

Through a Veteran's Eyes:

The Transition of the Army Leader into the Civilian Workforce:

A culminating paper submitted by

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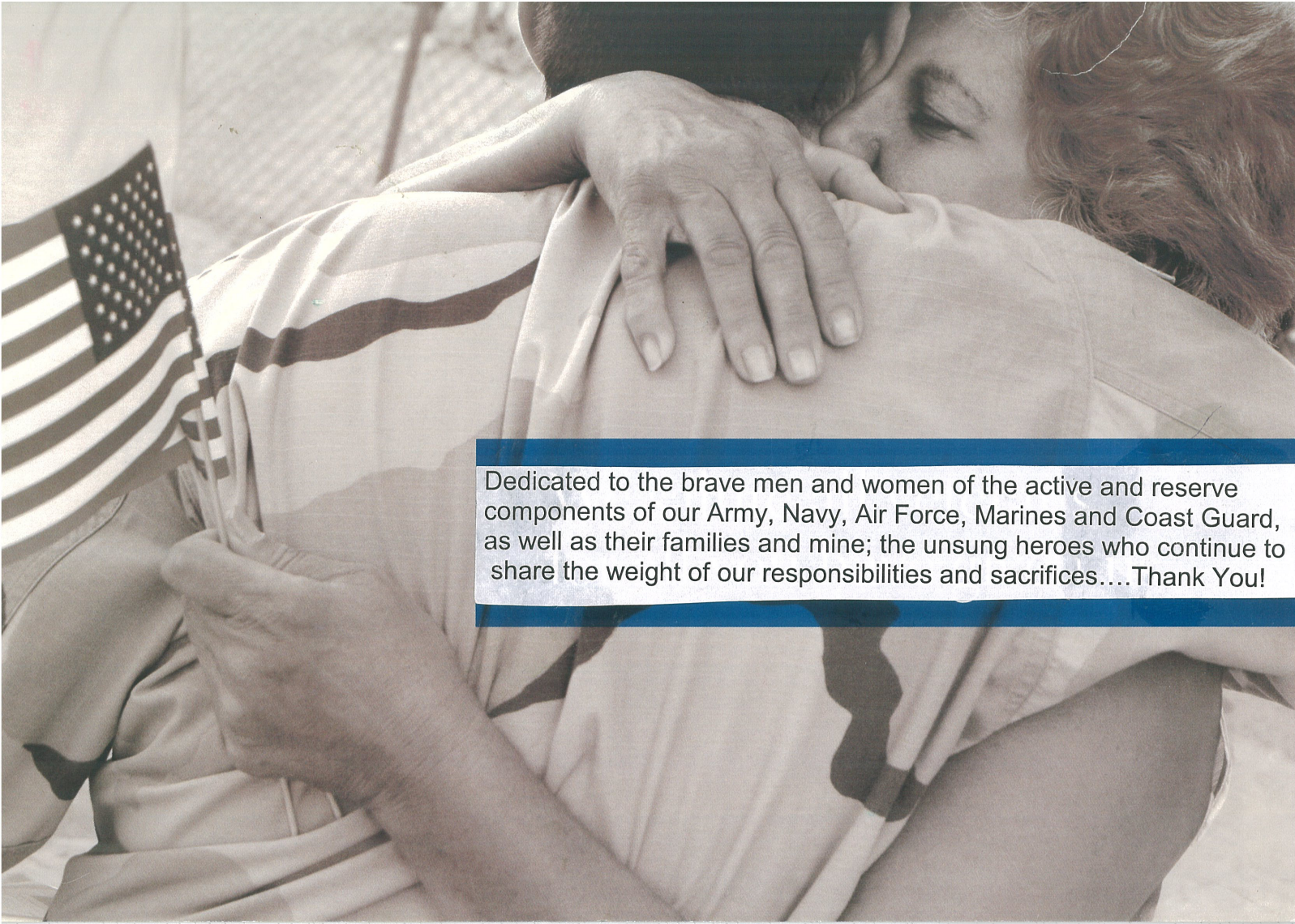
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Dedicated to the brave men and women of the active and reserve components of our Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard, as well as their families and mine; the unsung heroes who continue to share the weight of our responsibilities and sacrifices....Thank You!

ABSTRACT

The primary focus of this study is to examine what enables and challenges leaders transitioning from the Army. The secondary focus is the impact this transition has on both the military and civilian communities, to include recommended courses of action to raise awareness, initiate dialogue, promote collaboration and bridge the gap between both communities.

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

As an Army Veteran, I experienced firsthand the unique challenges service members face upon transitioning to the civilian workforce. Such challenges are heightened for those who have served combat tours in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, as I did.

It's been over three and a half years since I left the Army as a Supply and Logistics Officer and moved onto the next chapter of my life, as both a Veteran and a civilian. Although leaving the Army was a big step outside my comfort zone and into another "unknown," I felt empowered by the highly dynamic and diverse training and experience that I had as both a soldier and a leader.

Leading a platoon of soldiers (about thirty people) during Operation Enduring and Operation Iraqi Freedom, as well as a company of both American and Korean soldiers (about 155 people) in South Korea only strengthened my resolve and self-confidence in my value to the civilian workforce, regardless of the industry. Additionally, the message

conveyed to me during my entire Army career was that my dynamic leadership, logistical and operational skills were tangible and transferable to the civilian workforce.

What awaited me in the civilian workforce after I got out was a shock, even after completing the Military Transitioning Program and having three years of work experience outside the Army “under my belt.” The challenges of my transition continued through the tenure of my first job and the follow-on employment with other companies in the last three and a half years since my departure from the Army.

At first, my “transition” seemed successful as my first post-military job was a senior management position, commensurate with my Army pay and experience. It is worth noting, however, that my hiring manager was a Marine who clearly understood my military experiences, a luxury not always available to “transitioning” officers. He not only became my direct supervisor but my mentor as well, helping me navigate through the stormy waters of corporate culture and the reintegration into a civilian environment, as he had done ten years before

That first job after the Army was especially significant in my transition not just because of the lessons I learned, but as the validation that my operational and managerial skills were indeed transferable, even in an industry where I had no prior knowledge or training. I felt like I had “made it” and was looking forward to growing with the company. However, eighteen months into my tenure, I found it difficult to cope with increasing disagreements and tension with my peers and supervisors, so I made the decision to leave the company and further my education. I began the graduate Organization Development Program (OD) at Sonoma State University (SSU) in the fall of 2006.

While attending the OD program, I had a series of part-time jobs, none of them lasting more than one year or even a couple of months at a time. As I struggled to stay afloat financially, I leveraged my Veteran Education Benefits and eventually depleted my savings and retirement accounts for tuition, medical insurance and living expenses. I continued to look for full-time employment, with the intention of finding a company that would value both my diverse work experience and graduate education in Organization Development. My employment search continued via company websites, on-line postings and military “headhunters,” to no avail.

This past fall, seven months from graduating and six weeks into my newest part-time job, what I know now as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) fully surfaced and pulled the rug out from under me. It impacted every part of my life, personal, academic and professional, making it virtually impossible to get out of bed, much less function on a day to day basis. I withdrew from everyone and everything I cared about, sank into a deep depression and was headed towards an extremely self-destructive path. I skipped classes, backed out of several ongoing internships, stopped running and quit my part-time job mid-year. It took me several weeks of self-recrimination and denial before I could even take the first step and seek treatment and support from a Veterans Affairs (VA) Clinic.

In my quest to augment my support emotionally, I reached out to my family and friends, the majority of which were out-of-state and out of the country, as well as my classmates and faculty members from the OD program. However, identifying resources to support myself financially was an exhausting endeavor due to the bureaucratic dead-ends and Catch 22 limitations. In my attempt to access Public Assistance/Food Stamps, Unemployment, Social Security, State and VA disability compensation, I found myself

overwhelmed, *incapable* and *unwilling* to “pick myself up and dust myself off” anymore. This was a far cry from the woman who ran marathons, enlisted in the Army, and volunteered for paratrooper training “just to see if she could.”

From my robust leadership experiences to a *seemingly* successful “transition” into the civilian work and academic environment, the downward spiral of my inability to handle a part-time job four hours a day has been one of the most disorienting, frightening, and *disempowering* experiences of my life. Ironically it was through these dark days that I have been able to achieve incredible clarity and purpose. It also validated the question I have been asking myself for the last three and half years. “If *I’m* continuing to have this much difficulty (transitioning) with the solid base of support from friends and family combined with my extensive work experience and educationwhat about my fellow service members who may not even have a *fraction* of the support or resources that I have?”

This question has stayed with me throughout my departure from the Army in 2004 and has fueled my passion of working with the veteran community, specifically their transition to the civilian workforce. It only seemed natural that I chose this topic to explore further in my culminating paper.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD OF ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

As I’m writing now, not just as a veteran, but also as an OD practitioner, I will be specifically exploring two areas of the Army’s leader transition into the civilian workforce: the existing *systems* and *processes* put in place by the Army, Department of Defense, and

the VA in support of the soldier's readjustment and reintegration into the civilian community. I am also looking forward to sharing insight into an organizational culture that is often misunderstood, overlooked or unconsidered.

A tremendous opportunity exists not only to build and sustain a candid dialogue between the military and civilian communities, but to forge partnerships in education, business and trade, so as to support returning veterans and their families, and to strengthen communities.

