

*Employer Packet*

# BEST PRACTICES

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Recruiting and Retaining  
Military Candidates

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PRESENTED BY  
FASTPORT





# FASTPORT

Dear Employment Partner,

Together, we have undertaken an ambitious aspiration — to reach, educate, train, hire and retain more of America's military community into civilian business enterprise. We have approached this aspiration with unprecedented cooperation among competitors to build a technology platform and leverage it with personal interactions to provide our partners a competitive advantage in Veteran employment.

FASTPORT has undertaken a massive public relations campaign to promote Veteran Ready employers in the civilian world, and we are delighted to add your company to our consortium of employers ready to proudly take on that status and mantle. Employers, especially apprenticeship providers, are in the national discussion of Veteran employment in key areas of the Department of Defense, Department of Labor, Department of Veteran Affairs and, most importantly, throughout the U.S. Army, Army Reserve, National Guard, and U.S. Marine Corps transition offices around the world. Furthermore, our employer partners have been positioned within these military and Veteran channels as leaders in Veteran employment.

It is my pleasure to provide this series of Best Practices to help you create and enhance your military hiring programs. As you build and grow your objectives, goals and strategies to further leverage your current momentum, please don't hesitate to reach out to our team so we can provide personalized help.

With my sincerest thanks and deepest appreciation of your support and industry leadership

William R. McLennan  
Chief Executive Officer  
FASTPORT



# Becoming Veteran-Ready Check List

- Survey your employees.** You might be surprised to find what percentage of your employees have a military affiliation. Use that information to get to know veterans and spouses in your own company.

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- Create an Affinity Group.** An Affinity Group is best described as a forum for employees to gather socially and share ideas outside of their particular business units. Development of Veteran and military affinity groups are a critical element to workplace retention.
  - Keep in contact with group members on a regular basis.
  - Maintain a website or social media sites to establish a form of communicating information about the group throughout the company
  - Hold social activities (meet-and-greets, family get-togethers). It is important to include family members in the activities whenever possible
  - Celebrate holiday remembrances (Veterans Day)
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# Becoming Veteran-Ready Check List

- Familiarize yourself with military installations within 100 miles of your company.

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- Identify a veteran or military spouse employee who can attend job fair and networking events to help the organization connect with Veteran candidates.

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- Become aware and involved in the Department of Labor "Hire Vets" initiative.

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- Learn about the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), the law governing employers' relationships with military employees.

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- Download the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' "Guide to Hiring Veterans" for your HR or recruiting teams.



# BEST PRACTICES

VETERAN HIRING AND RETENTION

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Recruiting Veterans

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Writing Military-Specific Job Postings

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Promoting a Military Brand

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# RECRUITING MILITARY VETERANS



Deciding to hire veterans is a big step, but it is just the first on the road to becoming a military-savvy employer. Service men and women have a unique set of skills and experiences that make them extremely valuable employees, but you must understand how to recruit them before they will flock to your company.

Here are 8 simple steps you can implement right away to improve your veteran hiring strategy and recruit more veterans.

## **Step 1: Lead & Commit**

Once you've decided to hire veterans, make an official commitment. A hiring commitment shows veterans that you are serious about hiring from the military and reassures veterans that you will help make their transition smooth. To make a military spouse hiring commitment [click here](#).

## **Step 2: Promote Your Commitment**

Now it's time to spread the word. Veterans are much, much more likely to apply for your jobs if they know you are a military-friendly employer, so let them know. Your commitment is an extraordinary marketing opportunity for your company, so don't waste it. One of the most effective ways to promote your choice is to use a press release to announce your commitment and then promote your press release on your social media sites. In addition, send the press release to those military installations within 100 miles of your business locations.

For those companies that use FASTPORT's services, FASTPORT will help promote your commitment by putting your press release on Fast Track, [fastport.com's "News Page"](#) and on its social media sites.

## **Step 3: Know Your Audience**

Now that you've made it clear you are actively seeking veterans to build your company, you need to understand what's different about them. Those differences are what make them fit the industry so well and why you should recruit them.

# RECRUITING MILITARY VETERANS

## **Step 4: Make Transitioning Less Scary**

Understanding veterans helps you see why you should hire them, and it shows what concerns they may have about joining your team. Tailor job descriptions to this new hiring group, and use postings to correct any potential misconceptions. This short time investment could pay off and create a loyal employee.

