and has provided career counseling
services at University of Southern California, Mount San Antonio College, and currently with Glendale Community College as a tenured member of the Counseling Department.

Evaluator #3, Mary Robins, is the current Director of Career Services at Menlo College in Atherton California. She holds a Masters in Career Development and has over twelve years working experience as a career counselor.

**Summary of Finding from the Field Evaluation Group**

What follows is a summary of the field evaluation group appraisal of this project’s appropriateness for the target population. It is organized by the group’s responses to six evaluation questions.

1. **To what degree does this program address the particular problems and needs of the population?**

   Evaluator #1 concluded that the program does an excellent job of defining the multiple issues facing veterans and that this project is appropriate for the subpopulation of veterans without significant physical and or emotional conditions that are seeking civilian employment. Evaluator #2 and #3 concurred with this assessment. In addition, Evaluator #3 expressed the opinion that, given the currently limited growth in the U.S. job market, the workshop described in this project will be increasingly needed in order to more fully prepare former U.S. service members for a difficult job search process.

2. **To what degree is the format of this program (primarily group workshops) appropriate for this population?**

   Evaluator #1 felt that the format of the workshop, particularly on its emphasis on small group work, was beneficial in two ways. First, the format allows participants to learn how to work in groups and teams in other than the strict “command/control”
framework typical of the military. Second, the sharing of career transition challenges in small groups can help to normalize the challenges that participants face in finding work.

Similarly, Evaluator #2 felt that the workshop’s group format was “ideal” for this population, concluding that it was likely to create a feeling of “comradery and community” for participants who already share similar backgrounds and who are preparing to face similar challenges. Evaluator #3 elaborated on this point by saying that group work also allows organizations to reach a larger population of those in need.

3. To what degree are the assessments used in this program appropriate for this population?

Evaluator #1 affirmed that the assessments used in this program were both “aligned with typical career services” and were “extremely on target” for measuring the transitional skills and values needed for career transition. Evaluator #2 concurred with this conclusion, with Evaluator #3 contending the assessments were both easy to administer and easy for the participant to understand the results.

4. To what degree are the exercises and activities used in this program appropriate for this population?

Overall, Evaluator #1 felt that the exercises and activities for the program were well thought through. She suggested that one way of increasing learning during the triad exercises would be to have the participant playing the role of a job interviewee share a self-evaluation of his or her performance in that role before hearing feedback from other participants in the group. Evaluator #2 agreed with the appropriateness of the program’s individual, group, and interactive lecture teaching methods. Evaluator #3 elaborated on the preceding statement by pointing out that the program’s exercises provide time for
self-reflection which enhances learning. Additionally, the exercises also help the group to function as a resource and networking tool for its members.

5. To what degree are the program’s goals and objectives likely to be met in the allocated time frame?

While Evaluator #1 felt that the program’s goals and objective would be accomplished by the program, she also expressed the reservation that an eight week format might be perceived as an overly long instructional time frame for the target population, especially if they were seeking immediate employment. She mentioned the use of a boot camp model as a possible alternative, but recognized that such an accelerated format, while creating job search momentum, might actually limit useful learning that occurs during the training. Neither Evaluator #2 nor #3 raised any concerns regarding the program ability to meet its expressed goals or that eight training sessions might discourage the target population from signing up for the program.

6. Do you have any of recommendations to make this program more effective?

All three evaluators offered valuable recommendations to this program which reflects both the depth of their professional training and their practical knowledge in program design and execution.

Evaluator #1 pointed out the potentially dramatic increase in the program effectiveness if it were taught by a former U.S. service member who is also a capable group facilitator.

Evaluator #2 presented several options and constructive critique for the program. One such suggestion was to change way the facilitators collected formative assessment information. For example, rather than asking participants for feedback on the training
session at the end, it would be more useful to wait until the following session to collect this information. Evaluator #2’s reasoning was that postponing the formative assessment in this way would lead to greater learning by participants by giving them more time to reflect and process their experiences in the session. Another suggestion was to possibly find alternatives to questions using the format “how are you feeling” in case such participants are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with responding to such requests. A third and particularly salient suggestion was the advantage of preparing for the need for personal counseling that might arise during the training. Specifically, she suggested consulting with the sponsoring organization’s staff therapist or psychologist before the start of the program to discuss how to best support the program’s participants and what type of intervention or framework should be put in place if or when personal counseling issues do arise.

Evaluator #3 provided a diverse set of recommendations aimed at improving the instructional material, assessing the technical competency of the participants to effectively use the computer resources required to complete session assignments, and that workshop facilitators be properly trained in the administration and interpretation of psychometric assessments (e.g. Strong Interest Inventory®). She also identified means of amplifying usefulness of a prompt used in Session 4 of the workshop. The prompt was, “What do you, both as individuals and as veterans, see as your greatest challenges or obstacles to employment outside the military?” Evaluator #3 felt, and I agree, that asking this same questions during the first and last session, as well as during Session 4, would improve the program in several ways. First, it might uncover job search issues not already in the workshop that nonetheless could still be addressed at some point during the
training. Second, it would act as a simple formative assessment of the program, providing useful and timely corrective feedback to the program’s facilitators. Lastly, by repeating the question over the course of the training sessions, ideally the answers of the participants will begin to demonstrate progress in their understanding and confidence regarding the job search process as well as identifying those participants who may still need additional support after the training has concluded.

Conclusion

The feedback provided by these evaluators will greatly add to the effectiveness and usefulness of this program, should it be implemented in the future. After reflecting on some of the evaluators’ suggestions and observations, the author plans to make the following modifications to the program.

The formative assessment of the program will be more tightly focused on the feedback of clients to the following question, “What do you, both as individuals and as veterans, see as your greatest challenges or obstacles to employment outside the military?” This question captures the essence of the program’s goal, which is to assess and raise the job search self-efficacy of the program’s participants. Integrating this question into Sessions 1, 4, and 8, both the facilitators and the participants will be able to keep the larger purpose of the workshops in focus and to assess the group’s progress toward achieving it.

In light of feedback from one evaluator that veterans might find it unsettling to respond to open ended assessment questions about feelings in a group, questions dealing with emotions will be made narrower in scope. For example, instead of, “How are you feeling today?” the program will use questions like, “So how are you feeling about the
exercise that we just completed?” The purpose of this alteration is to find a more appropriate balance between the challenge the program puts on participants to become aware of and integrate feelings into the job search process and the need to avoid demands on participants that do not contribute to their job search success. For similar reasons, the program leader would make sure to establish a referral process for participants to contact the sponsoring organization’s staff therapist or psychologist before the start of the program.

Finally, though the program already calls for the workshop facilitators to be an experienced career professional, the program will be amended to explicitly require that the facilitators are qualified to administer and debrief the Strong Interest Inventory® and any other assessment tools that might be used and which require certification.

In conclusion, in order to make the program more effective in helping its target population, the program will need to be amended to incorporate the changes discussed in this section. This also assumes that the facilitators of the program would use formative assessment information to improve the program during its ongoing delivery.
References


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military combat deployment. *JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association, 300*(6), 663-675.


Loghran D.S. & Klerman J.A. (2008) *Explaining the Increase in Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Servicemembers During the Global War on Terror*. Santa


http://www.va.gov/VETDATA/docs/SpecialReports/Unemployment_Rates_FINAL.pdf/.


Appendix A: Veteran Career Program Intake Form

Please fill in all requested information completely

Name: ___________________________ Address: ___________________________
Decorations: ___________________________
SS#: ___________________________ Email: ___________________________
Phone where you can be reached: ___________________________
Age: _______ DOB: _______ Gender: M ___ F___ Race/Ethnicity _______
Referral Source: ___________________________
Reason for Referral ___________________________

In Case of Emergency Contact:
Name: ___________________________ Address: ___________________________
City: ___________________________ State: _______ Zip: _______
Phone: ___________________________

MILITARY
OIF/OEF Veteran _______ Security Clearance _______
Branch _______ Active Duty _______ National Guard _______ Reserve _______
Rank _______ Grade _______
Primary Military Occupation _______ Specialty _______
Certifications ___________________________
Military Education, Training ___________________________
United States military occupation code -
NEC/AFSC/MOS _______
Unit ___________________________
Time in Service: _______ Yrs _______ Months _______ Days
Time in Unit: _______ Yrs _______ Months _______ Days
Time in theater: _______ Yrs _______ Months _______ Days
Number of deployments: ___________________________
Where ___________________________ From _______ To _______
Where ___________________________ From _______ To _______
Where ___________________________ From _______ To _______
Where ___________________________ From _______ To _______

Honors/medals/awards/decorations ___________________________
Military Discharge (DD-214) _______ Discharge type _______ Date: _______
(Please attach a copy)
Legal military issues?
Satisfied with military experience?
Civilian legal actions (where/what/when/pending?)

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION (VA)
VA Claim Number
Disability: Yes ___ No ___ Rating % ___ In Process ___
If yes, how sustained: Combat ___ Non-combat ___ What ________________
Where ________________________________
Date(s) ________________________________
Documented? Yes ___ No ___
Need to speak to a Benefits Counselor? Yes ___ No ___
Name of Benefits Counselor and/or Case Manager ______________________________

BACKGROUND
Gender:
Female ___ Male ___ Transgender ___ Female to Male ___ Male to Female ___ Other ___
Ethnic Identity ________________________________
Born/Raised ________________________________
HS Grad? ___ Suspensions/Expulsions ___ College ___
Associates of: ___ Bachelor of: ___ Master of: ___
Continuing Ed: ________________________________
Single ___ Engaged ___ Married/Significant Other ___ How long? ___
Spouse’s Name: ________________________________
Children/Ages ________________________________
Religious or spiritual upbringing ________________________________
Present Affiliation ________________________________
Is this an important part of your life? ________________________________
Why/why not? ________________________________
MEDICAL HISTORY (For additional space, please continue on reverse)

General health

Are you now under a doctor’s care? ________________________________

Reason for doctor’s care __________________________________________

Are you taking any medication? _____________________________________

If yes, what kind? ________________ Reason for medication ________________

Last medical examination ____________________

Have you ever been hospitalized for a physical illness? ________________________

If yes, please describe ________________________________________________

Vision Impairment       Yes   ____        No   ____        Date   ______

TB Test of Chest X-Ray      Yes   ____        No   ____        Date   ______

History of Injuries/Surgeries/Limitations (Please list & include dates)

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

SLEEP HABITS

Hours (currently) ___________ Restful ____________________________

Interrupted   ____  Nightmares   ____  Initial insomnia   ____  Trouble awakening   ____

Hours (previously) ___________ Restful ____________________________

Interrupted   ____  Nightmares   ____  Initial insomnia   ____  Trouble awakening   ____
### PSYCHOLOGICAL / EMOTIONAL HEALTH

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you seen a mental health provider?</td>
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<td><strong>When</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Where</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Diagnosis</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Provider</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Reason</strong></td>
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<th>Are You Feeling Suicidal?</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Idea</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intent</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Plan</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Threats</strong></td>
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<th>Previous feelings</th>
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<td><strong>Previous attempts</strong></td>
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<td>Has a family member/close friend committed suicide?</td>
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<th>Are You Feeling Homicidal?</th>
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<td><strong>If yes, toward whom?</strong></td>
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<th>Previous feelings</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Previous attempts</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>History of violent behavior?</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Do you have</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flashbacks</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrusive thoughts</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paranoia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obsessive thoughts</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excessive/irrational fears</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hallucinations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Auditory</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tactile (touch)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Olfactory (smell)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Visual</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gustatory (taste)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Problems with</th>
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<tr>
<td>Word retrieval</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confusion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Work History (please start with your most recent job first)

Employer/Branch of Military________________________________________
Job title:________________________________________________________
Dates:_______________________________ Wage:_____________________
Duties/ Responsibilities
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Did you receive specialized training?  Y  N
If yes, please explain___________________________________________________
Reason for leaving:_______________________________________________________
Did you like that type of work?  Why or why not?
________________________________________________________________________

Employer/Branch of Military________________________________________
Job title:________________________________________________________
Dates:_______________________________ Wage:_____________________
Duties/ Responsibilities
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Did you receive specialized training?  Y  N
If yes, please explain___________________________________________________
Reason for leaving:_______________________________________________________
Did you like that type of work?  Why or why not?
________________________________________________________________________

Employer/Branch of Military________________________________________
Job title:________________________________________________________
Dates:_______________________________ Wage:_____________________
Duties/ Responsibilities
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Did you receive specialized training?  Y  N
If yes, please explain___________________________________________________
Reason for leaving:_______________________________________________________
Did you like that type of work?  Why or why not?
________________________________________________________________________
GOALS
If accepted, what do you intend to gain from this program?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
How do you plan to achieve this?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
What are your expectations of this program?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
How do you define success for yourself?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Why do you think you should be selected for this program?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________  ______________________________________
Applicant Signature                          Date

_________________________________________  ______________________________________
Staff Signature                               Date
A well-crafted resume and cover letter can set you apart from other candidates. Strong resumes do more than summarize your educational background and work history; they emphasize the results of your efforts and draw clear parallels between your skills and experience and an employer’s needs.