The following are some conventions I will use throughout the body of this paper. Although many of the transitioning experiences are universal throughout the Armed Forces, I will narrow my focus on the military service I am most familiar with: the active-duty component of the Army. I will also use the term "leader" interchangeably with "soldier" and "veteran", as well as "military" with "Army." For the reader's benefit, I have also included in Appendix E a glossary of military terms that expands on certain terms mentioned throughout this paper. The following sections of this paper include Literature Review, Assumptions, Biases, Data Presentation, Data Analysis and Discussion, and finally Implications and Conclusions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although there is a significant amount of data and information on the overall Department of Defense (DOD) Transitioning Programs known as TAP (Transition Assistance Program), there is a scarcity of information related to the Army Career Alumni

Program (ACAP), specifically to the transitioning of Army leaders. Additional portions of the literature review will be evident throughout the other sections of the paper.

Significant Milestones in Military Transitioning

As the victories of the Allied Forces increased towards the end of World War II, President Roosevelt was already thinking ahead to the 16,000,000 service members that would be returning from the Great War, vowing not to repeat the end of World War I when soldiers returned to poverty and unemployment.

The American Legion, a veteran service organization that was founded in 1919, initiated its own campaign for comprehensive support of veterans and named a special committee, which met for over two weeks over Christmas in Washington, D.C. This committee, led by attorney and World War I veteran Harry W. Colmery, drafted the proposal: “a bill of rights for GI Joe and GI Jane.” The press and history dubbed it the “GI Bill of Rights.” The Bill was introduced into Congress on January 10, 1944, and on June 22 of that same year, President Roosevelt signed what became known as *The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944* (Greenberg, 1997, p10). “The fundamental idea behind the GI Bill and the key to the program’s stunning success, was that in a democracy, reciprocal obligations bind citizens and government... in doing so, government effectively invests in citizenship, incorporating individuals as full members of the polity who have a stake in its existence.” (Mettler, 2005, p 166)

FOUR ELEMENTS OF THIS BILL SERVED AS POST-WAR BENEFITS

- **Readjustment allowances while unemployed-** The program was also known as the “52-20 Club” because it paid \$20 per week for up to a year.

- **Educational opportunity in colleges and universities-** Tuition and books were paid in full up front, with no out-of pocket expenses for the veteran.
- **Vocational, education, and on-the-job training-**“Employers were encouraged to train their own workers with the help of the GI Bill, thereby facilitating movement into the working mainstream.”(Greenberg, 1997, p61) The availability of educational benefits extended past the traditional degree programs at colleges and universities, and included vocational training. This continuous training benefit made a good incentive for employers to hire veterans and simultaneously offset corporate training costs.
- **Loans for purchase of a home, farm, or business-** This program, designed to promote private home and business ownership, provides a loan guarantee backed by the U.S. Government. This same program served as the foundation for the VA Home Loan that currently exists as a benefit for veterans today.

However, as the military transitioned from a draft force in World War II, Korea and Vietnam, to an all-volunteer force at the end of 1972, the benefits were scaled back to meet the needs of a peacetime military. From 1972 to 1976, following the aftermath of the divisive and unpopular Vietnam War, recruiting for all branches of service was especially difficult, resulting in the 1976 enactment of the Veteran’s Educational Assistance Program (VEAP), which was a descendant of the original GI bill and was a military benefit primarily used as a recruiting tool. It ultimately failed both as a recruiting incentive and a quality program for veterans. In 1987 President Ronald Reagan re-instituted the GI Bill permanently. It was renamed the “Montgomery GI Bill” (MGIB) in honor of

Representative G.V. “Sonny” Montgomery of Mississippi, who was not only a World War II and Korean combat veteran but a strong advocate for the GI Bill.

Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

“The law creating TAP established a partnership among the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, Transportation and the Department of Labor’s Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS), to give employment and training information to armed forces members within 180 days of separation or retirement.” (U.S Department of Labor, 2002, p1) This transition program was created in 1990, following the military downsizing after Operation Desert Storm, to better prepare service members to enter the civilian workforce. Every branch of service, to include the Coast Guard, has a TAP program in place to support not only the service members but their families as well. (It is important to note that although the Coast Guard is considered a military branch of service, it is not governed by the Department of Defense, but by the Department of Transportation.)

TAP consists of several three-day workshops that are taught by professional facilitators from the State Employment Services, Military Family Support Services and Department of Labor contractors. These workshops include, but are not limited to, resume and cover letter writing, interview techniques, and job searches. “Several studies confirm participant satisfaction with transition assistance, but limited information is available about the overall effectiveness of the transition assistance program.”(Baschetta, 2002, p 10)

Congressional Mandate, Chapter 10, Title 58

In response to operational requirements negatively impacting timely access to transition services, this mandate was passed by Congress in 2002, requiring all service members separating or retiring to transition between ninety to 180 days. “In the case of an anticipated retirement, pre-separation counseling shall commence as soon as possible during the 24-month period preceding the anticipated retirement date. In the case of a separation other than a retirement, pre-separation counseling shall commence as soon as possible during the 12-month period preceding the anticipated date... in no event shall pre-separation counseling commence later than 90 days before the date of discharge or release.” (Congressional Mandate Chapter 58, Title 10)

Although the law requires soldiers be allowed between 90 and 180 days to complete the separation process, there is no explicit language stating that the soldier’s regular duties *have to be* scaled back or excused altogether so as to focus solely on transitioning. This ambiguity allows commanders and supervisors a lot of flexibility and discretion in prioritizing mission requirements over the individual soldier’s needs for transitioning. The ability to access these transition services seems to depend more on the active support and endorsement of the transition program, than on the soldier’s desire or time to attend it. “Military mission and the support that supervisors have for transition services may determine the degree to which they have access to these services.” (Baschetta, 2002, p 8)

Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP)

While a differentiation in organizational name exists among different branches of service, the Army's comprehensive program is referred to as ACAP, which is an official Army program, fully supported by the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Army. (ACAP Center, Fort Monmouth, p 1).

Career Options and Navy Skills Evaluation Program (CONSEP)

This mid-career program is specifically designed for military personnel with four to twelve years of service who are within eighteen to twenty-four months from the end of their active duty service obligation. CONSEP is only available through the Navy and the Marine Corps Transition Centers and favors a different timeline and a more proactive approach to transitioning than the Army.

The four day workshop addresses personal planning, financial planning, civilian career planning and Navy/Marine Corps Career planning. CONSEP utilizes a comparative analysis strategy contrasting the military career to its equivalent civilian career options, identifying additional education or training required. The Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard transition counselors all shared the belief that CONSEP *could be* a powerful supplement to the TAP program. However, they believed that it is not widely supported and endorsed by installation leadership, as it is perceived as running contrary to the pressing missions of operational readiness and retention.

Military Transition Comparison: Peace Corps Transition

The Peace Corps experience and commitment, like the military, is unique in that it is unrivaled by the average mainstream job. Like the military, stereotypes exist about the type of people that volunteer for the Peace Corps, the scope of their work, and the potential value of their new-found skill set to a conventional workplace. As a result the Peace Corps experience can be misunderstood or marginalized because it is far removed from popular culture in terms of being lucrative and prestigious.

The research and informal conversation with a former Peace Corps volunteer validated the common threads of transitioning into a mainstream “civilian” culture. Like the military, those who join the Peace Corps do so as volunteers, and are placed in a completely different environment, away from home and for many, far outside their comfort zone. ”For two or more years living and working in a developing country, often without electricity or running water...many bring back the lessons they learned abroad and seek lives of purpose...” (Kennedy, 2007, p 68).

Upon a Peace Corps volunteer’s return, the Peace Corps’ Office of Returned Volunteer Services (RVS) provides career, educational, and re-entry related assistance through its eleven regional recruiting offices and its Career Center in Washington, D.C. (Peace Corps Website, benefits section, p1). There are various employment opportunities available part-time, full-time, and short-term within the Peace Corps stateside staff. Transitioning members also have a non-competitive eligibility status for appointments to U.S. government executive branch agencies for one year after their completion of service,

facilitating an appointment to some federal government positions without competing with the general public. (Peace Corps Website, benefits section, p 2)

Additionally, there are various educational subsidies available for former volunteers to incorporate their Peace Corps service into advanced degrees, as well as partial deferment and/or cancellation of federally approved educational loans.

To augment recruiting efforts and continue part of their mission, the Peace Corps sends the returning volunteers to educate their communities back home to share their travel and volunteer experiences in many different forums, including schools and various civic organizations. "The Peace Corps experience can enhance long-term career prospects, whether a Volunteer wants to work for a corporation, a non-profit organization, or a government agency." (Peace Corps website, Benefits, p 1)

RESEARCH DESIGN

This qualitative phenomenological study explores the experiences of leaders, as well as the challenges and enablers that impact their transition from the Army to the Civilian Workforce.

Primary data for this study was provided by interviews with ten Army leaders, (Appendix A) whose time in service ranged from four to twenty-two years, in a variety of occupational specialties and leadership positions. The sample set represented an equal number of men and women, with four out of the ten participants retiring from the Army after at least twenty years of service, while the remaining six separated after their initial three to four year contract was completed. All interviews were transcribed for the purpose

of thematic analysis, after which the data was sorted and distilled for common themes from which conclusions were drawn.