## **Step 5: Post Your Jobs Everywhere**

Once you craft your tailored job descriptions, use Fastport to post your jobs and get them in front of the military community. Their system will send your postings to candidates with the skill set you are looking for. This targeted online exposure means more qualified veterans vying to work with your company.

## **Step 6: Use Military Certification/Credentialing Equivalents**

While you speak with veteran applicants, ask them if they have Credentialing. For example, a Military Skills Test Waiver. The Military Skills Test Waiver exempts service members who are or were employed in a military position in the last 12 months from taking the driving portion of their CDL skills test. The waiver helps veterans to obtain their CDL faster, but a staggering 80% haven't even heard about it. The Military Skills Test Waiver is accepted in all 50 states and benefits multiple veterans from multiple military occupations, not just 88Ms, so make sure your applicants know about it.

## **Step 7: Fine-Tune Your Veteran Onboarding Process**

Military training gives veterans exceptional traits you won't find in other hiring pools, but they might feel disoriented when they enter the civilian world. It's no secret that the military has its own language, and that can be intimidating for people who have been away from civilian employment for an extended period. Get to know (and use!) their jargon. This will build your credibility in their eyes and make them feel more comfortable in your company's environment. Use this to your advantage when talking with recruits who might be a little intimidated.

## **Step 8: Hire Recruiters with Military Background**

One obvious (and effective) way for a company to speak veterans' language is to use recruiters with military backgrounds. These recruiters have a unique ability to speak with veterans about the industry because they have a deep understanding of both. Having recruiters with military backgrounds also proves that you hire veterans, which could instill confidence in your new job seekers.

# WRITING MILITARY-SPECIFIC JOB POSTINGS



You've done it! You made a commitment to hire veterans. Your badge is proudly displayed on your website, and now those veterans will flock to your HR department in droves to sign on as an employee. Sounds too good to be true? Well, that's because it is too good to be true.

Committing to hire veterans is an essential step, but you'll have to do more outbound recruiting to attract veterans to fill your available positions.

One of the most important methods military-friendly companies must implement is the veteran-specific job posting. To help you create the most tailored job posting possible, Fastport has created a list of Best Practices below.

## **Focus on Them**

This first piece of advice may seem obvious, but many companies struggle to make job posting about how military veterans will benefit from the jobs (not just about their carrier or the job itself). Let's compare two job descriptions to illustrate the difference:

Company X was founded in 1900, and we are the best in the business. Our drivers have a reputation for excellence and are one of the reasons our customers return again and again. As a regional driver for Company X, you will drive throughout the Midwest region and receive medical benefits and paid vacation immediately after employment. Apply today to find out more about this exciting job.

Your military experience is a valuable asset, whether you drove in the military or not. Join Company Y as a regional driver to jumpstart your trucking career with one of the industry's most respected fleets and put that experience to use in your new profession. With plenty of downtime, excellent pay, unmatched benefits, and our training program, Company Y will put you on the path to a lucrative and long-lasting career.

In both descriptions, Company X and Company Y give useful information about their available job. However, Company Y created a much more targeted approach to attract veterans, and that targeting gives them a better chance at attracting vets. Remember that everything you write in the job description should show how the carrier/job will benefit the applicant.



# WRITING MILITARY-SPECIFIC JOB POSTINGS

## **Tell Veterans Their Military Experience Counts**

To show how your job will benefit veterans, make sure that you tell them their military experience “counts” in your company. Consider mentioning the CDL Military Skills Test Waiver specifically to show their experience can help them start their long-term career quickly. The waiver helps veterans to obtain their CDL faster, but a staggering 80% haven’t even heard about it. The Military Skills Test Waiver is now accepted in all 50 states and benefits multiple veterans from multiple military occupations, not just 88Ms, so make sure your applicants know about it.

## **Give Continued Training Options**

Even if veteran candidates have a logistics background or drove trucks during their military careers, most will need help transitioning into commercial trucking. Therefore, emphasize how your carrier will support them with continued training. Training options will help veterans see they don’t need to know everything about commercial trucking before they apply to drive for you, and that will encourage more to apply.