THE 5 STEPS OF RESUME DEVELOPMENT

Step 1: Analyze the Job Description
Read job descriptions thoroughly and then highlight all of the keywords which indicate required and preferred skills, abilities, attributes, and qualifications. If an employer is looking for somebody who is innovative, punctual, and attentive to detail, use these same or similar words in your resume.

Although you had already chosen a career while in the military, it may be difficult to translate that career into civilian terms. One tool to help with this task is Military.com’s online employment search engine that allows veterans to tailor their job search according to their military training and specializations. The Job Skills Translator webpage can be found at www.military.com/skills-translator. This translator also features estimates on salaries, training required and future outlook. O*NET online has a similar skills translator which uses the Military Occupational Classification (MOC) system. O*net’s translator can be accessed at http://www.onetonline.org/crosswalk/MOC/.

Step 2: Generate a List of Accomplishments and Military Professional Development
Using your military advantage means taking advantage of every professional development opportunity the military gave you. These opportunities are unique to the military and not only make for successful service members, but also put you in high demand in the civilian workforce.

Create an inventory of your accomplishments—tasks that you enjoyed doing, did well, and are proud of. Include education/training, volunteer experience, jobs, projects, work assignments, travel, and group or team activities. Focus on the outcomes of your efforts. Quantify your results if possible. Describe your accomplishments with numbers and percentages. Explain how often you did your tasks, the percentage of increased productivity, the cost savings, the number of people you supervised or trained, or the dollar value of equipment you were responsible for.

Here are some examples:

- Supervised 14-member staff
- Produced 150% over quota for eight consecutive months
- Resulted in $250,000 savings
- Administered travel budget of $15 million
- Reduced inventory loss by 20%
- Developed training program for a 600 person organization
Don’t be humble! Resumes are promotional tools.

**Step 3: Identify Relevant Skill Areas**
Frame your experience so that it focuses on skills and achievements that are desirable for that particular position. Make sure each accomplishment you list highlights a skill the employer is looking for.

**Step 4: Write Descriptive Phrases**
Using action verbs, write concise phrases to describe experiences that demonstrate your relevant skills. The accomplishments on your resume should ultimately be targeted to address an employer’s needs. Do your best to place them in order of relevance with the most relevant information as close as possible to the top.

**Step 5: Choose a Format**
While resume templates may be tempting, they tend to be inflexible; also, employers are often familiar with them and may perceive you as lacking ingenuity. Here’s a chart to help you select a format.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selecting a Resume Format</th>
<th></th>
<th>Hybrid or Combination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chronological</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skills or Functional</strong></td>
<td><strong>Combines the other two formats. Can be organized in different ways, but usually displays experiences with descriptions in reverse chronological order grouped under skill headings.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lists your experience in reverse chronological order—from most recent to least recent.</td>
<td>• Lists your experience based on skill headings, which are not necessarily in chronological order.</td>
<td>• Works best when there are some consistent themes to your experience (teaching, leadership, marketing, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Works best when your work, volunteer, and academic experience relate directly to the type of job you’re applying for.</td>
<td>• Works best when you are trying to break into a field where you have little or no experience. A good choice for career shifters.</td>
<td>• The benefit of this format is that it provides employers with easily identifiable skill areas and a sense of your history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Illustrates consistency in your work history. If there are wide gaps in your experience, this may not be the best format for you.</td>
<td>• Actual work history is summarized in a brief section at the bottom of the page.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Most popular resume style. The majority of on-campus recruiters and business employers prefer this style.</td>
<td>• Focus is shifted away from where and when you developed particular skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The skills themselves are the main attraction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESUME DOs AND DON’Ts**

**Do**
- Make your professional summary relevant and concise.
- Focus on the specific results of your work, significant achievements, and recognition received.
- Use action verbs such as “created” or “coordinated” to describe your experience.
- Get feedback from several people, including a career counselor.
• Have somebody whose writing skills you trust proofread your resume for spelling and grammatical errors.
• Remember to describe both your paid and unpaid positions or volunteer experiences.
• Exercise restraint rather than cramming too much information onto a resume.
• Tailor your resume to each specific position.
• Omit experiences that you would not want to repeat in future positions unless they are necessary for the job.
• Use readable and common fonts

Don’t
• Use phrases such as “Responsibilities included.”
• Use resume templates included in word processing software.
• Manipulate margins or font size to accommodate information in place of proper editing.
• Include routine job duties such as “making copies.”
• Use long sentences or paragraphs.
• Submit the same resume to every employer, regardless of the position.
• Write long objectives such as, “To find a sales position at a medium sized corporation where I can grow and develop my management skills.”

EMAILING RESUMES
Before emailing your resume, try to find out the employer’s format preference. Some accept attachments; others prefer your resume in the text of the email message. If you can’t find out the employer’s preference, send it both ways in one message. Unless you are told otherwise, include a cover letter. Send the resume and cover letter in one email message.

When submitting a resume via an organization’s website, use the formatting and display style recommended by the website.

To send your resume as an attachment:
• Give the document a name the recruiter will associate with you, such as “RoryMiller.doc” Don’t give it a generic name like “Resume.doc.”
• Be sure your document is virus free
• Email it to yourself to make sure it’s easy to open and the formatting remains intact

To send your resume in the text of the email message:
• Save both the resume and cover letter as text documents (.txt)
• Put the cover letter first
• Do not use bold, underlining, bullets, distinctive fonts, colored text, or html codes.
Use asterisks, plus signs (+), dashes, all capital letters, and combinations of these to highlight text
Text resumes look plain and ordinary, but employers are used to this. They are more concerned with whether the content meets their needs.

**To make your resume scannable:**
Some employers use resume database tracking systems. They scan incoming resumes (sometimes letters, too) into a database and when they have openings, retrieve resumes using relevant keywords.
Some companies will indicate on their website if they scan resumes and often provide formatting tips.
- Include industry or job-specific keywords, especially relevant skills, major, specific areas of study, and experience (e.g., marketing research, java, html, sales, gel electrophoresis).
- Use 10 to 12 point font size. Do not use italics, underlining, fancy fonts, bullets or multiple columns. Use all bold or capitals for emphasis.
- When submitting a hard copy by mail, print it on white paper with a laser printer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resume Components</th>
<th>BASICS</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifying Data</td>
<td>Put name, street address, email address and phone or message number at the top of the page (include area codes and zip codes). Can also include personal web page if relevant.</td>
<td>Voicemail message, email address, and website content should be appropriate for a potential employer. Don’t answer the phone during a job search unless you are in an appropriate environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Name of school, major, degree received, graduation date, projected graduation date, or dates of attendance if degree was not completed.</td>
<td>Include any course titles relevant to the targeted position. Honors and grade-point average are optional; include if among your strong points. If you attended more than one school, list the most recent first. You don’t have to list all the schools you have attended nor high school. Additional education and training may either go here or under a separate heading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience/Work History</td>
<td>Paid and unpaid work qualifies as experience. Emphasize tasks, skills, abilities, and accomplishments related to the targeted position. Give the job title, employing organization, and dates of employment.</td>
<td>Present achievements, contributions, and results (e.g., streamlined a procedure or made a cost-saving suggestion).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional components—use if appropriate for your background and the employers you’re targeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Objective</strong></td>
<td>A one-line description of the type of position you want.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follows your name, address and phone number at the top of your resume. Should be specific rather than a general statement of your interests.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills &amp; Abilities or Summary of Qualifications</strong></td>
<td>Foreign languages, computer skills, office skills, lab techniques, or transferable skills not mentioned elsewhere in the resume.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills and abilities can be combined under one heading or listed separately. Make sure your list includes concrete examples of your abilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>Mention if you are proficient or fluent in a foreign language.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you understand a language but are not fluent, still mention it. For example: fluent in Russian, conversational Spanish, or basic French.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities &amp; Interests</strong></td>
<td>In order of importance or reverse chronological order, list student activities/organizations, professional associations, and committees in which you have participated. List any offices that you held with the skills you used.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Include activities and interests that show leadership or initiative or that pertain to your career focus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Involvement/Volunteer Activities</strong></td>
<td>List offices held, organizations, projects, and accomplishments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the setting is political or religious, you may want to use generic descriptions (e.g., Youth Leader for church, Speech Writer for City Council candidate). If substantial, these may be listed under “Experience.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Honors</strong></td>
<td>Recent graduates and continuing students can include academic honors such as Dean’s List, honor societies, and scholarships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can be listed separately or under Education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research &amp; Publications</strong></td>
<td>Briefly describe relevant research projects. List published articles, papers or books.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class Projects</strong></td>
<td>List relevant projects completed in college classes. List any research, lab skills, or software/programming languages used.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This shows that you have hands-on experience and is a good strategy for younger students with limited experience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Include if your career interest involves travel or knowledge of other cultures.</td>
<td>You can use this as a way of distinguishing yourself if you have significant travel experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References/Portfolio</td>
<td>It is not necessary to end your resume with the phrase, “References Available on Request,” but this is the best place to state that you have “Portfolio and/or writing samples available on request.”</td>
<td>Create a separate page for references. List names, titles and contact information. Always ask permission before using anyone’s name as a reference. Include people who know about your work-related abilities, such as former employers, volunteer project supervisors, and faculty. Do not use relatives or friends.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EMAILING RESUMES**

Before emailing your resume, try to find out the employer’s format preference. Some accept attachments; others prefer your resume in the text of the email message. If you can’t find out the employer’s preference, send it both ways in one message. Unless you are told otherwise, include a cover letter. Send the resume and cover letter in one email message.

When submitting a resume via an organization’s website, use the formatting and display style recommended by the website.