A request for research volunteers was made to my colleagues, mentors and friends with whom I had served during my five years in the Army. The selection criterion was limited to Army leaders, who had managed or led at least five soldiers during their tenure, and had transitioned from the Army in the last five years, after September 11, 2001. I chose these demographics for two reasons:

1) Military leaders, in theory, would be the most marketable and competitive in the civilian workforce because of their dynamic management and leadership experience.

2) September 11, 2001, marked a significant milestone in World History, transitioning our armed forces from a peacetime to a war-time military. This in turn, introduced an additional set of unique challenges such as extended and repeat combat deployments, impacting both the soldier and their families. Separating or retiring after September 11, 2001, would increase the chances that the respondents would have either deployed to Afghanistan or Iraq for Operation Enduring Freedom and/or Operation Iraqi Freedom, or supported the training and operations of the military stateside and overseas.

I specifically focused on active-duty leaders versus those serving in the National Guard or Army Reserves. This is because as *citizen soldiers*, their military commitment is based on a part-time structure (one weekend a month, two weeks a year). Consequently, their re-entry into the “civilian” workforce differs too greatly to be addressed in a research paper of this size. The reserve component also has a less of a centralized infrastructure for support and services, than its active-duty counterpart.

A standard list of twenty-eight questions was used for each interview (Appendix C), allowing enough flexibility to elicit additional anecdotes and impromptu dialogue that enriched the interviewees' answers and deepened my insight. All of my interviews were conducted over the phone, and I wasn't able to read additional cues from face-to-face contact and body language. However, my prior and/or existing rapport and trust with all the interviewees enabled me to have a candid and comfortable exchange that allowed a wealth of information about their transitioning experiences. Actual quotes from the interviews and from the literature are provided to validate the findings. Respondents whose quotes appear in the research signed an interview release form giving the researcher permission to use their names. (Appendix D).

In addition, I have interviewed representatives from supporting service member / Veteran agencies (Department of Veteran Affairs, Department of Labor, Transitional Assistance Program [TAP] of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard), to provide some comparison and contrast of existing practices for transitioning military leaders.

ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions underlie this study:

- Using other soldiers with whom I have an existing rapport or relationship could influence the interview data I receive because of similar or shared experiences.
- The transition of the Army leader into the civilian community encompasses more than just readiness for the workforce, but various social, cultural and psychological factors.

- The Army, like the other armed forces, is a sub-culture that is often isolated, and in turn misunderstood by the overall civilian community.
- The Army leaders put forth the best effort to transition with the information provided by the ACAP program.
- The Army transition counselors do the best they can with the information they presently have to support the transitioning Army leaders.
- Army leaders have both the capacity *and* desire to contribute to the civilian community.
- The civilian community, if given the opportunity to obtain the perspective and experience of the Army leader, would have both the capacity *and* the desire to support their transition.
- The more time, focus and support a leader is given to access ACAP and TAP will positively impact his or her transition into both the civilian community and the workforce.

BIASES

Although I have always prided myself on being both self-motivated and resilient, the kaleidoscope of my experiences, challenges, and setbacks continues to influence my life, and in turn, the scope of this study. Female soldier, military leader and disabled combat veteran are the lenses that I will be using as I share the data and the personal accounts of other veterans. As a result, I am grounded in the belief that the quality of programs and services veterans have access to *during* and *after* their military service will have a direct impact on their transition and potential contribution to the civilian community. I also believe that the *intentional* and *balanced* collaboration of both the military and civilian communities will only enrich the overall quality of the existing ACAP and TAP programs.

DATA PRESENTATION

The themes generated from the interviews are presented below. Results are summarized in narrative form either under emergent theme headings or specific interview questions. The data are separated into two categories:

- 1). Enablers to Transitioning
- 2) Challenges to Transitioning

1). ENABLERS

Adequate Time to Solely Focus on Transitioning

The transitioning timeline, which the soldiers' supervisors are required to follow, is outlined in Congressional Mandate 58, Chapter 10. By law, those soldiers retiring from the military with twenty or more years of service are encouraged to start their transitioning process twenty-four months before retirement, twelve months being the bare minimum suggested time. For soldiers separating, or completing less than twenty years of service, ACAP services are available to them six months prior to leaving the Army.

Although ninety days of transitioning preparation is the *bare minimum* time allowed by law for transitioning service members, it is unclear from the literature what the consequences are for military units that don't comply. There is also no evidence to suggest that soldiers are made aware of this ninety day minimal mandate of transitioning assistance available to them by law.

“I was given whatever time I needed to transition.” (JE) The leaders who were given not just the mandated time to transition, but “cut loose” from their everyday responsibilities, were afforded the opportunity to take advantage of the variety of services and support that ACAP and TAP workshops offered. Although there is no conclusive evidence to suggest whether this actually made their transition into the civilian world smoother, it seemed to give the leaders the *perception* that it would be.

Support Network in Place

The commonality amongst all of the interviewees, regardless of their experiences, was that they had a network of friends, family, mentors, etc. in place while they were facing the rigors and uncertainty of transitioning. “My greatest source of support was my family and friends in the civilian sector (especially those who had already done the transition).” (JB)

The other crucial element of the veteran support network is to know what resources are available and accessible to them in their local community. From the interviews I conducted and firsthand experience, I believe that the dissemination of *accurate* and *timely* information is *not* being provided to the soldiers as a formal part of their ACAP or TAP program.

Over *ninety percent* of the community resources and information that I found as a transitioned veteran was *three years after* I left the Army, and *only while* conducting my research for this paper. For example, after three years of spending thousands of dollars in private medical insurance for myself, I was first made aware this past December 2007 that I was eligible for subsidized health care through the Veteran’s Affairs Hospital and Clinics,

versus the limited two year time limit after my discharge I was originally told I could access from the VA as a combat veteran.

Clear Expectations of Civilian Job Market

The management of expectations can be one of the toughest parts for Army Leaders to come to terms with, especially in regard to finding civilian positions commensurate with the pay and/or responsibility they had when they were in the Army. Many leaders have misconceptions about the transferability of their skills to the civilian job market, especially having held dynamic managerial/leadership positions in the Army, during a time of war.

The leaders who were prepared, either by ACAP counselors, friends or their own research, for the possibility they would be making less money and have less responsibility, were able to make more educated decisions about their prospective employment choices. “I expected that I would be making what I made before, or less. I expected the pay cut. I also knew I would have less responsibility and management of other people because the way the nursing corps dynamic is.” (HS)

Army Leaders “Going Beyond” ACAP services

“I started with the phone book to see what businesses were in the area and I made contact and asked about open positions and applications.” (JS) Although a variety of services and workshops are offered through the ACAP and TAP programs, many leaders choose to do their own supplemental research, networking and interviewing outside the Army, so as to educate themselves and increase their possibilities of finding employment in

the civilian sector. This is also where the established network of friends and family are helpful to make contacts in the civilian world.

2). CHALLENGES

Minimal Time for Leaders to Solely Focus on Transitioning

“I was told I would have a year to transition versus the actual 30 days that I got” (JM). Despite the congressionally mandated timeline, the reality is that Army leaders, especially those who carry a significant load of operational and supervisory responsibility, often may not have the luxury of solely focusing on their transition, so they do both. Unfortunately, accessing the transitioning services is usually what gets put on the “back burner.”

Quality of ACAP Service

“I could have used more extensive guidance counseling appropriate to where we are. A ‘one size fits all’ counseling model was used.” (KS) Nine of the ten leaders that I interviewed did not feel prepared by the ACAP program to enter the civilian job workforce, specifically in three areas: *skill transferability*, *marketing skills to employers*, and the aforementioned *management of expectations*, which operate interdependently in the leader’s transition.

I believe that skill transferability and marketing these skills to employers involves a lot more than omitting military jargon and doing a literal “translation” of military skills to civilian terms. The leaders needs to first understand that not all of their military experiences and technical skills will correlate, and thus are appropriate to include in a resume or

interview. Once transferable skills are identified for a particular job, the next challenge is to articulate it in such a way that the employers can understand and see value for their civilian organization.

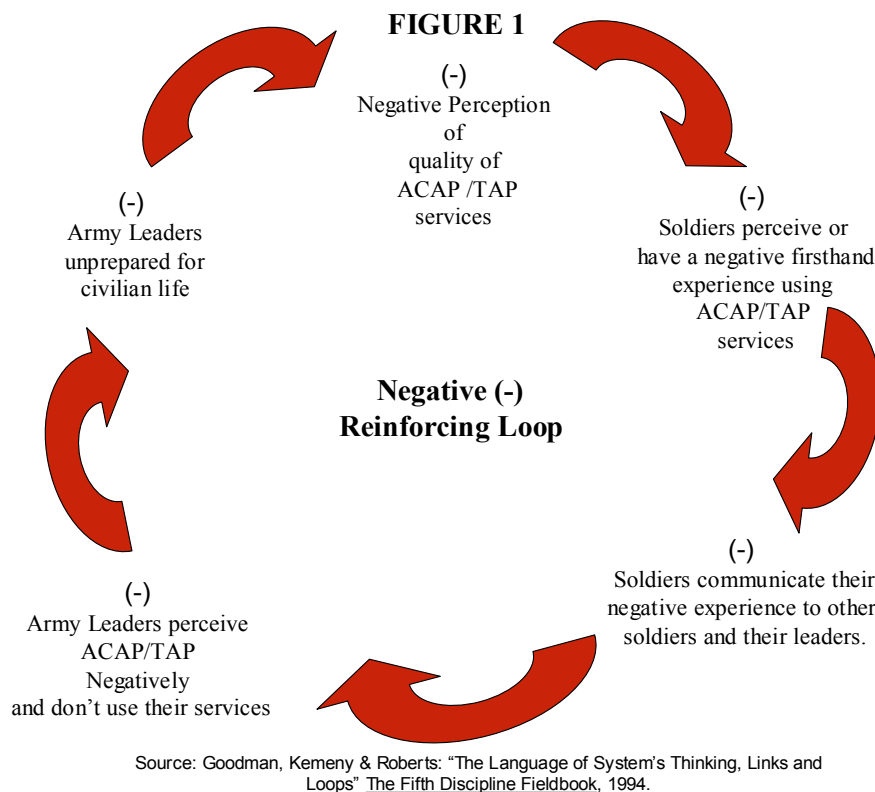
Realistic expectations about the civilian job market makes the soldier a more educated and resourceful job seeker. “I was optimistic and naïve about my expectations. I thought I was a great candidate for technology management, especially with my Signal Corps background. However the reality was that I needed more technical experience.” (LC)

Two other minor themes emerged from my interviews that are worth mentioning, as I believe they can contribute directly to a leader’s transition:

- Leaders generally had a very poor perception of the quality of ACAP Services
- The geographic location and community where the transition took place were influential to the overall process.

