

Hire a Veteran- A Valuable Workforce Strategy

In today's climate as we look for that perfect employee, where do we find the best candidates for open positions? Have you ever considered looking at transitioning service members, Veterans, or military spouses? Where do I find these people, and why would they be a good fit for my company?

In Washington State between the Army, Navy, Coast Guard, and Airforce, we have three large military installations and several smaller ones including the Washington National Guard and various Reserve units.

Literally, thousands of service members transition out to the civilian world from Washington State bases every year. Almost 7,200 transitioned out from JBLM alone in 2020. While almost half move out of state, many more choose to make Washington their permanent home. This translates to 1,000's of potential candidates for your business.

What would a former service member offer to my company? First you are looking at a candidate that knows how to commit to an organization. They know how to be on time and have a good attitude about work. They understand the chain of command, how to take orders, carry them out, and how to complete the job. They are used to finishing an assignment under tough and sometimes stressful conditions. These are the essential skills that they can bring to your organization.

Also, this does not include any direct technical skills they may be trained in that will benefit your organization. Everything that happens in the civilian world from personnel to IT happens in the military, and Veterans bring varying degree of training depending on rank and specialty. Everyone gets out of the military at some time whether they are a private or a general, and many bring significant managerial and leadership level skills.

How do I find these people? Start with finding your local WorkSource office, many of which are located near one of the bases. They have staff that are directly tasked with helping transitioning service members, Veterans, and spouses get into employment opportunities. Each office will have a Veterans specialist that could also assist you. If you are associated with a State or Federally registered apprenticeship program, let them know that you are particularly interested in hiring a Veteran or spouse. Letting them know will help them to assist you in this search.

You can also contact your Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Apprenticeship Specialist to help you in this search. We will direct you to the office that will provide the assistance needed.

If you have further questions please contact:

Peter Lahmann, Apprenticeship Specialist
Washington Department of Veterans Affairs
Peter.lahmann@dva.wa.gov 360-999-8024