**To send your resume as an attachment:**
- Give the document a name the recruiter will associate with you, such as “MillerJennifer.doc” Don’t give it a generic name like “Resume.doc”
- Be sure your document is virus free
- Email it to yourself to make sure it’s easy to open and the formatting remains intact

**To send your resume in the text of the email message:**
- Save both the resume and cover letter as text documents (.txt)
- Put the cover letter first
- Do not use bold, underlining, bullets, distinctive fonts, colored text, or html codes. Use asterisks, plus signs (+), dashes, all capital letters, and combinations of these to highlight text
- Text resumes look plain and ordinary, but employers are used to this. They are more concerned with whether the content meets their needs

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Some employers use resume database tracking systems. They scan incoming resumes (sometimes letters, too) into a database and when they have openings, retrieve resumes
using relevant keywords. Some companies will indicate on their website if they scan resumes and often provide formatting tips.

- Include industry or job-specific keywords, especially relevant skills, major, specific areas of study, and experience (e.g., marketing research, java, html, sales, gel electrophoresis).
- Use 10 to 12 point font size. Do not use italics, underlining, fancy fonts, bullets or multiple columns. Use all bold or capitals for emphasis.
- When submitting a hard copy by mail, print it on white paper with a laser printer.

**RESUME CHECKLIST**

STOP! Don’t submit your resume until you have checked off this list!

- Are your name, address, city, state, zip code, phone number and email address at the top of the page?
- Is the resume pleasing to the eye with an easy to-read font, good layout? Can an employer learn the basics about you with a 10 second glance at it?
- Did you use bullets, bold, all capitals, and underlining to highlight the parts you want to emphasize (e.g., job titles)?
- Did you tailor your resume for the position by including key skills and experiences the employer wants?
- Is information listed in order of importance and relevance to the requirements listed in the job description?
- Does the resume avoid generalities and provide specific information about context, actions taken, and results?
- Do most phrases begin with action verbs such as “developed,” “initiated,” etc.?
- Have you been accurate and truthful about your accomplishments rather than being too modest or exaggerating?
- Did you check the spelling of every word and make sure the grammar and punctuation are correct?
- If you know your resume will be scanned, did you omit columns, underlining, and bullets?
- Have you had a Career Center counselor or peer advisor critique it?
- If you were the employer, would you call you for an interview?
VERB LIST FOR RESUMES & LETTERS

Management
administered
analyzed
assigned
attained
chaired
consolidated
contracted
coordinated
delegated
developed
directed
evaluated
executed
improved
increased
organized
oversaw
planned
prioritized
produced
recommended
reviewed
scheduled
strengthened
supervised

mediated
moderated
negotiated
persuaded
promoted
publicized
reconciled
recruited
spoke
translated
wrote
remodeled
repaired
solved
upgraded

Teaching
adapted
advised
clarified
coached
communicated
coordinated
demystified
developed
enabled
encouraged
evaluated
explained
facilitated
guided
informed
instructed
persuaded
set goals
stimulated
trained

Research
clarified
collected
critiqued
diagnosed
evaluated
examined
extracted
identified
inspected
interpreted
interviewed
investigated
organized
reviewed
summarized
surveyed
systematized

Financial
administered
allocated
analyzed
appraised
audited
balanced
budgeted
calculated
computed
developed
forecasted
managed
marketed
planned
projected
researched

Communication
addressed
arbitrated
arranged
authored
collaborated
convinced
corresponded
developed
directed
drafted
edited
enlisted
formulated
influenced
interpreted
lectured

negotiated
located
mediated
recognized
renegotiated
relocated
renegotiated

Technical
assembled
built
calculated
computed
designed
devised
engineered
fabricated
maintained
operated
overhauled
programmed
Creative
acted
conceptualized
created
customized
designed
developed
directed
established
fashioned
founded
illustrated
initiated
instituted
integrated
introduced
invented
originated
performed
planned
revitalized
shaped
Helping
assessed
assisted
clarified
coached
counseled
demonstrated
diagnosed
educated
expedited
facilitated
familiarized
guided
motivated
referred
rehabilitated
represented

Clerical or Detail Oriented
approved
arranged
catalogued
classified

collected
compiled
dispatched
executed
generated
implemented
inspected
monitored
operated
organized
prepared
processed
purchased
recorded
specified
systematized
retrieved
screened	tabulated
validated

More Verbs for Accomplishments
achieved
expanded
improved
pioneered
reduced (losses)
resolved (problems)
restored
spearheaded
transformed
Sample Chronological Resume

Ben Turner
2345 Brook Avenue, Englewood, Colorado 12345
(123) 456-7890
ben.turner@email.com

OBJECTIVE: Seeking a position as an armed security guard for Pinkerton Services

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS
• Active U.S. government security clearance
• Bilingual-fluent in both English and Spanish
• Superior performance award for past four years in security management
• Able to make difficult decisions in stressful situations

EXPERIENCE
19XX-20XX Security Specialist U.S. Marine Corps
• Supervised $100 million of highly sensitive equipment – efforts led to zero loss in a 3-year period.
• Implemented new system security plan that led to increased lockdown protection for brig personnel.
• Provided leadership, instruction, and supervision of 25 personnel – efforts resulted in a 30% decrease in staff turnover and a 10% increase in promotions.
• Expertly managed investigative reports – recognized as NCO of the Quarter for efficiency and accuracy of written instructions and documents.
• Proven ability to communicate effectively in diverse environments – efficiently managed a diverse workforce and inmate population resulting in a 10% decrease in inmate violence.

19XX-19XX Warehouse Supervisor Micro Chemical, Inc., Denver, CO
• Supervised a crew of 15 in daily operations, including evaluation and discipline – efforts led to a company-record promotion rate for staff and a 10% decrease in staff turnover.
• Monitored complex cataloging and ordering systems – implemented a fast-track procurement system for office supplies resulting in a 20% decrease in supply turnaround.
• Helped develop and implement an effective security system – efforts led to $24K savings annually by reducing pilferage and damage.
• Proficient at using Windows Vista, Microsoft Office, and PeopleSoft Databases

19XX-19XX Security Guard Mayfield Malls, Denver, CO
• Coordinated work assignments, evaluated performance and disciplined a four-member security team – recognized as “Security Supervisor of the Quarter” for boosting morale and encouraging an innovative and safe working environment.
• Investigated security and safety violations and wrote detailed incident reports – led to Mayfield Mall being recognized as the “Safest Shopping Facility in the Mountain States.”
• Helped diffuse conflicts in a public environment with regard to everyone’s safety – consistently recognized through customer feedback for excellent customer relations.

EDUCATION
• U.S. Marine Corps Specialized Training: Explosives, Firearms, Leadership, Diversity, Communication
• Metro State College 42 Semester Units in Administration of Justice, Denver, CO
Sample Functional Resume

Ben Turner
2345 Brook Avenue, Englewood, Colorado 12345
(123) 456-7890
ben.turner@email.com

OBJECTIVE: Seeking a position as an armed security guard for Pinkerton Services

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS
• Active U.S. government security clearance
• Bilingual-fluent in both English and Spanish
• Superior performance award for past four years in security management
• Able to make difficult decisions in stressful situations

EXPERIENCE

Security
• Supervised $100 million of highly sensitive equipment – efforts led to zero loss in a 3-year period.
• Implemented new system security plan that led to increased lockdown protection for brig personnel.
• Monitored restricted personnel in a correctional facility ensuring they remained in detention
• Helped develop and implement an effective security system – efforts led to $24K savings annually by reducing pilferage and damage.

Investigation
• Investigated security and safety violations and wrote detailed incident reports – led to Mayfield Mall being recognized as the “Safest Shopping Facility in the Mountain States.”
• Expertly managed investigative reports – recognized as NCO of the Quarter for efficiency and accuracy of written instructions and documents.

Communication
• Proven ability to communicate effectively in diverse environments – efficiently managed a diverse workforce and inmate population resulting in a 10% decrease in inmate violence.
• Helped diffuse conflicts in a public environment with regard to everyone’s safety – consistently recognized through customer feedback for excellent customer relations.
• Proficient at using Windows Vista, Microsoft Office, and PeopleSoft Databases

Supervision
• Provided leadership, instruction, and supervision of 25 personnel – efforts resulted in a 30% decrease in staff turnover and a 10% increase in promotions.
• Supervised a crew of 15 in daily operations, including evaluation and discipline – efforts led to a company-record promotion rate for staff and a 10% decrease in staff turnover.
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- Security Specialist U.S. Marine Corps
- Warehouseman Supervisor Micro Chemical, Inc. Denver, CO
- Security Guard Mayfield Malls Denver, CO

EDUCATION

- U.S. Marine Corps Specialized Training: Explosives, Firearms, Leadership, Diversity, and Communication
- Metro State College 42 Semester units in Administration of Justice, Denver, CO
Sample Combination Resume

Ben Turner
2345 Brook Avenue, Englewood, Colorado 12345
(123) 456-7890
ben.turner@email.com

OBJECTIVE: Seeking a position as an armed security guard for Pinkerton Services

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS
• Active U.S. government security clearance
• Bilingual-fluent in both English and Spanish
• Superior performance award for past four years in security management
• Able to make difficult decisions in stressful situations

EXPERIENCE

Security
• Supervised $100 million of highly sensitive equipment – efforts led to zero loss in a 3-year period.
• Implemented new system security plan that led to increased lockdown protection for brig personnel.
• Monitored restricted personnel in a correctional facility ensuring they remained in detention
• Helped develop and implement an effective security system – efforts led to $24K savings annually by reducing pilferage and damage.

Investigation
• Investigated security and safety violations and wrote detailed incident reports – led to Mayfield Mall being recognized as the “Safest Shopping Facility in the Mountain States.”
• Expertly managed investigative reports – recognized as NCO of the Quarter for efficiency and accuracy of written instructions and documents.

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• Proven ability to communicate effectively in diverse environments – efficiently managed a diverse workforce and inmate population resulting in a 10% decrease in inmate violence.
• Helped diffuse conflicts in a public environment with regard to everyone’s safety – consistently recognized through customer feedback for excellent customer relations.
• Proficient at using Windows Vista, Microsoft Office, and PeopleSoft Databases

Supervision
• Provided leadership, instruction, and supervision of 25 personnel – efforts resulted in a 30% decrease in staff turnover and a 10% increase in promotions.
• Supervised a crew of 15 in daily operations, including evaluation and discipline – efforts led to a company-record promotion rate for staff and a 10% decrease in staff turnover.
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- 19XX-20XX Security Specialist U.S. Marine Corps
- 19XX-19XX Warehouseman Supervisor Micro Chemical, Inc., Denver, CO
- 19XX-19XX Security Guard Mayfield Malls, Denver, CO

EDUCATION

- U.S. Marine Corps Specialized Training: Explosives, Firearms, Leadership, Diversity, and Communication
- Metro State College 42 Semester units in Administration of Justice Denver, CO
Ben Turner  
2345 Brook Avenue  
Englewood, Colorado 12345  
(123) 456-7890  
ben_turner@email.com

OBJECTIVE: Seeking a position as an armed security guard for Pinkerton Services

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS  
- Active U.S. government security clearance  
- Bilingual-fluent in both English and Spanish  
- Superior performance award for past four years in security management  
- Able to make difficult decisions in stressful situations

EXPERIENCE  
20XX-20XX Security Specialist, U.S. Marine Corps  
- Supervision of $100 million of highly sensitive equipment  
- Monitored restricted personnel in a correctional facility to ensure they remain in detention  
- Experienced in handling confidential material  
- Trained in diffusing hostile situations  
- Certified in the use of tear gas, C-4, and TNT  
- Qualified sharp shooter in small arms and assault weapons  
- Proofreading and checking contents of investigative reports  
- Proven ability to communicate effectively in diverse environments  
- Instruction, supervision and evaluation of 25 personnel

20XX-20XX Warehouse Supervisor, Micro Chemical, Inc., Denver, CO  
- Proficient at using Windows 3.x  
- Supervised a crew of 15 in daily operations, including evaluation and discipline  
- Monitored complex cataloging and ordering systems  
- Helped develop and implement an effective security system

20XX-20XX Security Guard, Mayfield Malls, Denver, CO  
- Coordinated work assignments, evaluated performance and disciplined a four-member security team  
- Investigated security and safety violations and wrote detailed incident reports  
- Helped diffuse conflicts in a public environment with regard to everyone’s safety

EDUCATION  
- U.S. Marine Corps, Specialized Training: Explosives, Firearms, Leadership, Diversity, Communication  
- Metro State College, 42 Semester Units in Administration of Justice Denver, CO
Appendix C: Skills Identification Handout
Adapted from the Maryland Department of Labor (n.d.)