“I was under the impression that ACAP was a waste of time from enlisted soldiers and NCOs. I felt if they couldn’t help them transition with the lower education and less of a management skill set, they wouldn’t be able to help me.” (ARPC)

This negative perception of the ACAP services from the leaders has the potential to negatively impact the transitioning experience, as illustrated by the following link and loop. (Senge, 1994, p 161)



Another challenge that faces many soldiers is transitioning from an installation in a particular geographic area while simultaneously job searching and attempting transition to a completely different geographic location (in many cases he or she is looking to go “home” after separating/retiring). This makes it extremely difficult to meet with potential employers, transition fully and reintegrate into the civilian world. This is further complicated if a soldier transitions from an overseas station, also known as OCONUS (outside the continental United States) “Being out of country made it harder as ACAP hadn’t bridged the gap for a seamless transition between opportunities OCONUS and CONUS”. (JB)

Finding a Niche in the Civilian Marketplace

“The biggest challenge was *not knowing* what I wanted to do (that held me back). The Army trained me and gave me a job.”(KS) Oftentimes when soldiers leave the Army, they are faced with the figurative “fork in the road” about what type of employment to pursue. Do they continue with what they were trained by the Army to do (ex military police, supply and logistics) or do they enter a new industry altogether, something they might have always dreamed about pursuing and might require additional education and training? Knowing this ahead of time helps the leaders become more intentional and focused about their job search and the various opportunities available.

Not Fully Aware of Veteran Benefits, Services and Community Resources Available

“I had no idea about Vets Benefits and Resources (ex. Medical insurance, health care benefits). I found out from friends via word of mouth eighteen months later after I got out. The formalized information wasn’t part of the process.”(HS) For the leaders retiring from the service, there is more of an emphasis on their continuing military benefits such as healthcare and instruction for filing a claim with the Veterans Administration (VA) for service-connected injuries and disabilities. However for the leaders separating, the data showed there was little to no information on Veterans Benefits, Services and Community Resources available during their transition program.

Civilian Employers Lack of Understanding of Veteran’s Skills, Abilities and Experiences.

“The biggest challenge was selling my capabilities. No one really believed what I had done in my career and didn’t understand the scope of my duties.” (JM) Even after a

leader has translated his or her skill set into civilian terms and has articulated it to an employer, the inability of some civilian employers to understand the leader's military experiences creates an additional obstacle in communication. Military service, especially during a time of war, can be an abstract concept that makes "connecting the dots" between a soldier's experience and the potential value to the organization extremely difficult. This in turn can negatively impact the soldier's chance of getting the job.

DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Although the respondents' transitioning experiences differed slightly, there were two key elements that stood out, and I will explore further:

- 1) ACAP Program is Not Endorsed as a High Priority by the Army
- 2) There Exists a Gap of Understanding between the Military and Civilian Communities about the Military as a Profession

ACAP Program Is Not Endorsed As A High Priority By The Army

What struck me as I listened to the various leaders tell me about their transitioning experiences from the Army, was that amongst ten participants, there wasn't a uniform process that existed and was followed. The only transitioning prerequisite was the mandatory Pre-Separation Briefing that are required of all soldiers to attend within 180 days of their departure, regardless of whether they are either retiring or separating.

The depth and quality of the remaining services offered to transitioning leaders varied from post to post and in some cases, by the rank they held. In the interviews with the ACAP and TAP counselors, I was told that most programs are adjusted to meet the staffing,

operational requirements and the surrounding communities of the particular military installation, versus adhering to a set standard of quality and customer service. “I didn’t feel prepared by ACAP, it felt like a ‘check the block’ program for the Army.”(JM)

ACAP is designed according to the original TAP paradigm, created after the military downsizing following Operation Desert Storm. The program’s structure “is based upon a set of needs exhibited by service members transitioning in the 1990's, after a period of relative peace, broken only by a single, short, contained episode of warfare.”(JS) In contrast, the soldiers currently transitioning through the ACAP center will have at least one deployment under their belt, if not multiple, which regardless of how functional or adjusted they “seem” at the time of transitioning, could greatly impact their job search and adjustment to civilian life.

Listening to my interviewees share their transitioning experiences and anecdotes caused me to reflect on my own. In the sixty days of my year-long tour in South Korea, my “transitioning” consisted of a three- hour workshop and three sessions with my ACAP counselor making a “civilian friendly” resume. This sharply contrasted with the high quality and dynamic education, training and leadership development I had received during my five years in the Army.

There is no doubt in my mind that if resourced, prioritized and endorsed properly, both the ACAP and the TAP programs have the potential to have the legendary impact the GI Bill had for the returning World War II Veterans and communities across the nation as described by Tom Brokhaw in his book, *The Greatest Generation*. “They were a new kind of Army now, moving onto the landscapes of industry, science art, public policy, all the fields of American life, bringing to them the same passions and discipline that had served

them so well during the war. They helped convert a wartime economy into the most powerful peacetime economy in the history.” (Brokhaw, 1998, p20)

The Gap of Understanding between the Military and Civilian Communities

The most prominent themes that wove throughout my interviews and my own experiences were how far removed the military experience is from the mainstream culture, and how that impacts a veteran transitioning into the civilian environment. Even with the blitzkrieg of media attention and public scrutiny the military has received since the attacks on September 11th and the ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, military service and experiences are a concept far removed from day to day life for most people. One reason is the inception of a volunteer military force, which officially ended the draft on December 31, 1972. Today it is estimated that “just 1.4 million Americans, less than one-half of 1 percent of the general population” (Mettler, 2005, p169) serves in the Armed Forces.

In contrast, 16,000,000 men and women served in World War II, representing about eight percent of the U.S. population. As veterans returned from the Great War, they were received in the community by other veterans, or by someone whose immediate family member were serving or had worn the uniform. The commonality of military experience either directly through veterans or through family members proved to be a powerful resource. As a result, many of the community understood that “they were mature beyond their years, tempered by what they had been through, disciplined by their military training and sacrifices.”(Brokhaw, 1998, p 19) *and* “that their experiences have made them even more resourceful and capable citizens” (Greenberg, 1997, p22)

This previous comparison was not made to romanticize and favor the Post-War era of 1945 to the present day society. In fact the reception of soldiers, sailors and marines back into their communities was not always without misunderstanding or judgment. Two illustrations by Norman Rockwell (Appendix D) capture this, and upon sharing this with other veterans from different eras, we all had a good laugh because times haven't changed all that much. At one point we all shared stories about being subjected to one or more of the same type of questions and comments once civilians find out we had served in the military, especially in a combat zone.

There exist misinformation and stereotypes about the military profession, as a result of less than one percent of people serving, and the type of people that volunteer to serve. This coupled with the fact that the present day "Global War on Terror" is an unpopular and extremely divisive issue, can potentially impact a returning service member's ability to be understood and seen as competitive in today's job market.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN COMMUNITIES

As an Army veteran who has served as an enlisted soldier and as an officer, in the reserve and active-duty forces, I know firsthand the value of our nation's veterans and what they have to offer their communities. This military experience in tandem with my five years of leading teams of students, line staff, and managers in the civilian sector has only strengthened my conviction. Military or civilian, commitment, raw talent, and professionalism manifest themselves as human potential just the same.

The divide between the military and civilian communities, however, is widening in the face of a socially and politically divisive war and a struggling U.S. economy. The

“bridge” needed to re-connect both these communities will need to be designed, resourced, and constructed jointly, with the following in mind:

- Before candid and continuous dialogue can begin between both communities, a strongly facilitated discussion needs to address unchallenged assumptions about each other, surfacing as many questions as answers.
- Identify resources and services accessible to the transitioning veteran population, continuously assessing the labor needs of the neighboring industries, indigenous to a particular community versus using a national “one size fits all” model.
(ex: What works in San Diego, California doesn’t necessarily translate to Boston, Massachusetts)

Connecting Both Communities: What the Bridge *Could* Look Like

Although I strongly believe that each community can individually decide the best place of leverage for welcoming transitioning veterans, the local Chambers of Commerce seem to me the most logical gateway to the civilian community. I believe that the Chambers of Commerce have the best “big picture view” of the training, education and labor needs of their employment market, as well as local resources and services veterans can access.

