



★★★ America's Heroes at Work

Hiring Veterans A Step-by-Step Toolkit for Employers



★★★ What we know about Transitioning Service Members



Transitioning Service Members

- Tend to possess an overall skill set that shows tremendous benefit the civilian workforce:
 - accelerated learning curve
 - dedication and focus
 - gets the job done
 - works brilliantly under pressure
 - more...
- Have difficulty translating their military experience into civilian language and terminology – and therefore have trouble getting their resumes to “the top of the pile”
- Are often unsure about exposing their military history due to societal stigma (re “the war” and media-displayed invisible injuries of war)



★★★ Injured Returning Service Members



More than **36,000** service members return with significant *physical* injuries.

Signature injuries of the current overseas conflicts are unseen.

- Nearly **one in five** veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars is currently suffering from depression or stress disorder. Estimates range up to **300,000** with PTSD.
- **19%** report they might have experienced a TBI, usually as the result of a roadside bomb. Approximately **60,000** have sustained mild TBI.
- PTSD among returning service members will cost the nation as much as **\$6.2 billion** in the two years following deployment -- an amount that includes both direct medical care and costs for lost productivity.



- When the Society for Human Resource Management surveyed its members (June 2010), **46%** said they believed post-traumatic stress and other mental health issues posed a hiring challenge. Just **22%** said the same about combat-related physical disabilities.
- Although media attention has helped make the diagnosis and treatment of PTSD and traumatic brain injury a government priority, veterans say it has also contributed to the stigma associated with these wounds.
- "They hear so many stories on the news — this soldier got back from Iraq and killed his wife — which makes people a little reluctant to hire you."



America's Heroes at Work

An Initiative Created FOR Employers



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America's Heroes at Work

Supporting the Employment Success of Returning Service Members with TBI & PTSD

Welcome to America's Heroes at Work - a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) project that addresses the employment challenges of returning Service Members living with **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)** and/or **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**.

Designed for employers and the workforce development system, this website is your link to **information and tools** to help returning Service Members living with TBI and/or PTSD succeed in the workplace - particularly Service Members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

What's New

Veterans Hiring Toolkit

Filled with useful information on hiring veterans, this Toolkit has been designed to assist and educate employers who want to include veterans and wounded warriors in their recruitment and hiring initiatives. Featuring a straightforward six-step process, it pinpoints helpful tools and outlines important steps to take when designing a veterans hiring initiative.

[LEARN MORE](#)

TBI, PTSD & Employment Training Tool

This interactive e-learning module is designed to educate managers, HR professionals and co-workers about TBI and PTSD in the



On the Job: Understanding TBI & PTSD

From simple workplace supports to job coaching and mentoring programs, employers can play a vital role in the recovery and rehabilitation of people with TBI and/or PTSD.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Learn How to Hire a Veteran

The America's Heroes at Work Veterans Hiring Toolkit provides the information and resources you need to recruit, hire and retain qualified Veteran employees.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Educating Employers on the Invisible Injuries of War

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Links to 1:1 Assistance

Findings:

- Top-level decision makers tend to drive employer participation in a veterans hiring initiative
- Recruiter training is an important part of starting a veterans hiring initiative
- Work experience, internship and mentorship opportunities are extremely helpful
- TBI/PTSD-related stigma exists among many employers - employers are unaware of the resources that exist to help them provide appropriate workplace accommodations





Hiring Veterans



*A Step-by-Step Toolkit
for Employers*



<http://www.americasheroesatwork.gov/forEmployers/HiringToolkit/>

★★★ Toolkit Purpose

- The Veterans Hiring Toolkit has been designed to:
 - assist and educate employers who have made the proactive decision to include transitioning Service Members, Veterans and wounded warriors in their recruitment and hiring initiatives.
 - pinpoint helpful tools and outline some important steps to take when designing a Veterans hiring initiative that works for your particular business.
 - showcase promising practices related to recruiting, retaining and promoting Veteran employees.
- Sprinkled throughout:



Did you know?



Resource Alert!



★★★ Step 1: Design a Strategy



Create a Plan:

- Familiarize yourself with the benefits of hiring transitioning Service Members, Veterans and wounded warriors
- Learn about the tax incentives associated with the hiring of Veterans as well as disabled Veterans
- Plan for results: Start with the basics



PLAN FIRST!

★★★ Step 2: Create a Welcoming & Educated Workplace



Assess your current processes and explore including Veteran-specific actions into your on-boarding strategies:

- Develop an understanding of military culture and experience
- Establish your company and its job application process as Veteran-friendly
- Learn the facts about hiring Veterans with invisible wounds of war: Demystify TBI and PTSD in the workplace



**ASSESS
DON'T GUESS**

★★★ Step 3: Actively Recruit Veterans and Military Spouses



Broaden your knowledge of how and where to find Veterans - and consider instituting a few strategies to help Veterans better find you:

- Determine employment opportunities and create detailed job descriptions
- Consider using military language in your outreach and job descriptions
- Consider alternatives to full-time employment, such as work experiences, internships and apprenticeships
- Access credible resources to help you look for qualified Veterans and wounded warriors who are seeking employment
- Know what you can and should not ask during an interview



★★★ Step 4: Hire Qualified Veterans and learn how to Accommodate Wounded Warriors



Reflect on your on-boarding strategies and consider adding a few new elements to be inclusive of Veterans, both with and without combat-related injuries:

- Create a culturally sensitive new hire orientation plan
- Understand your responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Consider disclosure concerns
- Know where to obtain free, one-on-one guidance on job accommodations



★★★ Step 5: Promote an Inclusive Workplace to Retain Veteran employees



Retaining a skilled workforce requires effort after the hire:

- Place a value on military service
- Expand traditional Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)
- Develop and promote peer mentorships in the workplace - Vet to Vet
- Practice Veterans appreciation and promote a Veteran-friendly workplace
- Recognize that military families may have different needs than civilian families
- Consider participating in local Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Programs
- Understand your responsibilities under USERRA





Step 6: Keep Helpful Tools and Resources at your Fingertips



Know the resources available to help employers in their Veterans hiring efforts:

- Keeping informed via social networking and e-news
- Resources on recruiting, hiring and retaining Veterans
- Know the answers to common employer questions about Veteran and disability employment, such as:
 - *Workplace accommodations*
 - *Costs, liabilities and return on investment*
 - *Candidate qualifications and capabilities*
 - *Stigma and employees with psychological health injuries and mental health concerns*
 - *Staff training and disability-friendly workplaces*



★★★ Final Thoughts – regarding injured returning Service Members



- The injuries related to military service (physical, psychological health and cognitive) are “acquired injuries.” Allow the Veteran time to figure out what his or her mind and body can do again.
- Every employee with a TBI or PTSD is an **individual** and therefore a strategy you try with one individual may not work with the next.
- You don’t need to have all of the answers! **Trial and error** is often the best practice...so long as the Veteran is part of the process.
- Workplace supports and accommodations create a welcoming and productive environment (for all employees).



★★★ For more information:



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