Skills Identification

An important part of marketing your skills to employers is taking stock of what you have to offer so that you don’t undervalue yourself. Skills come from many different sources. Not all skills are gained by way of paid employment. You may have also gained significant skills as a volunteer where you were not paid. These skills still have value and could be in demand. As you analyze your skills, do not just think about the job titles you have held. Think about the specifics you did on each job. Consider the skills you possess, the skills you do not possess, and the skills you want to develop or refine. Compare your skills with the skills required in the jobs that interest you. This will enable you to understand how well you qualify for a position. Also, you will know what additional training or experience you need.

You probably don’t realize how many skills you have. In fact, you probably have more than you think. Employers want to know what skills you will bring to the job. You must be able to identify and give examples of your skills. Of all job seekers, 80-85% cannot describe their job skills in an interview. Knowing what you can do is an important part of your job search and your life.

There are three areas of skills to consider:

♦ Self-Management
♦ Transferable
♦ Job-Related

Self-Management

These are the skills you use day-to-day to get along with others to survive. They are the skills that make you unique. Sincerity, reliability, tactfulness, patience, flexibility, timeliness, and tolerance are all examples of self-management skills. Motivational attributes and attitudes are also self-management skills. Persistence, drive and cooperation are more examples. Do not underestimate self-management skills, especially those that show motivation and a good work attitude. Employers look for these skills to determine how a candidate will fit into the organization. How a person will “fit in” is an important consideration for employers.
**Transferable**

Transferable skills are the tools that enable you to move seamlessly from industry to industry, from career to career. Transferable skills can clearly illustrate to a prospective employer that:

a. You’ve done this before and you can do it again
b. You’ve done something similar and you can adapt

Simply put, they are skills you possess that can be used in an array of work situations. The skill sets required will vary considerably from industry to industry, and by work responsibilities. They can be derived from a variety of sources: your accomplishments, both personal and professional; your diverse work experiences; at-work training and educational background.

Having many transferable skills is sort of like being in a large, multi-model car dealer’s parts department. The parts department may have thousands of parts, but if you, the customer, (or employer) needs a part for your Chevy, then you need that specific part. It doesn’t make a bit of difference if the car dealer has the world’s largest inventory of Honda parts – you want Chevy parts.

**Job-Related**

Job-related skills are those skills specific to a job or occupation. A secretary is skilled in typing, word processing, answering telephones, company correspondence, and filing. An accountant would list accounts receivable, performing accounts payable, payroll, figuring taxes, using a 10-key adding machine, and computer accounting programs. A salesperson would include customer service, record keeping, order processing, inventory management, billing, and product displays. Job-related skills are important to employers for obvious reasons. They are the specific skills employers look for in a candidate.

As you create your own unique inventory of skills:

- Don’t get hung up over definitions or the process of how you identify your skills. The goal is to generate a list of skills. Definitions and process are simply tools to help you achieve that goal.
- Don’t limit yourself. Give yourself the benefit of the doubt.
- You do not have to be an expert to claim a skill. Include skills you may be just learning.

\[
\text{. . . most of what we know and what we’ve become we’ve learned from others . . . we are all students . . .}
\]
DESCRIBE YOUR SKILLS USING CONCRETE EXAMPLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. State the SKILL or STRENGTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Give SPECIFICS (when, where, what and how)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Show beneficial RESULTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. LINK TO THE NEW JOB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use the following format:

1. **SKILL or STRENGTH**
   
   e.g. “I am extremely reliable.”

2. **SPECIFICS (when, where, what and how)**
   
   e.g. “Last summer my boss at Allied Distributing was in the hospital and I was responsible for taking care of our customers for two months. I was the first to arrive and the last to leave. I double-checked every order and I made follow-up calls to each customer on a weekly basis.”

3. **RESULTS**
   
   e.g. “During that time, our customers never experienced any delays or were inconvenienced and my supervisor was reassured because she could count on me to take the initiative and get the job done.”

4. **LINK TO THE NEW JOB**
   
   e.g. “I believe my proven reliability would really enhance your company’s fine reputation for excellent customer service.”
DESCRIBE YOUR SKILLS
USING CONCRETE EXAMPLES

WHAT CAN I OFFER AN EMPLOYER?

 skl SKILLS

 spec SPECIFICs

 res RESULTS

 lkn LINK TO NEW JOB
Appendix D: Identifying Your Transferable Skills
Adapted from Fordham University (n.d.).

SKILLS EMPLOYERS WANT

What are transferable skills? Simply put, they are skills you have acquired during any activity in your life — jobs, classes, projects, parenting, hobbies, sports, virtually anything — that are transferable and applicable to what you want to do in your next job.

Experts who study trends in hiring find that most companies, regardless of size or industry, look for the same basic skills when hiring. The top skills employers are looking for in today’s workforce include:

• **Critical thinking**: Seeing the big picture and being analytical; comprehending what you read.

• **Good communication skills**: Getting your point across effectively when writing and speaking; skillfully expressing, transmitting and interpreting knowledge and ideas.

• **Visionary qualities**: Brainstorming, looking to the future, setting goals.

• **Self-esteem, motivation, and goal setting**: A positive attitude; showing a willingness to take the initiative.

• **Proficiency with information**: Being inquisitive, curious and resourceful; knowing how to conduct research.

• **Global-mindedness**: Understanding and showing an interest in other cultures and getting along with diverse groups of people.

• **Teamwork**: Working well with others to achieve common goals.

• **Learning to learn**: A desire for lifelong learning.

• **Basic academic skills**: Developed capacities that facilitate learning or the more rapid acquisition of knowledge; an ability to read, write, interpret data, complete basic computation.

• **Creative thinking and decision making**: Understanding of the steps involved with effective decision-making; ability to evaluate the effects and effectiveness of a decision; applying information creatively to specific problems or tasks.

• **Personal and career development skills**: Analyzing and learning from life experiences — both one's own and others; developing of personal growth goals that are motivating.

• **Interpersonal/negotiation skills**: Using interpersonal skills for resolving conflict, relating to and helping people.

• **Organizational effectiveness and leadership**: Supervising, directing and guiding individuals and groups in the completion of tasks and fulfillment of goals.

It is important to note that none of the skills listed above is job or career specific. They are all transferable skills which can be used in a variety of occupations. You may have
developed them through coursework, jobs, internships, volunteering, or just plain life experience.

As you begin your job search, it is important that you know your own qualifications. The concept of transferable skills is a vital job-search technique that all job-seekers should master, though the concept is especially important for career changers and students. It is critical for successful job seekers to carefully evaluate how their skills transfer into other opportunities. It's also important to look for ways to express this transferability to a prospective employer. By communicating your transferable skills effectively, you can enhance your marketability and open yourself up to a larger sector of the job market.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS IDENTIFICATION

By identifying your transferable skills you have the ability to make connections between your past experiences and your future aspirations. Below is a list of skills you may possess. They are not limited to one discipline or knowledge area, but rather they are transferable to many opportunities.

Please review the list below and select those areas which you have experience in. This exercise will assist you in preparing for many facets of your career transition, including resume writing and interviewing.