The Chamber of Commerce “model” already exists and is being used in communities like Colorado Springs, Colorado, which shares the responsibility of its transitioning service members with its six neighboring military installations.

“Chamber and community members have numerous opportunities through the programs and events of the *Military Affairs* Division to further their involvement with, and understanding of, the military. One organization within the Division is the

Military Affairs Council...which is a separate membership organization of over 200 community members with a strong sense of the importance of national defense and the military in our region.” (Military Affairs Section, Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce Website, 2008)

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MILITARY COMMUNITY

In the nine- month span of this research study, I have visited various military transition programs all over the state of California. I was heartened and inspired to see truly committed and passionate transition counselors providing the best program they could within mandated guidelines and a certain program structure. However, having committed and qualified transition counselors, only addresses half of the equation. Without appropriate systems and processes that support service members transitioning to the civilian workforce, the potential positive impact of having committed and qualified personnel is diminished.

With its systems and processes incongruent with the unique transitioning challenges of serving in a combat environment such as today, ACAP and TAP are falling short of preparing their soldiers for the civilian workforce. The last time TAP was evaluated in the mid 1990s, administrators focused on employment -related assistance and not on retention. Since September 11th, the mission of the military has drastically increased, and the focus and resources have shifted from employment-related assistance to retention and recruitment.

The current structure of the transitioning program limits the capacity of the separating service member to be competitive in today’s job market. The program is

perceived by the soldiers and many of their supervisors as an after-thought, “a check the block” line item of their out-processing from the military. The attention and focus given to transitioning contrasts significantly to the investment of time and focus a scheduled training exercise or more conventional Army school is allotted. ”Service members, supervisors, commanders and transition assistance program staff told us because of mission related work priorities, service members may receive transition assistance later than what is optimal.” (Baschetta, 2002, p10)

On paper, the congressional mandate dictates that service members be given between ninety to 180 days to access TAP. The *reality* is that the increasingly high operational tempo and mission requirements become the soldier’s primary focus and number one priority.

If audited, five out of the eleven leaders in this study, to include myself, would have been *out of compliance* in receiving ACAP services according to the Congressional Mandate 58-10. Four separatees and one retiree, were given between 30-60 days of transitioning time, *well below the minimal ninety- day mandate*. The answer isn’t stricter auditing but a shift of mentality about the importance of ACAP and TAP in the service member’s career, regardless of the length of their military tenure.

The existing system of preparing soldiers for the civilian workforce seems to be done independently, *versus in concert with*, the solicited labor needs of the civilian workforce. In a time of economic crisis where county, state and federal budgets are significantly decreasing, there are many opportunities to leverage resources in both the military and civilian communities to maximize the effectiveness of ACAP/TAP. Instead of contemplating “Why aren’t civilian employers hiring veterans?”, I believe the Army and its

sister services should be directly asking civilian organizations questions like “What do your most competitive candidates look like?” and “How can we (the military) better prepare our service members to meet your needs in regards to training and education?”

Furthermore, the campaign of providing monetary incentives and tax breaks for employers to hire veterans is well-intended, but is a “quick fix” for an issue that warrants greater discussion at the grassroots community level. To be productive the discussion needs to be *endorsed* by the military leadership, *engaged* by the neighboring military base communities, and *convened* by professional facilitators. Before even discussing civilian workforce needs, the unchallenged assumptions that exist for both civilians and military service members, while widely ignored, need to be addressed.

Civilians have unchallenged assumptions about the type of people that volunteer for the military, and the managerial environment of the military. In the same regard, military service members have unchallenged assumptions about the types of jobs they are qualified for and the amount of care or concern they will receive in the civilian sector. Addressing these issues and surfacing additional ones can make a huge difference in opening the doors of communication, increasing trust and building overall community capacity for employment and the productive integration of veterans into the labor force.

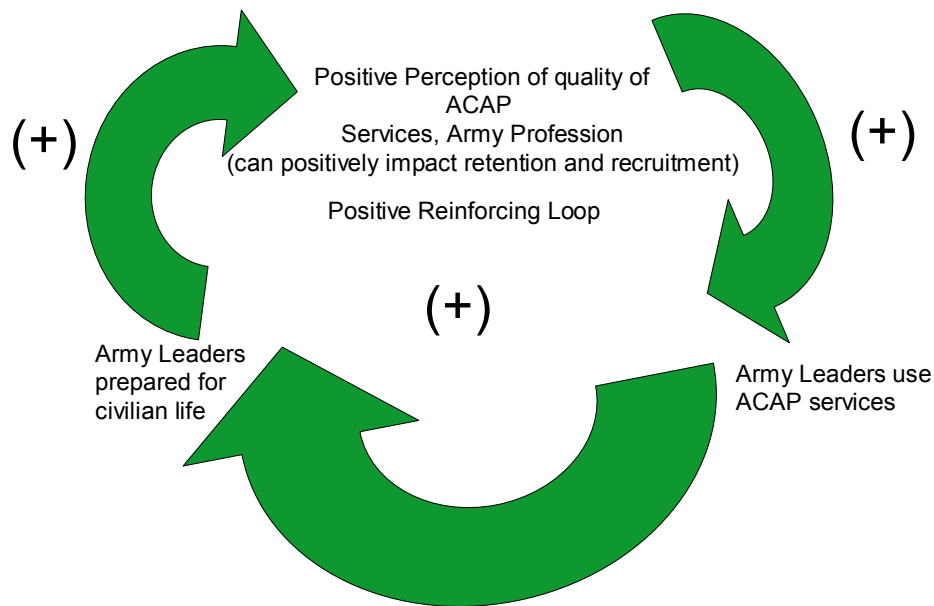
In the course of researching this topic and my ongoing search for employment, I recently came across a job description from the Air Force for a *Supervisory Community Readiness Consultant*, (Appendix F) which I believe would be the ideal position for the military community collaborating and engaging with its civilian counterpart. I have included *both* the duties/responsibilities *and* the requirements of the position in terms of education and training.

While applying to this position I noticed that there was more of an emphasis on a *proactive* and *intentional* whole community engagement and collaboration (both military and civilian) rather than the Air Force providing the required TAP classes according to the congressional mandated timeline. The job description and interviews with both the Air Force and Coast Guard Transition counselors also revealed that the foundation of the Air Force's TAP program seems to be grounded in the belief that "meeting mission" *doesn't have to be mutually exclusive* with having a prestigious and competitive transition program that produces high quality candidates for the labor market.

As it currently stands, the existing TAP program lacks a uniform barometer for evaluation, making the program's success open to interpretation. Beside the civic responsibility we have to our men and women in uniform, they are the best "ambassadors" for the military profession. Their experiences, positive or negative, will be a lot more powerful and credible than any enlistment bonus or marketing tool the military produces.

Improving ACAP and TAP programs is an investment that both the military and civilian communities will reap the rewards for generations to come, as reflected by the following positive reinforcing loop. (Senge, 1994, p 161)

FIGURE 2



Source: Goodman, Kemeny & Roberts: "The Language of System's Thinking, Links and Loops" *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 1994.

Implications for the Civilian Community

"We cannot live for ourselves alone. Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads, and along these sympathetic fibers, our actions run as causes and return to us as results."(Herman Melville)

As more veterans from the Armed Forces are returning home and attempting to rebuild their lives as well as those of their families, the assistance, support and resources of not just the military community, but the civilian community are quintessential.

Though there are numerous strategies and ideas that came directly from the research and my own transitioning experiences, there exists one far more powerful in bridging the gap between the military and civilian communities: the temporary *suspension of judgment*.

This judgment ranges from the type of people that serve, to the value of military experience, and a veteran's capacity to *lead or be led* outside a *seemingly controlled* work

environment. Temporarily suspending judgment isn't about conforming or abandoning one's beliefs or values. Instead it is about creating an opportunity to see service members as mirrors of one's own community, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, parents, and grandparents alike. Like many of their civilian counterparts they are trying to provide for their families while also functioning as contributing members of society.

“However great may be the service of men and women who have served on the battlefields or home front in this war, an even greater obligation will face them when peace returns...The continuing duty of citizenship is to apply the lessons of this war to the establishments of a better and stronger nation. As these veterans have led in war, so they must lead in peace.” (Warren Atherton quoted in Mettler, 2005, p22)

The two most powerful venues of leverage for the civilian community to integrate veterans into the civilian community are in the workforce and higher education.

Integrating service members into the workforce goes beyond hiring veterans simply because they *are* veterans. It is about tangibly understanding the value their diversity of experiences bring to any given industry or organization. As a former hiring manager in the corporate sector, I understood the potential value that candidates with military experience brought. As a result, I frequently recruited from the pool of transitioning veterans, in addition to other more conventional routes.

I encourage civilian community members, who haven't done so already, to consider widening their talent search to include military veterans. There are opportunities for hiring managers and community leaders to connect with military transitioning professionals either through their local County Veteran Centers or neighboring military bases, which have a

TAP program on-site. Veteran civic organizations such as the Veteran of Foreign Wars (VFW) and American Legion are also great resources for general information on military veterans.

