

Translating veterans' training into civilian job skills

During their military careers, veterans receive extensive, full-time training not only in technical specialties but in valuable nontechnical (or soft) skills, such as leadership, decisionmaking, persistence, and communication. These skills are vital to success in the civilian workforce, but translating military terminology into civilian workplace parlance can be challenging. Here are two examples of how training can translate.



how training can translate



MILITARY TRAINING RECEIVED

Army Basic Combat Training (10-week course)

- Participating in dangerous, demanding exercises
- Completing tasks quickly to support team success
- Mastering tasks that require extensive practice
- Following exacting standards with precision
- Working collaboratively with others around the clock
- Cooperating with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds



SKILLS EMPLOYERS WANT

Entry-level civilian job skills

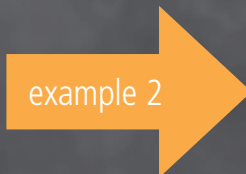
- Handling work stress
- Being dependable and reliable
- Persistence
- Conscientiousness and attention to detail
- Teamwork and team-building
- Interpersonal skills



MILITARY TRAINING RECEIVED

Marine Corps Sergeants Course (7-week course)

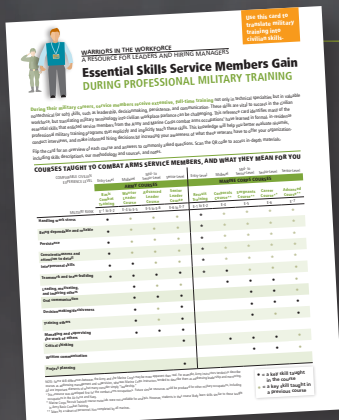
- Giving extemporaneous speeches
- Developing a plan of action despite uncertainty
- Gaining buy-in from peers
- Debating, considering, and reconsidering positions
- Writing and revising analytical essays
- Learning how to create long-range, annual, and quarterly training plans



SKILLS EMPLOYERS WANT

Mid- to senior-level civilian job skills

- Oral communication
- Decisionmaking/decisiveness
- Leading, motivating, and inspiring others
- Critical thinking
- Written communication
- Training others



Excerpted from *Essential Skills Service Members Gain During Professional Military Training: A Resource for Leaders and Hiring Managers*, by Chaitra Hardison et al., RAND Corporation, TL-160/2-OSD, 2015
www.rand.org/t/TL160z2

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