☐ Accepting and learning from negative criticism
☐ Assess learning styles and respond accordingly
☐ Assessing needs
☐ Assessing one's values in relation to important life decisions
☐ Assigning tasks and setting standards for staff
☐ Assisting in the establishment of personal goals and development of future plans
☐ Attending to detail
☐ Avoiding bias and preconceptions
☐ Ability to make decisions without feeling pressured
☐ Willing to take risks
☐ Behaving ethically
☐ Being punctual
☐ Being sensitive
☐ Believing in self worth
☐ Brainstorming and making use of group synergy
☐ Bright, energetic, learning quickly
☐ Calculating, performing mathematical computations
☐ Solving general problems and focusing on details
☐ Mobilizing team members
☐ Negotiating effectively
☐ Working on several problems at once
☐ Caring for and serving people
☐ Career counseling
Carrying out tasks with thoroughness and precision
Classifying and sorting information
Classroom guidance
Clerical skills
Coaching, guiding, encouraging individuals to achieve goals
Collaborating with others
Collaborative decision making
Communicating well with diverse groups and at all skill levels
Comparing and evaluating information
Compiling numerical and statistical data
Complex problem-solving skills
Conducting meetings
Conducting needs assessments
Resolving conflicts
Confronting and expressing opinions without offending
Consulting and recommending solutions
Consulting with stakeholders
Controlling budgets
Conveying a positive self image
Conveying a sense of humor
Conveying feelings
Cooperating
Coordinating people, activities and details
Coordinating tasks
Coping with feelings
Counseling, advising, guiding others
Counseling individuals and groups
Creating and administering evaluation plans
Creating and justifying organization's budget to others
Creating and maintaining a safe environment
Creating efficient systems
Creating innovative solutions to complex problems
Creating positive, hospitable environment
Creating ideas, innovating
Creativity
Creativity and flexibility in thinking
Critical thinking, abstract reasoning, problem-solving and conflict resolution skills
Dealing with data
Debating issues/ideas
Defining problems and identifying possible/apparent causes
Defining needs
Delegating tasks and responsibilities with respect
Demonstrating effective social behavior in a variety of settings and under different circumstances
Demonstrating empathy, sensitivity and patience
- Demonstrating flexibility during crisis
- Dependability/reliability
- Describing feelings
- Designing and planning skills
- Designing instruments (e.g., surveys, questionnaires) to obtain information
- Detail-oriented
- Developing and maintaining a budget
- Developing and facilitating work teams
- Fund-raising
- Developing and mentoring talent
- Developing educational curriculum and materials
- Developing goals for an organization
- Developing personal growth goals that are motivating
- Developing rapport easily with groups of people
- Editing and proofreading written material
- Educating
- Effective decision-making
- Effective writing and speaking skills
- Effectively participate in group discussions
- Empathy
- Encouraging the use of technology at all levels
- Encouraging, empowering and advocating for people
- Establishing and enforcing policies
- Engaging all stakeholders
- Enlisting help
- Envisioning the future and leading change
- Establishing culture to support learning
- Ethical Decision-Making
- Behaving ethically
- Evaluating information based on appropriate standards
- Evaluating personal and professional strengths and weaknesses
- Evaluating the effects and effectiveness of a decision
- Event planning
- Explaining difficult ideas, complex topics
- Express feelings appropriately
- Expressing ideas
- Extracting important information
- Facilitating brainstorming activities
- Facilitating conflict management/resolution
- Facilitating decision-making
- Facilitate groups in the decision-making process
- Facilitate self-awareness in others
- Financial management
- Flexibility
- Following through with a plan or decision
- Forecasting, predicting
- Formulating insightful and relevant questions
- Formulating questions relevant to clarifying a particular problem, topic, or issue
- Formulating and defending positions
- Gathering information
- Generating trust and confidence in others
- Giving constructive feedback
- Giving praise and credit to others for work well done
- Goal setting
- Good listening, clarifying, questioning, and responding skills
- Group guidance/counseling
- Growth-oriented – personally and professionally
- Guiding student planning
- Handling complaints in person and over the phone
- Handling several problems at one time
- Hiring and supervising personnel
- Human relations and interpersonal skills
- Hypothesizing and testing for results
- Identifying alternative courses of action
- Identifying and communicating value judgments effectively
- Identifying appropriate information sources and resources
- Identifying one's own strengths and weaknesses
- Identifying one's own values
- Identifying people who can contribute to the solution of a problems or task
- Identify possible alternative solutions and select the most appropriate ones
- Identifying problems and needs
- Identifying tasks to be accomplished
- Identifying central issues and key questions
- Identifying problems and potential problems
- Identifying resources needed (e.g., material, people, time)
- Identifying the steps in a project from beginning to end
- Imagining alternatives
- Implementing decisions
- Increasing productivity and efficiency to achieve goals
- Information and advice giving
- Information gathering and reporting
- Initiating new ideas
- Inspiring others to achieve common goals
- Instructing others
- Insuring completion of a task
- Interacting effectively with peers, superiors, and subordinates
| ☐         | Interacting with and appreciating people from diverse cultural, social, and religious backgrounds |
| ☐         | Interpreting both qualitative and quantitative data |
| ☐         | Interviewing people to obtain information |
| ☐         | Intuiting strategies and solutions |
| ☐         | Inventing products through experimentation |
| ☐         | Investigating clues |
| ☐         | Justifying the organization's budget to others |
| ☐         | Keeping a group "on track" and moving toward the achievement of a goal |
| ☐         | Keeping accurate and complete financial records |
| ☐         | Knowledge of capabilities and limitations of people |
| ☐         | Knowledge of counseling and psychological theories |
| ☐         | Knowledge of human development |
| ☐         | Knowledge of self-help theories and programs |
| ☐         | Knowledge of Special Education laws and resources |
| ☐         | Leadership |
| ☐         | Listening carefully, attentively, empathically, and with objectivity |
| ☐         | Maintaining group cooperation and support |
| ☐         | Making and keeping a schedule |
| ☐         | Making commitments to people |
| ☐         | Managing conflict |
| ☐         | Managing groups |
| ☐         | Managing money or budgets |
| ☐         | Managing personnel, projects and time |
| ☐         | Managing time and stress effectively |
| ☐         | Mediating problems |
| ☐         | Meeting deadlines |
| ☐         | Meeting goals |
| ☐         | Meeting the public |
| ☐         | Modeling behavior or concepts for others |
| ☐         | Motivating and leading people |
| ☐         | Multitasking |
| ☐         | Negotiating |
| ☐         | Oral & written communication |
| ☐         | Organizing people and tasks to achieve specific goals |
| ☐         | Organizing or managing projects |
| ☐         | Overseeing communication, email and telephones |
| ☐         | Participating in group discussions and teams |
| ☐         | Perceiving feelings, situations, and nonverbal messages |
| ☐         | Personal, professional management, and career development skills |
| ☐         | Perspective-taking |
| ☐         | Persuading/influencing others to a certain point of view |
| ☐         | Planning and organizational skills |
| ☐         | Possessing courteous telephone skills |
☐ Practicing ethical behavior in difficult situations
☐ Predicting future trends and patterns
☐ Preparing and writing concise and logically written materials
☐ Presenting ideas effectively in speeches or lecture
☐ Prioritizing tasks
☐ Proactive
☐ Problem-solving skills
☐ Processing human interactions, understanding others
☐ Proficiency in understanding, organizing, and integrating information
☐ Program development and management
☐ Project planning skills
☐ Promoting individual achievement
☐ Promoting change
☐ Providing referrals
☐ Provide training for development of staff
☐ Providing appropriate feedback
☐ Providing support for others
☐ Public relations
☐ Reading materials accurately, analytically and critically
☐ Reflecting
☐ Remaining flexible with decisions
☐ Remembering faces, accurate spatial memory
☐ Reporting information
☐ Representing others

☐ Research and planning skills
☐ Resource management
☐ Responding appropriately to positive and negative feedback
☐ Risk-taking
☐ Running meetings
☐ Safeguarding human rights
☐ Seeking additional opportunities for professional development
☐ Selling ideas, products or services
☐ Sensitivity to cultural and ethnic diversity
☐ Service skills (service to students, parents, school staff and the community)
☐ Setting and meeting deadlines
☐ Setting realistic goals and priorities and determining courses of action
☐ Sharing credit
☐ Social-emotional skills, e.g., perspective-taking, clear communications, interpersonal problem-solving
☐ Speaking effectively to individuals and groups or in public
☐ Statistical and inferential skills
☐ Strong data assessment and analytical skills
☐ Structuring and evaluating arguments
☐ Structuring conversations (e.g., interviews) to obtain information
☐ Summarizing complicated materials
- Supervising others
- Supporting and praising one another for reaching goals and accomplishments
- Synthesizing and summarizing information from multiple sources
- Synthesizing facts, concepts, and principles
- Systematizing information and results
- Taking initiative
- Taking responsibility for decisions
- Taking risks, make hard decisions, be decisive
- Teaching a skill, concept, or principle to others
- Teaching, advising, coaching, empowering
- Teamwork and team building
- Technology skills
- Testing and assessment
- Thinking critically
- Tracking progress of projects and troubleshooting
- Training/consulting
- Translating information into meaningful conclusions, recommendations, or plans of action
- Understanding strengths and weaknesses of members and use strengths to build team development
- Understanding the feelings of others
- Understanding and knowing how to deal with people
- Understanding people’s different perspectives
- Using a variety of media for presentation
- Using a variety of sources of information
- Using body language that makes others comfortable
- Using effective coaching/mentoring skills with peers or subordinates
- Using various forms and styles of communication
- Use various media to present ideas imaginatively
- Utilizing technology to facilitate research and management
- Visualizing concepts and results
- Willingness to take initiative
- Working effectively under pressure
- Working effectively with organization members
- Working with people
- Writing case studies and treatment plans
- Writing grant proposals
- Writing carefully reasoned reports and essays
- Writing concisely
- Writing copy for sales and advertising
- Writing well organized and documented reports
Add any transferable skills that were not listed above but that you think are important to include.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Now that you have identified some of your transferable skills you will be able to market yourself even more effectively. Your success in finding the position right for you will depend on your ability to showcase your innate talents and skills.

Hopefully, this exercise has helped you discover that you have even more to offer than you realized!
Appendix E: Taking StrengthsFinder 2.0

Where to Find Your Access Code

You can find your unique access code inside the packet in the back of your StrengthsFinder 2.0 book.

How to Use Your Access Code

Your access code allows you to take the Clifton StrengthsFinder 2.0 assessment and access the StrengthsFinder 2.0 resources on this website. Use the following procedure to enter your access code:

1. Go to this webpage: https://strengths.gallup.com/signin/default.aspx

   **NOTE:** If you are already signed in, skip this step and proceed to step 3.

2. On the Sign In page, perform one of the following actions:
   
   o If you have an account, enter your username and password in the appropriate fields, then click *Sign In*.
   
   o If you do not have an account, click the "Click to Register" link and complete the registration process.

3. Click *My Dashboard* on the top menu.

4. On the My Dashboard page, click *StrengthsFinder 2.0* in the submenu.

5. On the StrengthsFinder 2.0 page, click the *Enter Access Code* button to proceed.

6. On the Access Code Entry page, enter your access code. Then click the *Continue* button and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the process.
Appendix F: Talent vs. Skill & Experience
Adapted from Brierty (n.d.).

I’m about to teach you a SKILL, give you some experience and then demonstrate how someone with a little talent can get far better results than someone with skills and experience… here goes:

Look at the puzzle below:

Man

Board

If you haven’t worked it out, it reads: ‘Man Over Board’. Let me teach you a skill to make it easy to work these things out…

**Look at the position of the first word and its positional relationship to the second word.**

So I’ve taught you a SKILL… now you need some experience to become good at this stuff. So I’m going to give you another one to solve…

mind

Matter

That’s really easy using the training I gave you at the start… *Mind* is over the word *Matter* and it works out as: ‘Mind over Matter’. But what happens when something falls a little outside of your training?…

Stand

I

This one is a little different… using your training you’d be right in saying that the phrase is: ‘Stand over I’, but common sense would tell you that’s not quite right and the real answer is: ‘I understand’.

Now you begin to see how a personal quality, like common sense – or talent, can get a totally different – and better – result than someone who was blindly following the rules or
training. Now here’s the thing: you simply can’t train for all the variables in any given job and talent is what separates the outstanding people from the average. Talent allows them to come up with the right solutions when things happen that are a bit out of the ordinary.

Following is one last example to really drive this point home.

So your job is solving word puzzles? I’ve given you some training, you have some skills and experience and managed to solve a problem that you weren’t trained for. But what happens when you see something that doesn’t fit the criteria of your training or skill? Like this:

cnalam

The training we gave you doesn’t help you solve it… and you haven’t had experience with this one either. People with a TALENT for word puzzles will easily be able to solve this puzzle: ‘Backward Glance’.

I could give you harder word puzzles but my point is this:

Training and experience will only take you so far. You can’t teach talent… Dyson, Gates, Jobs, Dell didn’t necessarily have formal training in their chosen industries but their talent enabled them to make things happen, the sort of things that change industries.

So don’t think because you don’t have a degree or years of experience, you can’t make incredible things happen or you can’t win that dream job.

More and more employers are starting to look for talent and more people are quitting their jobs to find jobs that USE their talents rather than jobs that use their skills, experiences or degrees they got stuck with when they first started out in their careers.

Talent explains why some people are stars at their job while others stumble… many human resource people believe in more training to get better results when sometimes the best thing to do is get more talent. Taking the StrengthsFinder 2.0 during this training is one way to help you to identify your specific talents and learn how you can better apply them in your job search and your professional life.
Appendix G: CPP Client (Testing) Website Assessment Instructions

The CPP assessments can be completed from any computer with internet access.

To take a CPP Assessment:

• Using a web browser (not a search engine) access the testing site at:
  
  http://online.cpp-db.com/

• Enter the following Login (case sensitive):
  
  To be issued

• Enter the following Password (case sensitive):
  
  To be issued

• Leave the “User ID” **blank** (unless you are a return user & have a User ID #)
  
  Click “ENTER”

• From the menu, next to the instrument displayed:
  
  Click on the instrument you have been instructed to take;
  
  Newly Revised Strong [2005] then click the “TAKE IT” button

• You will now be prompted to fill out a demographics page:
  
  Provide the requested demographic information. Then click the “SUBMIT” button.

• After completing the assessment, below on the bottom of the page
  
  Click “DONE”

• If you have not completed all the questions, you will see another message prompting you to either resume or click “I’M DONE”. Please DO NOT close your browser without following this specific instruction or your assessment will not be submitted.
  
  Click “I’M DONE” (if completed) or “RESUME” (to complete your assessment)

*Please note: If you have clicked, “I’M DONE” to submit your responses, but have not completed enough questions, you will be prompted with this message:
Your responses have been saved; however, you did not respond to enough items to generate valid results.

**Important!! You may continue answering items by clicking the “Resume” button, or you can return at a later time if you are done for now.**

Please note that your responses will not be forwarded for scoring until you have responded to enough items to generate a valid score for your report(s).

- After completing an assessment, a message appears prompting you to choose one of two options: “TAKE ASSESSMENT” or “LOG OUT”.