In addition to entering the workforce, many returning veterans will be accessing their Montgomery G.I. bill to continue their education or embark on a new career. Veterans contribute to the diversity of the student population through their real-world experiences, dynamic teamwork skills and the unique perspective they bring. A 1988 Congressional study showed that every dollar spent on educational benefits under the original GI Bill added seven more dollars to the national economy in terms of productivity, consumer spending and tax revenue. (Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America website)

CONCLUSION

As a veteran who is still adjusting to the transition of being a civilian after almost four years, I can attest to the need for the civilian community to be as equally involved as their military counterparts in supporting veterans with the transition process. I am convinced I am standing tall three weeks from receiving my Masters Degree not just because of the unconditional support of family and friends, but because of the compassion and oftentimes Herculean efforts of civilian community members. There are countless “neighbors” who have gone the extra mile for me, opening the doors to much-needed resources and services, even when the doors were previously closed to me. Others have crossed my path more serendipitously with an appreciative “Thank You for Serving” and a warm smile, reminding me that I wasn’t alone.

Although the well-known African Proverb “It takes a village...” refers to an entire community specifically supporting a child’s growth, it is just as relevant and applicable to transitioning veterans. The balance of both the military and civilian communities working in concert will be paramount to the success of the transitioning service members and families. My experience validated both the need *and* benefit of the aforementioned enabler of a support network serving as a foundation for a veteran’s transition.

Eight months into my treatment for PTSD, my dizzying battle with the relevant government agencies for rehabilitative and financial support continues. Although overwhelming and despairing at times, I am extremely grateful to my current “village” that enables me to take solace knowing I will never be without shelter, food or a shoulder to lean on. I know that many of my fellow service members from previous and current wars aren’t as fortunate.

Reflecting on where I was exactly a year ago serves as a powerful anchor for me, not just for the progress I have made to date, but for the lesson of continuous progress I will need to access a higher quality of life. If I was asked a year ago how I got through the tough times in my life, I’d answer that I literally *ran* through them, using the discipline and resilience acquired from being a seasoned athlete and soldier.

I am grateful for the privilege of leading soldiers, whose trust and faith in me, in turn, allowed me to learn how to trust myself more. I am indebted to my military experience for giving me the confidence to know what I am made of, as well as the conviction to know what I stand for. Even serving in war-torn countries such as Korea and Iraq, I was never at a loss for examples of humanity and compassion, both from American soldiers and the local population.

As an Organization Development practitioner, I look forward to sharing this insight with both the veteran and civilian communities. Additionally, this research has sparked my curiosity in further exploring workforce *diversity*, specifically as it relates to tangibly connecting a service member's military experience and cross-functional potential, to a multitude of industries in the civilian workforce, regardless of the soldier's previous skill set or training.

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Appendices:

A: Research Participants

B. Research Participation Release Form

C. Interview Questions

D. Norman Rockwell Advertisement (1945)

E. Glossary of Military Terms

F. Supervisory Community Readiness Job Description

Appendix A: Research Participants

ARTC- Separated, 8 years, Captain, Transportation Corps * Managed/led 5-50 people

HS- Separated, 4 years, Captain, Nursing Corps *Managed/led 4-40 people

JB- Separated, 4 years, Captain, Transportation Corps * Managed/led 5-50 people

JE – Retired, 20 years, Lieutenant Colonel, Aviation* Managed/led 150-500 people

JM- Retired, 22 years, Chief Warrant Officer Three, Ordnance Corps (Maintenance)
*Managed/led 22-143 people

JS- Retired, 20 years, Captain, Infantry *Managed/led 3-480 people

JS- Separated, 6 years, Captain, Armor *Managed/led 20-350 people

KS- Separated, 8 years, Captain, Military Police *Managed/led 3-83 people

LC- Separated, 6 years, Captain, Signal Corps *Managed/led 20 people

LH - Retired, 21 years, Sergeant First Class, Quartermaster Corps (Supply and Logistics)
*Managed/led 3-35 people

Appendix B: Research Participation Release Form

Dear Research Participant,

Your participation in this project is greatly appreciated. The purpose of this study is to explore the transition of Army Leaders into the Civilian Workforce. In addition to identifying the challenges and enablers of transitioning, I am interested in the possible implications it will have for both the military and civilian communities.

With your permission, I will take notes. Should you wish to not have your name (initials), rank, military branch identified, maximum number of people managed, I will assure your confidentiality.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may ask any questions regarding the research and they will be answered fully. You may withdraw from the study at any time.

If you agree to participate, please complete the following:

I, (print your name legibly) _____,
have heard and read the purpose of this study. Any questions I had have been
answered to my satisfaction. I understand my right to withdraw my consent to
participate at any time.

I hereby freely give my consent to participate in these aspects of the research project:

☐ Yes ☐ No: Permission to use my name and/or organization

NAME (Signature): _____ DATE: _____

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further ideas or concerns about the project. I will post a copy of the final paper upon completion of my paper at the following address: www.sonoma.edu/users/s/smithh/odlibrary/default.htm. If you would like me to send you a copy of my final paper please indicate your request in the box below and provide an address or email for me to do so.

☐ Yes ☐ No: I wish to receive a copy of the final paper
Please send to the following address:

Thank you again for your participation,

Maria Carolina Gonzalez-Prats
Organization Development MA candidate
Sonoma State University

Appendix C: Interview Questions

1) Background Information

- Your reasons for joining the Army/separating from the Army
 - how long were you in for?
 - what were you originally trained for?
 - what positions did you hold
 - what is the range of people that you managed/led

2) Transitioning Process in the Army

- When did you make your decision to get out?
- Were did you separate from?
- How much time were you told you'd be given to transition?
- How much time in reality were you given (i.e. focusing FULL time on transitioning)
- What services were you offered as part of the transition program? Was any of it mandatory?
- What services did you utilize?
- Was it helpful, why or why not?
- Were you made aware of in regards to Veterans Benefits and Resources to access in the civilian community? If yes, what?
- Did you have any expectations about what awaited in the civilian market in regards to pay and responsibility? If yes, what?
- Did you think your military skills were transferable, why or why not?
- When did you officially start your job search? What, if anything, did you do on your own?
- What was your greatest source of support during this transition period? What helped you personally?
- Did you opt to stay in the Reserves or National Guard? Why or why not?

3) Experience as a Civilian

- Did you feel prepared by the Transition Services to enter the civilian workforce?
Why or why not?
- What did you feel was your biggest challenge in your job search?
- What resources did you use, if any (i.e. headhunters, placement agencies, etc.)
- How long did it take you to land your first job after the Army?
- Are you still at the same job?
- Are you currently employed? If yes, where what do you do?
- How many jobs have you had since you got out? What do you attribute this to?

4) Hindsight

- If you knew then what you know now about transitioning to the civilian job market, do you think it would have influenced your decision to stay in or get out?
- Knowing what you know now about the Civilian job market, what would you suggest to the outgoing Army leaders transitioning out of the service?
- If manpower or money wasn't an issue, how do you think the Army can strengthen their transition services?
- How do you think communities can improve their efforts to reach out transitioning veterans?
- Is there anything I haven't asked you that you want to add or share?

Appendix D

Norman Rockwell asks:

"Would a Veteran find You here?"



The no-nonsense type. "You've been home a whole week, son. Isn't it time to look for a job? Can't pamper our selves, you know."



The Yeh-Yeh Sister. Just can't take her eyes off a disabled soldier. Thinks it's awful, and what's more, lets him know it.



Master Merriys. Okinawa may have been tough all right, but wait'll you hear this civilian on the rigors of rationed driving.



Americans, first-class. "Welcome home soldier!" Here's where a veteran would probably find you, glad to see him and eager to help. Because the great majority of Americans are too grateful to these veterans to make the mistakes shown here.

Good Americans don't prod the veteran with questions if he doesn't want to talk. They don't act sorry for him. Nor tell him life has been hard here. (He's been where it is hard.) And they don't stare at any disability he may have.

Above all, they remember that his experiences have made him an even more resourceful, capable citizen. They make it their job to help him get back into normal civilian life. Let's all be like them!



Lady with the needle nose. "Tell me how it feels to be wounded, Ensign. Did you bleed much?"

Prepared by the War Advertising Council, Inc. in Cooperation with the Office of War Information and the Retraining and Reemployment Administration.

PUBLISHED IN COOPERATION WITH THE DRUG, COSMETIC AND ALLIED INDUSTRIES BY

The Reception Committee—

(KNOW ANYBODY HERE?)



The Greeter. He's a one-man brass band when it comes to welcoming a veteran. "Nothing's too good for Our Boys!" he always says. And that's exactly what he gives them. Nothing, except a big hello and empty words. Help? That's the Government's job. "Don't you have business?" he asks. "Random's" job agencies?



The Bloodhound. "It's OK, Sailor, you won't shock me!" This shock-proof stalwart is after the details. How does it feel to be wounded? Ever kept a day? The War's just one big adventure to him. But it hasn't been for the sailor. He wants to forget it — fast. Not talk about it.

The Patriotic. He's practically winning the war single-handed. Always talking about all the things he goes without. Mentions the War Bonds he buys as though he were doing the Government a favor. This makes veterans (who've been buying plenty of Bonds themselves) wonder whether we had the right people in Anbols.



The Block. He's nervous. The Iron Man. War hasn't affected him. Can't understand why discharged veterans are allowed 90 days to relax before going back to their old jobs. Can't understand why they should need time to get over the War. He doesn't.

Prepared by the War Advertising Council, Inc., in Cooperation with the Office of War Information and the Retraining and Reemployment Administration.