## **Emphasize the Job’s Overall Importance**

As you dispel trucking myths, emphasize why the trucking industry is so important. You could mention that nearly 70% of America’s goods are moved on a truck or highlight that drivers help keep America safe. Military veterans are accustomed to work hard toward a common important goal (our national security), so having that goal reinstated when they return home is a great way to bring them into the industry.

Our drivers are responsible for the safety and security of America’s roadways, and having veterans in the driver’s seat can make a real difference in people’s lives. While you may be aware of that fact, veterans might not. So, remember to showcase that fact in your job postings.

## **Show Your Team Understands Veterans**

As you construct your job postings, remember that our “trucking language” can be intimidating for people new to our industry. Make postings simple and easy to understand for a non-industry recruit who is looking into trucking for first time.

In addition, realize that the military also has its own language. Get to know (and use!) their jargon to make veterans feel like your company understands them. This will build your credibility in their eyes, make them feel more comfortable in your company’s environment, and draw in new recruits.

# PROMOTING A MILITARY BRAND



## **Create a Military Landing Page**

When you ask service members to go to your website, you're starting a risky process if you don't have a military-specific landing page for them. As we mentioned in the Job Posting section, it's essential to create tailored content for this cohort, as it will show them that you understand their specific abilities and needs.

Given the choice between two companies, service members will almost invariably be drawn to companies with military imagery and language. A general site is simply not enough. To ensure your site does its own heavy-lifting in the recruiting phase, we recommend that you incorporate visuals of people in military uniform, patriotic imagery such as the American Flag, and even direct wording such as "We are Proud to Hire Veterans".

## **Promote Success Stories**

Veterans, like most people, like to see proof-of-concept when looking at employers. When you can prove that you are, indeed, able and willing to invest in military talent and give Veterans a platform to succeed in your company, you've got a winning military branding strategy.

# PROMOTING A MILITARY BRAND



## **Press Release Publishing Strategy**

We strongly encourage you to approve and publish a Joint Press Release with FASTPORT. We will create that for you and send to your team for additional information, approvals, etc. Simply tell us what you need, and we will help you put it onto paper. Once the release is approved, we recommend that you:

- Post on Company's website
- Post on Company's Facebook page
- Send to local and regional newspapers in your hiring locations
- Send to local Chamber of Commerce in your hiring locations
- Send to your State Motor Truck Association requesting them to post
- Send to all Associations your company is a member of requesting them to post
- Send to the local U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard garrisons in your hiring locations asking them to distribute to their soldiers (a great source of experienced Veterans)
- Send to the local American Job Centers in your hiring areas asking them to post and distribute to Veterans seeking employment
- Send to FASTPORT ([paige.thompson@fastport.com](mailto:paige.thompson@fastport.com)) for cross-promoting on all of our websites and social media platforms.

# ATTENDING HIRING EVENTS



Presenting at a job fair can be an incredibly rewarding experience. It's a fast-track opportunity to meet and hire (or pre-hire) candidates who are highly motivated to find a great job. However, you may feel out of your element as you prepare to attend your first event. To help you get started, we have listed a few of FASTPORT's Best Practices for Job Fairs below.

## **Attend Military-Focused Hiring Fairs**

Your commitment to hire veterans shows that you are a military-friendly employer, but now you have to find military veterans to fill those open positions. Standard job fairs may have a few vets sprinkled throughout the event, but you likely won't find as many as you would like. Instead, choose events that take place on military bases or those sponsored by Hiring Our Heroes. These events will give you the military exposure that you want and skyrocket your chances of finding veteran talent.

### *About Hiring Our Heroes Job Fairs, Transition Summits and Expos*

There are many different hiring fairs for veterans. We recommend you consider the Hiring Our Heroes events because they are free for employers and targeted at different veteran and military spouse groups. They also have events held on military bases, at popular sporting venues and in metropolitan venues. The events target transitioning service men and women, military spouses, local National Guard and reserve components, local veterans that are unemployed and underemployed.

## **Stake Out the Best Spot**

Job fairs tend to have first-come-first-served seating. To get the best location, you will need to arrive early so you can reserve your spot. (Arriving early will also help you prepare before candidates visit your booth.) You can determine the "best" position by determining the flow of foot-traffic. Avoid the first few tables in the front and back of the room. Foot-traffic is heaviest in the center of the room since that's where most of the employers are stationed, so make sure you're in that busy section. That way, you'll catch candidates' eyes more easily.