**Click “LOG OUT”**

After you have clicked on “Log Out”, you may close your browser session.
**Appendix H: Career Clusters and Your Personal Network**
Adapted from the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium. (n.d.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Cluster</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Who you know who works in this field?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Architecture &amp; Construction</strong></td>
<td>Design/Pre-Construction, Construction, Maintenance/Operations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arts, Audio/Video Technology &amp; Communications</strong></td>
<td>Audio and Video Technology and Film, Printing Technology, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Journalism and Broadcasting, Telecommunications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business Management &amp; Administration</strong></td>
<td>General Management, Business Information Management, Human Resources Management, Operations Management, Administrative Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education &amp; Training</strong></td>
<td>Administration and Administrative Support, Professional Support Services, Teaching/Training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Finance</strong></td>
<td>Securities &amp; Investments, Business Finance, Accounting, Insurance, Banking Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Cluster</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Who you know who works in this field?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Science</td>
<td>Therapeutic Services            Diagnostic Services            Health Informatics            Support Services            Biotechnology Research and Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality &amp; Tourism</td>
<td>Restaurants and Food/Beverage Services            Lodging            Travel &amp; Tourism            Recreation, Amusements &amp; Attractions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Services</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development &amp; Services            Counseling &amp; Mental Health Services            Family &amp; Community Services            Personal Care Services            Consumer Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>Network Systems            Information Support and Services            Web and Digital Communications            Programming and Software            Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law, Public Safety, Corrections &amp; Security</td>
<td>Correction Services            Emergency and Fire Management Services            Security &amp; Protective Services            Law Enforcement Services            Legal Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Production            Manufacturing Production Process Development            Maintenance, Installation &amp; Repair Quality Assurance Logistics &amp; Inventory Control Health, Safety and Environmental Assurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Marketing Management            Professional Sales Merchandising Marketing Communications Marketing Research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science, Technology, Engineering &amp; Mathematics</td>
<td>Engineering and Technology Science and Math</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Cluster</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Who you know who works in this field?</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Transportation, Distribution & Logistics** | Transportation Operations  
Logistics Planning and Management Services  
Warehousing and Distribution Center Operations  
Facility and Mobile Equipment Maintenance  
Transportation Systems/Infrastructure Planning, Management and Regulation  
Health, Safety and Environmental Management  
Sales and Service | |
Appendix I: Job Search Methods
United States Department of Labor. (2008)

Finding a job can take months of time and effort. But you can speed the process by using many methods to find job openings. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics suggest that people who use many job search methods find jobs faster than people who use only one or two.

**Personal contacts.** Many jobs are never advertised. People get them by talking to friends, family, neighbors, acquaintances, teachers, former coworkers, and others who know of an opening. Be sure to tell people that you are looking for a job because the people you know may be some of the most effective resources for your search. To develop new contacts, join student, community, or professional organizations.

**School career planning and placement offices.** High school and college placement services help their students and alumni find jobs. Some invite recruiters to use their facilities for interviews or career fairs. They also may have lists of open jobs. Most also offer career counseling, career testing, and job search advice. Some have career resource libraries; host workshops on job search strategy, resume writing, letter writing, and effective interviewing; critique drafts of resumes; conduct mock interviews; and sponsor job fairs.

**Employers.** Directly contacting employers is one of the most successful means of job hunting. Through library and internet research, develop a list of potential employers in your desired career field. Then call these employers and check their websites for job openings. Websites and business directories can tell you how to apply for a position or whom to contact. Even if no open positions are posted, do not hesitate to contact the employer: You never know when a job might become available. Consider asking for an informational interview with people working in the career you want to learn more about. Ask them how they got started, what they like and dislike about the work, what type of qualifications are necessary for the job, and what type of personality succeeds in that position. In addition to giving you career information, they may be able to put you in contact with other employers who may be hiring, and they can keep you in mind if a position opens up.

**Classified ads.** The "Help Wanted" ads in newspapers and the internet list numerous jobs, and many people find work by responding to these ads. But when using classified ads, keep the following in mind:

- Follow all leads to find a job; do not rely solely on the classifieds.
- Answer ads promptly, because openings may be filled quickly, even before the ad stops appearing in the paper.
• Read the ads every day, particularly the Sunday edition, which usually includes the most listings.
• Keep a record of all ads to which you have responded, including the specific skills, educational background, and personal qualifications required for the position. You may want to follow up on your initial inquiry.

Internet resources. The internet includes many job hunting websites with job listings. Some job boards provide national listings of all kinds; others are local. Some relate to a specific type of work; others are general. To find good prospects, begin with an internet search using keywords related to the job you want. Also look for websites of related professional associations.

Also consider checking internet forums, also called message boards. These are online discussion groups where anyone may post and read messages. Use forums specific to your profession or to career-related topics to post questions or messages and to read about the job searches or career experiences of other people. Although these message boards may seem helpful, carefully evaluate all advice before acting; it can be difficult to determine the reliability of information posted on message boards.

In online job databases, remember that job listings may be posted by field or discipline, so begin your search using keywords. Many websites allow job seekers to post their resumes online for free.

Professional associations. Many professions have associations that offer employment information, including career planning, educational programs, job listings, and job placement. Information can be obtained directly from most professional associations through the internet, by telephone, or by mail. Associations usually require that you be a member to use these services.

Labor unions. Labor unions provide various employment services to members and potential members, including apprenticeship programs that teach a specific trade or skill. Contact the appropriate labor union or State apprenticeship council for more information.

State employment service offices. The State employment service, sometimes called the Job Service, operates in coordination with the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration. Local offices, found nationwide, help job seekers to find jobs and help employers to find qualified workers at no cost to either. To find the office nearest you, look in the State government telephone listings under "Job Service" or "Employment."

Job matching and referral. At the State employment service office, an interviewer will determine if you are "job ready" or if you need help from counseling and testing services to assess your occupational aptitudes and interests and to help you choose and prepare for a career. After you are job ready, you may examine available job listings and select
openings that interest you. A staff member can then describe the job openings in detail and arrange for interviews with prospective employers.

**Services for special groups.** By law, veterans are entitled to priority job placement at State employment service centers. If you are a veteran, a veterans’ employment representative can inform you of available assistance and help you to deal with problems. State employment service offices also refer people to opportunities available under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. Educational and career services and referrals are provided to employers and job seekers, including adults, dislocated workers, and youth. These programs help to prepare people to participate in the State's workforce, increase their employment and earnings potential, improve their educational and occupational skills, and reduce their dependency on welfare.

**Federal Government.** Information on obtaining a position with the Federal Government is available from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) through USAJOBS, the Federal Government’s official employment information system. This resource for locating and applying for job opportunities can be accessed through the internet at http://www.usajobs.gov or through an interactive voice response telephone system at (703) 724-1850, (866) 204-2858, or TDD (978) 461-8404. These numbers are not all toll free, and telephone charges may result.

**Community agencies.** Many nonprofit organizations, including religious institutions and vocational rehabilitation agencies, offer counseling, career development, and job placement services, generally targeted to a particular group, such as women, youths, minorities, ex-offenders, or older workers.

**Private employment agencies and career consultants.** Private agencies can save you time and they will contact employers who otherwise might be difficult to locate. Such agencies may be called recruiters, head hunters, or employment placement agencies. These agencies may charge for their services. Most operate on a commission basis, charging a percentage of the first-year salary paid to a successful applicant. You or the hiring company will pay the fee. Find out the exact cost and who is responsible for paying associated fees before using the service. When determining if the service is worth the cost, consider any guarantees that the agency offers.

**Internships.** Many people find jobs with business and organizations with whom they have interned or volunteered. Look for internships and volunteer opportunities on job boards, school career centers, and company and association websites, but also check community service organizations and volunteer opportunity databases. Some internships and long-term volunteer positions come with stipends and all provide experience and the chance to meet employers and other good networking contacts.
Appendix J: Critical Target Job Deconstruction
Adapted from Yate (2011, March 17)

Key point

Focus on the target job by looking at it from your potential employer’s point of view

**Step One.** Collect 6-10 job postings of the job you are best qualified to do.

Save them in a folder and also print them out.

You can find job listings by going on such websites as www.indeed.com and www.simplyhired.com. Both of these sites are job aggregators, which mean that they search thousands of job sites looking for jobs with your chosen keywords.

**Step Two.** Create a new MSWord doc and title it TJD for Target Job Deconstruction.

Start with a first subhead reading JOB TITLE, then copy and paste in all the variations from your samples. Looking at the result you can say, "when employers are hiring people like me they tend to describe the job title with these words."

This will help you to come up with a suitable Target Job Title for your resume, coming right after your name and contact information. This helps your resume perform well in resume database searches and acts as a headline giving human eyes an immediate focus.

**Step Three.** Add a second subhead titled

SKILLS/RESPONSIBILITIES/REQUIREMENTS/DELIVERABLES, ETC.

Look through all the print job postings across your desk for a single requirement that is common to all of your job postings that you have printed. Take the most complete description of that single requirement and copy and paste it (with a bullet) into your TJD doc; put a #6 by your entry to signify it is common to all.

Underneath this pasted entry add any other words and phrases from the other job postings used to describe this same area. Repeat this exercise for any other requirements common to all six of your job postings.

**Step Four.** Then repeat the exercise for requirements common to five of the jobs and then four and so on all the way down to those requirements mentioned in only one job posting.

When this is done you can look at your work and say, "when employers are hiring people like me they tend to refer to them by these job titles and they prioritize their needs in this way and use these words to describe them."
**Step Five.** This step will get you focused on the very practical competency issues of interest to employers, it is information you might well use in an interview as well as in your resume.

For each of the prioritized requirements you identified in Steps Three and Four, identify the problems and challenges that arise when you are executing your duties in this area. Then for each problem challenge identify

- Examples of you successfully tackling such an issue
- Examples of tactics and strategies you employ to reduce the occurrence of such problems.

**Step Six.** Looking again at the prioritized requirements you identified in Steps Three and Four, consider each individual requirement and recall the **best** person you have ever known doing that aspect of the job.

Then identify what made that person stand out in your mind as a true professional; think of personality traits (perhaps he always had a smile), specific skill sets, professional behaviors (perhaps she had good listening and time management skills), dress, body language, social skills.

Take the time to do this conscientiously and you will have a complete behavioral profile of the person every employer wants to hire, plus a behavioral blueprint for your future professional success.

**Step Seven.** Looking one last time at the prioritized requirements you identified in Steps Three and Four, consider each individual requirement and recall the **worst** person you have ever known doing that aspect of the job.

Then identify what made that person stand out in your mind as a failure: think of personality traits (perhaps he was passive aggressive), the lack of specific skill sets, professional behaviors (perhaps she never listened and was never on time with projects or for meetings), and remember to consider dress, body language, and social skills.

Take the time to do this conscientiously and this time you will have a complete behavioral profile of the person no employer wants to hire, plus a behavioral blueprint for total professional failure.

**Pulling it all together**

The most productive résumé focuses on your professional experience, *as it relates to your ability to deliver on the requirements of the job you have targeted* as the next logical step in your career.

You now have the essential information and insight into your target job to give the right focus to your job-targeted resume.
You also have a comprehensive list of the keywords employers use when looking for someone with this job title. You will use these descriptors in the **Core Competency** (see: Resume Getting Lost in Resume Databases) section of your resume, and repeat them in the body of your resume, placing these skill sets in the contexts were they were applied.

Additional Resources:

- For resume templates go to: http://docs.google.com/templates?q=resume
- Online resume tutorial: http://www.careerinfonet.org/resume/resume_toc.asp?nodeid=26
Appendix K: Informational Interview for Success
Adapted from University of California at Berkeley (n.d.).