Blue Ribbon Citizen. Like all good people, she asks no questions, weeps no tears, doesn't stare at disabilities. To her, a returned veteran is an able, more aggressive and resourceful citizen than the boy who went away. She's proud of him, proud to know him. Anxious to be of real help to him. She's the kind of person we should all be.

PUBLISHED IN COOPERATION WITH THE DRUG, COSMETIC AND ALLIED INDUSTRIES BY

LAMBERT PHARMACAL CO., St. Louis, Mo.,

Makers of LISTERINE ANTISEPTIC

Two advertisements from 1945 show the wide range of reaction the veterans received.

Appendix E: Military Glossary

ACAP (Alumni Career Alumni Program): The comprehensive transition program that the Army offers its soldiers of all ranks, as well as their families.

Army Reserves: Reserve military unit that trains one weekend a month, two weeks a year. It is federally funded and resourced.

Company: Team of Soldiers that can vary in size from 100-250 personnel

CPT (Captain): Commissioned Officer Rank that often holds senior leadership positions as Company Commanders and Staff Officers. Rank used in the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps.

CW3 (Chief Warrant Officer Three): With the exception of the branch of Aviation, Warrant Officers hold special positions as Technical Experts in their field, and are required to have enlisted and Non-Commissioned Officers before becoming Warrant Officers. Also nicknamed “Chief”.

Civilian: Non-military person or someone who has transitioned to civilian life.

Combat Arms: Military specialties that has direct combat roles in warfare. Examples include Infantry, Armor, Aviation, Air Defense Artillery, and Field Artillery.

Combat Support: Military specialties that have indirect combat roles in warfare. Example includes Military Police (MP)

Combat Service Support (CSS): Military specialties that support both Combat Support and Combat Arms roles in warfare. Examples include Quartermasters (Supply and Logistics), Ordnance, Finance, Transportation, Adjutant, Signal, and Medical Services.

CONUS: Continental United States. This refers to the location of a service members duty station that is within the Continental United States. (ex. Texas, Washington State)

DAV (Disabled Veterans of America) Civic Organization that advocates for and serves disabled veterans.

DOD (Department of Defense): Governing body of all the armed services to include the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. (Does not include the Coast Guard)

Department of Homeland Security: Governing body in charge of safeguarding the country's borders, coastline and airports. Created after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Forces that fall under this category include the Transportation Security Agency (TSA) and the Coast Guard (formerly part of the Department of Transportation)

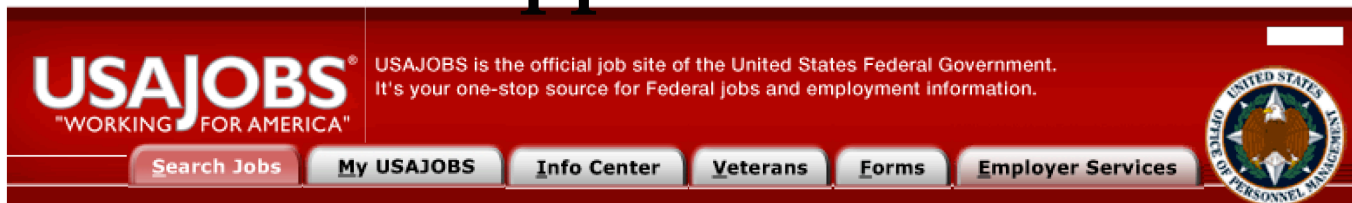
Leader: a term of distinguishment amongst the enlisted, Non-Commissioned Officer, Warrant and Commissioned Officer ranks. What I am using in this study to classify a Non-Commissioned Officer, Warrant Officer or Commissioned Officer who has managed/led at least five people.

LTC (Lieutenant Colonel): A high ranking commissioned officer that is below a Colonel and above a Major.

Logistics : Refers to military support specialties such as transportation, quartermaster and ordnance (Maintenance and ammunition).

Platoon: Team of soldiers within a company which can vary in size from 20-50 personnel

Appendix F



Department: **Department Of The Air Force**

Agency: **Air Force Personnel Center**

Job Announcement Number:
AFPC173420YC-0101-02/02FS

Overview

Duties

Qualifications & Evaluations

Benefits & Other Info

How to Apply

[← Back to Search Results](#)

Supervisory Community Readiness Consultant

SALARY RANGE: 57,146.00 - 110,691.00 USD per year

OPEN PERIOD: Saturday, February 09, 2008
to Saturday, August 09, 2008

SERIES & GRADE: YC-0101-02

POSITION INFORMATION: Multiple
Schedules Multiple Appointment Types

PROMOTION POTENTIAL: 02

DUTY LOCATIONS: multiple duty locations - [click here for more info](#)

WHO MAY BE CONSIDERED: US Citizens and
Status Candidates

JOB SUMMARY:

The mission of the United States Air Force is to deliver sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America and its global interests -- to fly and fight in Air, Space, and Cyberspace. To achieve that mission, the Air Force has a vision of Global Vigilance, Reach and Power. That vision orbits around three core competencies: Developing Airmen, Technology-to-Warfighting and Integrating Operations. Core competencies and distinctive capabilities are based on a shared commitment to three core values -- integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do.

This announcement is a Non-Competitive External Announcement.

This is a standing register and will be used to fill anticipated vacancies throughout the United States. The beginning and ending salaries may vary depending on the location of the position. The conditions of employment may also vary by location. Your resume will remain on file 90 days after the closing date: TAG:Closing Date for consideration.

This vacancy announcement may be used to fill permanent, term or temporary positions. Selection for a term or temporary position does not confer eligibility for a permanent position.

Management reserves the right to choose which eligibilities will be considered for each position. Candidates will receive a notice of rating, if referred or found not qualified for a specific specialty/grade and a disposition notice when the selection is made.

You are eligible under non-competitive external procedures if you meet one of the following criteria. Definitions are listed under "Other Information" .

Transfer

Reinstatement

ICTAP

30% Disabled Veterans: : <http://www.usajobs.gov/EI3.asp>

Veterans Employment Opportunity Act (VEOA)

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Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA)**Executive Order (EO) 12721****NAFI/AAFES****Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS)****Employment of People with Disabilities****Other Appointment Eligibilities**

<http://www.opm.gov/employ/html/sroa2.asp#InterchangeAgreementsWithOtherMeritSystems>

Military Spouse Preference for Overseas Employment**Family Member Preference for Overseas Employment****Excepted Service Family Member for Overseas Employment****Overseas Limited Appointee****KEY REQUIREMENTS:**

- U.S. Citizenship Required
- Travel and relocation expenses will/will not be paid

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**Send Mail****Send Mail to:**

AFPC Program Management and Support
will not accept mailed documents
PLEASE FAX to 478-757-3144
Not Applicable, TX 00000-0000

**Questions?****For questions about this job:**

Recruitment Service Center
Phone: (800)616-3775
Email:
recruitment.service@randolph.af.mil

USAJOBS Control Number: 1130631


[EEO Policy Statement](#) | [Reasonable Accommodation Policy Statement](#) | [Veterans Information Legal and Regulatory Guidance](#)

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**Department: Department Of The Air Force****Agency: Air Force Personnel Center****Job Announcement Number:****AFPC173420YC-0101-02/02FS**[Overview](#)[Duties](#)[Qualifications & Evaluations](#)[Benefits & Other Info](#)[How to Apply](#)[Back to Search Results](#)

Supervisory Community Readiness Consultant

Additional Duty Location Info: Few vacancies - Incirlik AFB, AE Few vacancies - Aviano AB, AE Few vacancies - Lajes Field Azores, AE Few vacancies - RAF Mildenhall UK, AE Few vacancies - Ramstein AB, AE Few vacancies - Spangdahlem AB, AE Few vacancies - Geilenkirchen, AE Few vacancies - Wiesbaden, AE Few vacancies - Little Rock AFB, AR Few vacancies - Luke AFB, AZ Few vacancies - Davis Mothan AFB, AZ Few vacancies - Moody AFB, GA Few vacancies - Dobbins AFB, GA Few vacancies - Robins AFB, GA Few vacancies - Mountain Home AFB, ID Few vacancies - McConnell AFB, KS Few vacancies - Hanscom AFB, MA Few vacancies - Andrews AFB, MD Few vacancies - Whiteman AFB, MO Few vacancies - Malmstrom AFB, MT Few vacancies - Grand Forks, ND Few vacancies - Minot AFB, ND Few vacancies - Offutt AFB, NE Few vacancies - Dyess AFB, TX Few vacancies - Charleston AFB, SC Few vacancies - Shaw AFB, SC Few vacancies - Arnold AFB, TN Few vacancies - Sheppard AFB, TX Few vacancies - Goodfellow AFB, TX Few vacancies - Laughlin AFB, TX Few vacancies - Brooks AFB, TX Few vacancies - Randolph AFB, TX Few vacancies - Lackland AFB, TX Few vacancies - Hill AFB, UT Few vacancies - FE Warren AFB, WY Few vacancies - Maxwell AFB, AL Few vacancies - Anderson AFB, AP Few vacancies - Kadena AFB, AP Few vacancies - Kusan AFB, AP Few vacancies - Misawa AB, AP Few vacancies - Osan AB, AP Few vacancies - Yokota AB, AP Few vacancies - McGuire AFB, NJ Few vacancies - Langley AFB, VA Few vacancies - Pentagon AFB, VA Few vacancies - Peterson AFB, CO Few vacancies - Buckley ANG, CO Few vacancies - USAF Academy, CO Few vacancies - Schriever, CO Few vacancies - Elmendorf AFB, AK Few vacancies - Eielson AFB, AK Few vacancies - Beale AFB, CA Few vacancies - Travis AFB, CA Few vacancies - Vandenberg AFB, CA Few vacancies - March AFB, CA Few vacancies - Edwards AFB, CA Few vacancies - Boling AFB, DC Few vacancies - Dover AFB, DE Few vacancies - Homestead AFB, FL Few vacancies - Eglin AFB, FL Few vacancies - Tyndall AFB, FL Few vacancies - Macdill AFB, FL Few vacancies - Patrick AFB, FL Few vacancies - HOMESTEAD AFB, FL Few vacancies - Hurlburt Field, FL Few vacancies - Hickam AFB, HI Few vacancies - Scott AFB, IL Few vacancies - Barksdale AFB, LA Few vacancies - Columbus AFB, MS Few vacancies - Keesler AFB, MS Few vacancies - Seymour Johnson, NC Few vacancies - Pope AFB, NC Few vacancies - Cannon AFB, NM Few vacancies - Kirtland AFB, NM Few vacancies - Holloman AFB, NM Few vacancies - Nellis AFB, NV Few vacancies - Wright Patterson, OH Few vacancies - Altus AFB, OK Few vacancies - Vance AFB, OK Few vacancies - Ellsworth AFB, SD Few vacancies - Fairchild AFB, WA Few vacancies - McChord AFB, WA