## **Engage Applicants Visually**

Your booth's design should also catch job veterans' attention. Display a banner or sign that clearly shows your company's name, logo, and color scheme. You may want to place something

# ATTENDING HIRING EVENTS

military-themed to brand yourself as military-friendly right away. A great option for this is to place your Commitment Badge in a prominent space, so candidates know you're formally committed to hire veterans. Remember that this may be the first time applicants have heard of your company, so you'll need to show them your brand identity immediately,

## **Consider Giveaways**

In addition to signage, you may want to purchase a few giveaways for job seekers to take with them after the job fair ends. Popular giveaways include keychains, water bottles, colorful flyers, candy, and pens. Regardless of the type you choose, giveaways showcase your company's brand, and they help veterans remember you once they return home.

## **Maximize Your Exposure**

Signs and giveaways encourage people to gravitate toward your booth, but they won't do all the work. It's imperative that your representatives engage with applicants in order to find new talent. We recommend sending two employees if possible so someone is always available to speak with candidates. If possible, send at least one representative with military experience and can speak the veterans' "language."

No matter how many representatives you send, make sure they are attentive throughout the entire event. They should stand in front of the table (not sit behind it) and greet job seekers with a smile, handshake, and positive attitude. They should only begin packing up materials when the event is scheduled to end. It appears unprofessional to leave before the official closing time, and they might miss out on a fantastic candidate who just happened to arrive a bit late.

## **Network with Other Employers**

Your first priority is to find and hire new veteran talent, but don't underestimate a job fair's networking possibilities. While one person sets up the booth, have the other representative mill around and get to know a few of the other employers. This may lead to local business partnerships or someone recommending a job seeker stop by your booth.

## **Have All Your Open Positions Available**

It is important that your representatives have all of your company's open positions available at the hiring fair, not just local positions. If you are attending an event on a military installation, it is important to recognize most service men and women transitioning out of the military will want to return to their hometown or state to find employment. A large percentage will also want to remain in the area but do not limit your ability to recruit on a regional or national basis.



# ATTENDING HIRING EVENTS

## **Prepare for On-the-Spot Interviews**

As you meet with applicants, don't shy away from doing on-the-spot interviews. Remember the vast majority of veteran attendees are highly motivated to find a job quickly. If you can do a qualifying interview at the fair and give a soft (or firm) offer there, you will likely secure a new member of your team.

## **Manage Expectations**

If you choose to do on-the-spot interviews, it's important to manage expectations. Representatives may be tempted to oversell positions, and that usually leads to frustration for both your company and the veteran. Stay positive and realistic about what the position can offer and how they would fit in.

If applicants do not qualify for the available jobs, be open with them from the start so you don't waste your time or the candidate's time. You can even turn this into a positive experience. If possible, use the networking connections you made earlier in the day to point them to another booth that might have a fantastic job opportunity.

## **Follow Up**

The job fair is the first step. After you pack up your materials and head back to the office, follow up with applicants as soon as possible. Military veterans and transitioning service men and women are in high demand. If you don't get in touch quickly, another company might hire them before you have a chance.

## **Follow Up Again**

Transitioning service men and women can be out of reach for several days, or even weeks. Do not get discouraged if they have not responded and keep trying. Also, most veterans transitioning out of the military will typically start their job search from 3 to 12 months away from their actual discharge date. You will need to use a candidate tracking tool to ensure you have regular follow up with your candidate about your open positions. Employers that continue the dialogue with transitioning candidates have been successful in developing a steady pipeline of veterans with predictable start dates.

# Summary: Hiring Fairs

Attend Military-Focused Hiring Fairs

STEP  
**01**



STEP  
**02**

Stake Out the Best Spot

Engage applicants visually

STEP  
**03**



STEP  
**04**

Consider Giveaways



Maximize Your Exposure

STEP  
**05**



Network with  
Other Employers

STEP  
06



STEP  
07

Have All Your  
Positions  
Available

Prepare for On  
the Spot  
Interviews

STEP  
08



STEP  
09

Manage  
Expectations

Follow Up (and  
Repeat)

STEP  
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