What if you are not sure about your career goals…or you feel that you lack relevant experience and knowledge to get the career position you want. One of the best ways to find out what an industry, company or position is really like is to talk with people in careers you are considering. No one else can give you a better sense of the real life experiences, the challenges and opportunities, the specific and perhaps hidden demands as well as the drawbacks and limitations of the career field.

What is the history behind the information interview?

The concept of 'informational interviewing' was conceived by Richard Nelson Bolles, author of the best-selling career handbook, *What Color Is Your Parachute?* Bolles describes the process as "trying on jobs to see if they fit you." He notes that most people choose a career path without taking the time to speak with professionals in their field of interest. As a result, they find themselves in careers that are not a true match for their skills, values, interests, and abilities.

What exactly is the information interview?

The informational interview is a highly focused information gathering session with a networking contact designed to help you choose or refine your career path by giving you the “insider” point of view.

What are the benefits of conducting the information interview?

The information interview allows you to:

- Gather valuable information from industry professionals on career planning and job search strategies.
- Discover the “realities” of a particular career field and what is it *really* like to work in a given industry.
- Evaluate whether the career is compatible with your skills, interests, lifestyle and goals.
- Receive specific suggestions on how and where to acquire the experience and knowledge required (the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program may be able to help you here).
- Develop confidence in interviewing with professionals by discussing your interests and goals.
- Gain access to the hidden job market. Over 80% of quality jobs are secured through networking.
- Expand your network of contacts in your field of interest for future opportunities
- Gain referrals to other professionals in the same field for additional networking.
What are some of the subject areas that can be discussed about the industry/organization during the information interview?

- Work environment
- Ideal skill set/qualifications
- Industry trends
- Career path of interviewee
- Lifestyle
- Typical compensation
- Challenges/Rewards
- Career ladder of field

How does the information interview work?

The information interview works best if it is done in person, face-to-face in the setting that you are interested in working (i.e. hospital, investment bank, consulting or non-profit organization etc.). However, it can also be done by telephone, e-mail, chat group, or on the internet.

How do I find the contacts for the information interview?

- Ask friends, family, neighbors, colleagues, former employers ... anyone you know, for an information interview or for a referral.
- If you are attending a college or university, contact faculty, the campus’ career center personnel, other campus offices, and especially any alumni services the institution has.
- Call community service agencies, trade, and professional organizations (e.g., veteran associations, women's organizations, Chamber of Commerce) or review their websites.
- Scan the Yellow Pages, articles in newspapers, magazines, and journals.
- Attend meetings (local, state, regional) for professional associations in your career interest field(s).

Can I ask for a job during the information interview?

No. The information interview is not a scheme or trick to get you into the door to talk to a potential employer about a job (although it certainly opens doors to specific job opportunities down the road). IT IS ABSOLUTELY TABOO TO ASK FOR A JOB DURING AN INFORMATION INTERVIEW.

How can I best prepare for the informational interview?

Preparation is the key to success. In advance of the meeting, you should prepare as you would for a traditional interview.
• Read about the career area and organization in which the person you are interviewing is affiliated.
• Review materials found online, at your local library, or a career center, if you have access to one, for background information on the industry/career field.
• Check the company/organization’s internet site.
• Know your own interests, skills, values and how they relate to the career field represented by the person you are interviewing.
• Prepare an “opening statement” that gives a brief profile of who you are and your interest in the field.
• Develop a number of well thought out, open-ended questions to stimulate a meaningful discussion.
• If you meet face-to-face, dress appropriately in interview attire. You want to give a good first impression and look like someone who could be an asset to the profession.

**How do I set up the information interview?**

An information interview can be obtained through personal referral, written request, or cold-call telephone contact. Many career counselors recommend a written request followed by a phone call, feeling you have a better chance for a favorable response. The advantage is that the letter serves as a preliminary introduction and helps explain your purpose.

**How do I follow up with my contacts?**

1) Be sure to send a formal thank you letter to the person you interviewed. A nice touch is to share with them the results of any project or suggestions discussed during the interview, and inform them what steps you have taken to apply the advice you received.

2) Report back to anyone who gave you a lead. This is not only common courtesy, it helps keep others interested and involved in your career plans and job search.

3) Continue to maintain contact with the person you interviewed. Keep in touch by sending an occasional article on a business related topic that you think would be of interest or a quick note updating them on your current activities.

4) Later on, if you decide to pursue the career field, you may wish to send out a “feeler” letter along with your progress report by stating, “If you hear of any job possibilities, I am enclosing my resume and would appreciate hearing from you.”
Appendix L: Resume and Cover Letter Peer Review
Adapted from Collier, J. (n.d.)

As you review your classmate’s resume, be sure to look for and comment on items we’ve been discussing in class about resume format, action words, and tailoring the resume to a specific job. Respond to the questions below as you review the resume.

Resume

What is your first impression?

Does the resume include the following sections? If not, what additions would you suggest?

Identification: Name, Address, Phone Number? E-Mail?

Career Objectives: Is the objective too specific? Too general? What changes would you suggest?

Educational Background: Does this section include - university, degree, date of graduation, GPA (if good/ necessary), honors, relevant and related courses? What changes would you suggest? If the resume is for veteran who has not completed a degree, options for listing educational dates of attendance include the following: if just beginning a degree program, “Currently Enrolled”; half-way through, “Completed X# of semester hours”; and if the degree is almost finished “Expected Graduation in Month/Year.”

Work Experience: Does this section include - all jobs and duties that relate; or all jobs and duties? Are the descriptions of job duties clear and accessible (format)? Have they translated their work experience and training into “civilian” language? Should any one of the jobs listed be emphasized or downplayed? Is the verb structure parallel? Strong verbs and adjectives? Suggestions?

Skills: Do the skills listed seem applicable to the position? Can you suggest other skills which might be included?
Given the order of the main sections of the body, what aspects of the writer’s background are highlighted? Does this order make sense?

Are Optional Categories - Activities, Personal Data - included? Are the descriptions clear and accessible? Consistent format? Necessary?

References: Should be listed. Available upon request? Suggestions?

Format (given the quality of the draft): How does the document look? Consistent use of fonts, font sizes? Distinctive headings? One-page long? Consistent punctuation?

List the three best qualities of the draft. Next, provide three suggestions for revision.

Circle or make notations beside any misspellings, problems of usage, awkward phrases/sentences.

**Cover Letter**

Does the letter have proper form - semi-block, paragraphs indented?

Does the letter include all the necessary components (return address, header, salutation, introductory paragraph, body paragraph(s), and conclusion)? If not, what’s missing?

Does the introductory paragraph include: legitimate name dropping; mention who, where, when and how the writer found out about the position; state the exact position desired; restate the qualifications the ad mention; state your qualifications; state what the writer
will contribute to the position/institution? Style suggestions?

Does the order of the body of the letter follow resume structure — education, work/skills paragraph?

Does the education paragraph mention: special, relevant and advanced courses or training and detail what skills, ideas, concepts the writer learned; mention special projects; point out what you the writer learned in the military that relates to the position; mention other training which provided related skills; mention any clubs, professional organizations that relate to the job?

Does the work/skills paragraph mention: related position held while in the military; name of position; duties performed; skills acquired, responsibilities assumed?

Does the concluding paragraph include: A request for an interview and suggest a time period; provide time of day when you can be contacted; state if you will contact them; reiterate contributions you will make?

List the three best qualities of the draft. Next, provide three suggestions for revision.

Circle or make notations beside any misspellings, problems of usage, awkward phrases/sentences.
Appendix M: Resume Checklist
Adapted from Davenport University Career Services. (n.d.).

**Five Second Review:** Give it the once-over…is your resume inviting or scary?

___ Utilized bold, italics, capitalization, and spacing to produce a visually attractive document. Font style and size is appropriate, consistent, and easy to read.

___ Sections are arranged so that the most important information is listed first (top to bottom; left to right).

___ Length of resume is appropriate given your experience.

**Heading**

___ Name and contact information is located at the top of your resume.

___ Contact information is current.

___ Only one professional email address is provided.

**Objective**

___ Is clear and concise.

___ Indicates realistic career plans.

___ Is supported by the rest of your resume.

**Education/Coursework**

___ Does not contain extraneous/irrelevant information. Need name of the degree, the school, the location of the granting institution and the year the degree was completed. Only the month and year of graduation is specified.
If you are just beginning a degree program, add a line that explains “Currently Enrolled.” If you are half-way through, add “Completed X# of semester hours.” If you are almost finished a degree, add “Expected Graduation in Month/Year.”

Degree(s)/Majors listed are named appropriately and listed in reverse chronological order.

School name and location (city, state) are provided.

Overall GPA is included if it is 3.0 or higher.

Relevant courses (if provided) are appropriately titled. Major courses irrelevant to your stated objective are omitted.

Experience/Skills

Experience is appropriately separated into Relevant and Additional Experience sections if applicable.

Utilized reverse chronological order when listing experience.

Emphasized appropriate experiences (PT/FT employment, activities, volunteer work, etc.) related to your objective.

Provided complete information for each entry: military branch, organization, location, dates, and position title.

Used action verbs (supervised, oversaw, designed, etc.) to describe responsibilities and accomplishments.

Provided quantifying information when appropriate: supervised 10 employees.

Illustrated skills appropriate to your stated objective.
Honors/Memberships/Activities

___ Provided names of organizations (military, professional, community, campus) you’ve been involved with.

___ Indicated positions held and/or recognitions received from organizations.

___ Did not include high school activities and awards.

Grammar/Spelling

___ Does not contain any misspellings.

___ Utilized appropriate verb tense throughout resume.

___ Sentence structure is clear and organized.

___ Avoided personal pronouns and complete sentences.

___ Utilized capitalization/punctuation consistently.

Comments:

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Appendix N: Job Interview Guide
Adapted from the University of California at Santa Cruz Career Center. (n.d.).

KNOW YOURSELF

- Your personal value
- Your interests
- Your abilities and skills
- Your qualifications for a job
- Your career goals and employment preferences

RESEARCH THE COMPANY, AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION

- Who is the employer? What is their mission?
- What is their product or service?
- What has happened recently? Mergers, deregulation?
- What is the company climate/environment like?
- General industry trends?
- What/Who is their competition?

This will allow you to relate your assets to the organization and position and to ask your own well-directed questions during the interview.

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU RESEARCH COMPANIES & ORGANIZATIONS

- http://www.learnwebskills.com/company/ provides an online tutorial on how to research companies online.
- Company websites and the internet. Career Services’ website has helpful links to make your search easier
- Professional associations and publications.
- Chamber of Commerce
- Company annual reports/literature including brochures and pamphlets
- Newspapers
- Business periodicals and trade journals
- Oakland University’s Alumni Relations Office/CAST mentor program
- Company employees, friends, neighbors, relatives, etc.

PREPARE FOR THE INTERVIEW

- Review questions you are likely to be asked by an employer. There are a number of questions commonly asked during an initial employment interview. Be aware of these questions, and develop well thought-out, concise replies. (Sample questions attached.)
- Write the questions down on flashcards. By shuffling the flashcards, you will become comfortable answering questions in any order.
You can practice interviews all by yourself or recruit friends and family to assist you.