MAJOR DUTIES:

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The primary purpose of this position is to plan, implement, administer, and counsel on Family Support Center's (FSC) career, transition, relocation, family, and there work/life services and activities provided to military members, retirees, Department of Defense (DoD) civilian members, and their families. Assesses individual and family needs and provides continuing work/life services to eligible populations interviews and assesses

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clients' needs and concerns (e.g., family separate, parenting, personal financial management, child care, elder care. etc.); valuates and interprets information gathered in interviews. Participates in implementing, maintaining, and providing installation work/life services that meet community needs. Conducts and implements; marketing and public relations campaigns to ensure target populations are informed of services and activities. Ensures availability of technology-base resources to maximize customer access to a full spectrum of resources to meet life-cycle need - Develops statements of requirements, and identifies potential sources for acquisition of resources.

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USAJOBS Control Number: 1130631

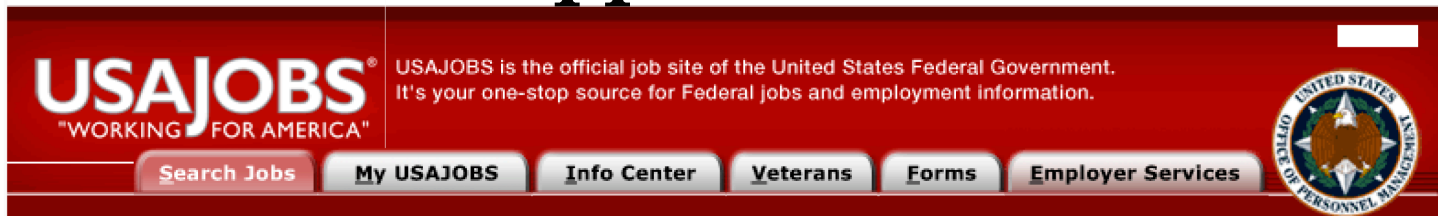
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Department: Department Of The Air Force

Agency: Air Force Personnel Center

Job Announcement Number:

AFPC173420YC-0101-02/02FS

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Supervisory Community Readiness Consultant

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

Qualification Requirements:

Basic Requirements:

The individual occupational requirements typically provide at least two methods for applicants to meet the basic requirements of the occupations covered by this standard:

Successful completion of a full 4-year course of study in an accredited college or university leading to a bachelor's or higher degree that included a major field of study or specific course requirements generally as stated in paragraph A in the individual occupational requirements.

Where specific course requirements are not indicated in paragraph A, the number of semester hours required to constitute a major field of study is the amount specified by the college or university attended. If this number cannot be obtained, 24 semester hours will be considered as equivalent to a major field of study. The nature and quality of this required course work must have been such that it would serve as a prerequisite for more advanced study in the field or subject-matter area. Related course work generally refers to courses that may be accepted as part of the program major.

OR

Appropriate combination of education and experience that is typically specified in paragraph B of the individual occupational requirements. The "paragraph B" method generally requires that an applicant possess a core of educational credit, such as described in paragraph A above, plus additional education and/or experience. The method of determining the number of semester hours required to constitute a major field of study is the same as described in paragraph A.

The quality of the combination of education and experience must be sufficient to demonstrate that the applicant possesses the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform work in the occupation, and is comparable to that normally acquired through the successful completion of a full 4-year course of study with a major in the appropriate field. In addition to courses in the major and related fields, a typical college degree would have included courses that involved analysis, writing, critical thinking, research, etc. These courses would have provided an applicant with skills and abilities sufficient to perform progressively more responsible work in the occupation. Therefore, creditable experience should have demonstrated similarly appropriate skills or abilities needed to perform the work of the occupation.

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Individual Occupational Standard (IOR) Basic Requirements:

1. Degree: behavioral or social science; or related disciplines appropriate to the position.

OR

2. Combination of education and experience--that provided the applicant with knowledge of one or more of the behavioral or social sciences equivalent to a major in the field.

OR

3. Four years of appropriate experience that demonstrated that the applicant has acquired knowledge of one or more of the behavioral or social sciences equivalent to a major in the field.

In addition to meeting the Basic Qualification Requirements and Individual Occupational Requirements (IOR) applicants must also meet qualifications outlined below.

YC-0101-02

SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE:

Applicants must possess one year of specialized experience at the next lower qualifying pay band or equivalent under the General Schedule (GS) or other pay systems. Equivalent experience may be at the level of the lowest GS grade covered by the applicable pay band; however, the experience must demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA's) to successfully perform the duties of the position being filled. Examples of creditable specialized experience include the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are listed below.

Your resume must list the appropriate academic field (e.g., history, biology, mechanical engineering, economics, sociology, etc.) and all courses you have taken (including those failed) which appear to satisfy the qualification requirements of this position for which you are applying. List graduate and undergraduate courses separately. Provide information for each course within the appropriate academic field (e.g., history, biology, mechanical engineering, economics, and sociology). Include the descriptive title and course code, completion date, grade, number of semester, quarter or classroom hours (for education completed at business, secretarial, technical school or military schools) and graduate and undergraduate classes.

Your qualifications will be evaluated on the basis of your level of knowledge, skills, abilities and/or competencies in the following areas:

- Knowledge of social services delivery systems as well as concepts, principles, theories, and practices relating to one or more of the social or behavioral science fields.
- Knowledge of personal financial management practices and technology to provide clients with appropriate financial data and practical financial skills to enable them to make an informed personal financial management decisions.
- Skill in conducting interviews to establish the nature and extent of concerns/issues, provide assistance in developing goals and plan, and determine appropriate referral services/options.
- Skill in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships using tact and diplomacy in interactions with individual families and with program representatives and officials.
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

Status candidates must meet time in grade requirements (52 weeks at the next lower

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grade level.)

PART-TIME OR UNPAID EXPERIENCE: Credit will be given for appropriate unpaid work on the same basis as for paid experience. Part-time experience will be credited on the basis of time actually spent in appropriate activities. To receive credit for such experience you must indicate clearly the nature of the duties and responsibilities in each position held and the number of hours per week spent in such employment.

ARE YOU USING YOUR EDUCATION TO QUALIFY? You **MUST** provide transcripts to support your educational claims. Unless otherwise stated, unofficial transcripts on college letterhead are acceptable. All materials must be submitted by the closing date of the announcement.

Education must be accredited by an accrediting institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education in order for it to be credited towards qualifications, particularly positions with a positive education requirement. Therefore, applicants must report only attendance and/or degrees from schools accredited by accrediting institutions recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Applicants can verify accreditation at the following website: <http://www.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/index.html>. All education claimed by applicants will be verified by the appointing agency accordingly.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOREIGN EDUCATION: Education completed in foreign colleges or universities may be used to meet the above requirements. You must show proof that the education credentials have been submitted to a private organization that specializes in interpretation of foreign educational credentials and that such education has been deemed to be at least equivalent to that gained in conventional U.S. education programs; or an accredited U.S. state university reports the other institution as one whose transcript is given full value, or full value is given in subject areas applicable to the curricula at the state university. It is your responsibility to provide such evidence when applying.

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

- The employee may be subjected to random drug testing
- Employee may be required to work other than normal duty hours, which may include evenings, weekends, and/or holidays.
- Shift work and emergency overtime may be required.
- Employees must maintain current certifications.

Your latest resume will be used to determine qualifications as vacancies occur.

HOW YOU WILL BE EVALUATED:

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Once the application process is complete, a review of your application will be made to ensure you meet the job requirements. Your resume must reflect the experience identified on the questionnaire. The Human Resource Specialist uses your responses to the occupational questionnaire, along with your resume and supporting documentation, to determine if you meet regulatory eligibilities and appointment authorities listed in this vacancy announcement. AFPC is not responsible for erroneous eligibilities that you list or those that you fail to list.

If, after reviewing your resume and or supporting documentation, a determination is made that you have inflated your qualifications and or experience your score can and will be adjusted to more accurately reflect your abilities. Please follow all instructions carefully. Errors or omissions may affect your rating.

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