If you have a webcam, video camera or tape recorder, record your responses and play them back. Assess your body language (if you have a video camera) and your answers to the questions. How is your posture and eye contact? Are you fidgeting? Are your answers too long-winded? Do you sound confident? If you do not have a video camera or tape recorder, practice in front of the mirror.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

1. Screening: The screening interview is the first interview of a series with the main purpose to screen out inappropriate candidates. It will often take place over the telephone and includes verification of resume information or requests additional information. Screening interviews also may take place during job fairs or on-campus recruitment. The screening interview saves a company considerable time and expense in eliminating weak candidates. Be prepared. Keep a copy of your resume and the job description by the telephone. Research the company and prepare for interview questions as soon as you submit your resume and cover letter.

2. One-on-One: The one-on-one interview includes an employer and the candidate with an exchange of questions and answers.

3. Panel Interview: In the panel interview you are interviewed by several people at the same time. The panel interview is often used to see how you would fit in with the group. It is easy to be intimidated by a panel interview, however, relax and focus your responses on all panel members.

4. Group Interview: Although not common, group interviews are sometimes conducted. In the group interview you are interviewed with several other applicants. In the group interview, the employer will observe interpersonal communication skills along with problem solving skills.

5. Series Interview: In the series interviews, you meet with several individuals within the same organization - one at a time. This is particularly true for high level positions and academic faculty positions. The interviews may take place over 2-3 days. Although you may be asked the same questions several different times, it is important to respond enthusiastically and treat each interview as a single opportunity.

6. Stress Interview: In this interview, the employer asks situational questions which test your ability to handle stressful situations. Recruiters for sales and marketing positions often use this interviewing technique.

7. Teleconferencing: In this day of high tech, many companies are conducting interviews via teleconferencing. By using innovative telecommunication systems, employers can interview a candidate miles away from the company. In this situation, face the camera and respond as if you were talking with an actual person.

8. Information Interviewing: This interview is initiated by the job applicant and is not conducted to obtain a job. Candidates interview professionals in the field to
find out more about careers. See the Information Interviewing handout in the Career Center for protocol and hints on conducting this type of interview.

STAGES IN THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

1. First impressions: Introduction and greeting. Small talk about traffic, weather, etc.
2. Instructions: Employer informs applicant of interview process and summarizes the job description.
3. Interview: Questions and answers.
4. Wrap-up: Applicant has opportunity to ask questions. Employer informs about next stages of the hiring process.
5. Follow-up: Applicant follows-up with thank you letter.

SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING TIPS

I. PREPARE BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- Perform a thorough self-evaluation. (Know your strengths and weaknesses.)
- Research the position, the organization and the community.
- Be prepared to discuss how your background can benefit the organization.
- Know your overall and major GPA if you are attending a college or university.
- Advise the appropriate people that you would like to use them as references
- Have a professional telephone greeting on your answering machine.
- Rehearse...Rehearse...Rehearse

II. DRESS FOR SUCCESS

- Take time to be well-groomed, have neatly trimmed hair, moderate makeup, be well-groomed and clean.
- Dress in business attire (This guide by Virginia Tech provides guidelines on how to dress appropriately: http://www.career.vt.edu/interviewing/interviewappearance.html)
- Look professional. You are more likely to be heard in the interview and employers will be more likely to assume you can perform the job.

III. PREPARE TO MARKET YOURSELF

- Know the points you want to make
- Create an outline of the strengths, skills and assets you have to offer and want to communicate in the interview.
- Develop examples or “stories” that demonstrate in some detail how you have applied these assets. Describe the situation, action and outcome.
- Prepare intelligent questions you want to ask the employer
IV. MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION

• Arrive early.
• Bring extra copies of your resume.
• Be courteous to everyone you meet: receptionists, etc.
• Greet the interviewer by name, with a smile. Be sure you know the correct pronunciation and spelling of the name.
• Shake hands using a firm, but not too firm, grip.
• Show enthusiasm and confidence in your voice and posture.

V. PAY ATTENTION TO BODY LANGUAGE

• Watch your posture; sit up straight, don’t slump
• Rest your hands on the table to help ensure correct posture
• Avoid fidgeting
• Avoid excessive hand gestures
• Make good eye contact and maintain it throughout the interview

VI. DURING THE INTERVIEW

• Listen attentively to the questions
• Use professional language; avoid slang.
• Ask for clarification if you do not understand a question
• Give complete answers and use specific examples and accomplishments whenever possible
• Use illustrations, descriptions, statistics and testimonials to support your claims
• Answer questions with honesty and sincerity
• Be aware of the time allocated
• Speak loudly and clearly enough for the employer to hear you
• Don’t criticize former employers, faculty or associates.
• Avoid talking about personal problems

VI. THE END OF THE INTERVIEW

• If the job interests you, ask for the job. For example: “After hearing more about your company and the position I am even more interested in the job. I hope to be working with you soon”.
• Ask when you can expect to hear back from the employer and the next steps in the process.
• Thank the interviewer and collect a business card or get the person’s name, phone and email.

VII. FOLLOW-UP AFTER THE INTERVIEW

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• Take a moment to make some notes after each interview
• Write and send a thank you letter that same evening
• Forward any requested material promptly
• If you don’t hear from the company within one week, contact them about the status of the position

TOP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following are top interview questions from the country’s leading employers (compiled by MonsterTRAK.com).

• Tell me about yourself.
• What do you know about our company?
• Why do you want to work for us?
• What unique qualities or abilities would you bring to this job?
• What are your major strengths and weaknesses?
• How long do you plan to stay at our company? Where do you see yourself in five years?
• Tell me about a time when you failed at something, and what you did afterwards.
• Describe a time when you worked on a team project. What was your relative position on the team? Were you satisfied with your contribution? How could it have been better?
• Why did you choose your school and course of study?
• Think back to a situation in which you had to resolve a conflict. Tell me how you did it.
• Tell me about a project that you had either at work (i.e. the military) or school. Describe in detail how you managed it and what the outcome was.
• What do you do in your spare time?
• What salary are you expecting?
• What other types of jobs or companies are you considering?
• Have you any questions for us?

Behavior-based interview questions (compiled by the National Association of Colleges and Employers)

• Describe a situation in which you had to use reference materials to write a research paper. What was the topic? What journal did you read? (research)
• Give me a specific example of a time when a co-worker or classmate criticized your work in front of others. How did you respond? How has that event shaped the way you communicate with others? (communication)
• Describe a situation in which you recognized a potential problem as an opportunity. What did you do? (initiative)
• Give me a specific example of a time when you sold your supervisor or professor on an idea or concept. How did you proceed? What was the result? (assertiveness)
• Describe the system you use for keeping track of multiple projects. How do you track your progress so that you can meet deadlines? (commitment to task)
• Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge your company or class was facing. What was the challenge? What roles did other play? (creativity and imagination)
• What, in your opinion, are the key ingredients in building and maintaining successful business relationships? Give me examples of how you’ve made these work for you. (relationship building)
• Describe a time when you got co-workers or classmates who dislike each other to work together. How did you accomplish this? What was the outcome? (teamwork)
• Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn? (time management)
• Describe a specific problem you solved for your employer or professor. How did you approach the problem? What role did others play? What was the outcome? (decision making)

QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYERS IN A JOB INTERVIEW

• Why is the position available?
• What are you hoping a person in this position will accomplish?
• What are your expectations for new hires?
• What types of assignments/projects may I expect the first six months on the job?
• What personal qualities will make someone successful on this job?
• What will my responsibilities be as far as__________? (Ask about any areas not clear from the job description)
• Can you give me an ideas as to what percent my time will be spent________?
• Do you have a detailed description of the position for which I am being considered?
• What is the greatest challenge facing your staff (department, or organization) right now?
• What are your company’s (or department’s) goals for the next two to three years?
• How would you describe the corporate culture?
• What are some characteristics of your company that make it attractive (or different from other companies)?
• What do you like best/least about working for this organization?
• What are the possibilities for job advancement and promotion? or Is it organizational policy to promote from within?
• How large is the department?
• Whom will I be working with?
• Will I be working on a team or in a group?
• Who will my supervisor/supervisors be or whom would I report to?
• What hours will I be working? Is overtime expected? If so, how much?
• Is there a probationary period?
• Is there training provided on the job? How long is the training period? Who will be training me?
• Do you financially assist employees with the costs of any college classes or job related training courses? or What are the advanced educational opportunities with XYZ company?
• Is relocation likely or required? Are relocation expenses covered?
• Will I be required to travel? If so, how often?
• Do you do formal evaluations of your employees? Who conducts these and how often are they done? Is the evaluation put in writing?
• When can I expect to hear from you? or When should I check back with you?
• When will an offer of employment be made and how?

QUESTIONS NOT TO ASK

• What is the salary?
• What are the benefits?
• How much vacation/sick time will I get?
• Questions about the organization that you should research before the interview:
  o The hiring organization’s services or products.
  o Where is it located (including branch offices, etc.)?
  o How long has it been in business?
  o How many people does the company employ?
  o Who is in charge of the company/organization?
  o Who is in charge of the department you want to work in?
  o Who are the company’s competitors?
  o What has been its growth?
  o What are its prospects for the future?
  o What are the entry and top level salaries and positions?
  o The hiring organization’s recent history, competitors, mergers, acquisitions, etc.
  o The general job responsibilities.

THE BEHAVIORAL QUESTION

Many employers are asking behavioral questions. You won't get the typical "Tell me about your strengths and weaknesses" questions in a behavioral interview. Instead, you'll be asked to provide specific examples highlighting skills that are necessary for the job. Here are some examples of behavioral interview questions:

1. Describe a time when you tried to persuade a person or group to do something they didn't want to do.
2. Give me an example of a time when you faced a lot of obstacles to achieving a goal.
3. Talk about a stressful situation you've experienced.
4. Describe a time when you had trouble seeing eye to eye with a colleague.
5. Tell me about a project or role that you've taken on that is outside your job description.
6. Give me an example of when you worked with a group or team of people to complete a project.
7. Talk about a time when you were faced with a difficult decision and describe how it turned out.
8. Describe a time when you had to cope with strict deadlines or time demands.
9. Give me an example of a time when you were forced to make an important decision without all of the necessary information.
10. Tell me about a time that you made a presentation at work that received a significant amount of critical feedback, much of it negative. How did you handle the situation?

Sample Behavioral Question

Career counselors recommend you use the "STAR" method to answer these types of probing questions. That's ST for situation/task, A for action, and R for result. Bill Byham, author of "Landing the Job You Want," gives an example of a successfully answered question.

Question: Tell me about a time when you went out of your way to satisfy a customer.

Situation/Task: I was working in the production department of a large publishing company. We received a letter from a 9-year-old girl who was unhappy because the gold design had worn off the cover of a book we had published. She wanted a refund. My boss gave the complaint to me to handle.

Action: I immediately requested a refund check from our accounting department. I also called our printer, who investigated and identified one run of books in which the covers had been improperly printed. I obtained a copy of the book with a properly printed cover, and sent the book, the refund check and a personal letter to the girl, thanking her for pointing out the problem and apologizing for the inconvenience.

Result: The girl's mother called me to thank me for the response. She told me that she was going to recommend our books to all her friends with children.

Preparing for the Behavioral Interview

1. Think about a situation which matches the questions listed above.
2. Write about your experience using the STAR method.
3. Practice talking about the experience. You may wish to tape yourself.
4. During the interview, answer questions succinctly. Avoid rambling.
Appendix O: Questions for Program Evaluation

1. To what degree does this program address the particular problems and needs of the population?

2. To what degree is the format of this program (primarily group workshops) appropriate for this population?

3. To what degree are the assessments used in this program appropriate for this population?

4. To what degree are the exercises and activities used in this program appropriate for this population?

5. To what degree are the program’s goals and objectives likely to be met in the allocated time frame?

6. Do you have any of recommendations to make this program more effective?