



# Understanding Military Skillsets and How They Apply to Business

A RecruitMilitary e-Book



# **Military Veterans Represent a Vast Talent Pool**

The military services represent one of the largest organizations in the world. As such, a wide variety of skillsets are required, much the same as a large corporation.

Veterans offer civilian employers a wide variety of skillsets acquired while in the service.

# Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) can be confusing ...

Think of an MOS as a college major.

Sometimes they are indicative of a skillset, while other times they are more general – like a Liberal Arts degree.



# The overwhelming majority of active-duty personnel work in military employment categories that have easily recognized counterparts:

- ☒ Engineering, Science, and Technical
- ☒ Machine Operator and Precision Work
- ☒ Transportation and Material Handling
- ☒ Executive, Administrative, and Managerial

There are literally thousands of Military Occupational Specialties, but it doesn't need to be overwhelming.



## Many veterans have college degrees

All branches of the Armed Forces require their members to be high school graduates or have equivalent credentials, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.

Officers usually need a bachelor's degree. Some officers entering the service may need to have education beyond the bachelor's degree. For example, officers entering as military lawyers need a law degree.

	Veterans	Non-veterans
Bachelor's degree and higher	32%	36%
Some College or Associate's	35%	25%
High School Graduate	29%	28%

Source for statistical information: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 2018



# Diversity in the Military

The U.S. military is one of the most diverse workplaces in the world. As 43 percent of its active duty forces are comprised of black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) groups\*, it serves as the largest single pool of diversity talent available.

## Highlights

- Among Army recruits, the portion of Black women is significantly higher than in the civilian labor force.\*\*
- 21.7% of Asian / Pacific Islander military members are senior enlisted (E6-E9).\*\*\*
- The Marines Corps is the only service in which Hispanic men and women are overrepresented among recruits.\*\*
- 19.6% of American Indian and Alaska Native commissioned officers graduated from a military academy.\*\*\*

\*[Pew Resource Center](#) | \*\*[Council on Foreign Relations](#) | \*\*\*[Department of Defense](#)

# **Women in the Military**

When the draft ended in 1973, women represented just 2 percent of the enlisted forces and 8 percent of the officer corps. Today, those numbers are 16 percent and 19 percent, respectively, a significant increase over the past half century.\*

## **Highlights**

- **1993** | Brig. Gen. Jeannie Leavitt made history as the service's first female fighter pilot, and was the first woman to command a USAF combat fighter wing
- **2008** | Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody becomes the first female four-star general in military history
- **2015** | Capt. Kristen Griest and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Shaye Haver become the first women to graduate from Ranger School
- **2017** | The Coast Guard surpassed DoD with female representation, at 26.4%.
- **2020** | A National Guard soldier became the Army's first female Green Beret
- **2020** | Capt. Amy Bauernschmidt was selected to command a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier for the first time in US Navy history

*\*[Council on Foreign Relations](#)*

# **Enlisted personnel make up about 83 percent of the Armed Forces. The remaining 17 percent are Officers.**

***Enlisted personnel*** typically do the following:

- Participate in, or support, combat and other military operations, such as humanitarian or disaster relief
- Operate, maintain, and repair equipment
- Perform technical and support activities
- Supervise junior enlisted personnel

***Officers*** typically do the following:

- Plan, organize, and lead troops and activities in military operations
- Manage enlisted personnel
- Operate and command aircraft, ships, or armored vehicles
- Provide military personnel with professional services in medical, legal, engineering, and other fields

Let's take a closer look at how each segment is organized.

# **Understanding Enlisted Skillsets**

# Across the Services, Enlisted Personnel Span a Wide Range of Occupational Specialties



# Roles for Enlisted

<b>Administrative</b>	Maintain data and files on personnel, equipment, funds, and other military-related activities. They work in a support area, such as finance, accounting, legal affairs, maintenance, supply, or transportation.
<b>Combat Specialty</b>	Train and work as members of combat units, such as the infantry, artillery, or Special Forces. May also operate various types of combat vehicles, such as amphibious assault vehicles, tanks, or small boats.
<b>Construction</b>	<p>Build or repair buildings, airfields, bridges, and other structures. They also may operate heavy equipment, such as bulldozers or cranes. Some construction personnel specialize in areas such as plumbing, electrical wiring, or water purification.</p> <p><b><i>Examples: Corps of Engineers, Horizontal Construction Engineer, Seabee, Red Horse, Technical Engineer (12T), Prime Power Production Specialist</i></b></p>
<b>Electronic &amp; Electrical Equipment Repair</b>	<p>Maintain and repair electronic equipment used by the military. Repairers specialize in an area, such as aircraft electrical systems, computers, optical equipment, communications, or weapons systems.</p> <p><b><i>Examples: Fire Controlman, Gunner's Mate, Sonar Technician, Avionics Technician, Satellite Communications, PMEL/TMDE</i></b></p>

# Roles for Enlisted

## Engineering, Science, & Technical

Perform a variety of tasks, such as operating technical equipment, solving problems, and collecting and interpreting information:

- *Environmental health and safety specialists* inspect military facilities and food supplies to ensure that they are safe for use.
- *Information technology specialists* manage and maintain computer and network systems.
- *Intelligence specialists* gather information and prepare reports for military planning and operations.

## Healthcare

Provide medical services to military personnel and their family members. They may work as part of a patient-service team with doctors, nurses, or other healthcare professionals. Some specialize in providing emergency medical treatment in combat or remote areas. Others specialize in laboratory testing of tissue and blood samples; maintaining pharmacy supplies or patients' records; assisting with dental procedures; operating diagnostic tools, such as x-ray and ultrasound machines; or other healthcare tasks.

# Roles for Enlisted

<b>Machine Operator &amp; Production</b>	<p>Operate industrial equipment and machinery, and repair parts for a variety of equipment and structures. They may operate engines, nuclear reactors, or water pumps, usually performing a specific job.</p> <p><i>Examples: Machinist's Mate, Boatswain's Mate, Gas Turbine Systems Mechanic, Electrician's Mate</i></p>
<b>Media &amp; Public Affairs</b>	<p>Prepare and present information about military activities to the military and the public. They take photographs, make video programs, present news and music programs, or conduct interviews.</p>
<b>Protective Service</b>	<p>Enforce military laws and regulations and provide emergency responses to disasters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Firefighters</i> prevent and extinguish fires in buildings, on aircraft, and aboard ships.</li><li>• <i>Military police</i> responsibilities include controlling traffic, preventing crime, and responding to emergencies.</li><li>• <i>Other law enforcement and security specialists</i> investigate crimes committed on military property and guard inmates in military correctional facilities.</li></ul>

# Roles for Enlisted

## Support Service

Provide services that support the morale and well-being of military personnel and their families:

- *Food service specialists* prepare food in dining halls, hospitals, and ships.
- *Religious program specialists* assist chaplains with religious services, religious education programs, and related administrative duties.

## Transportation & Material Handling

Transport military personnel and cargo. Most personnel within this occupational group are classified according to the mode of transportation:

- *Aircrew members* operate equipment on aircraft.
- *Cargo specialists* load and unload military supplies, using forklifts and cranes.
- *Quartermasters and boat operators* navigate and pilot many types of small watercraft, including tugboats, gunboats, and barges.
- *Vehicle drivers* operate various military vehicles, including fuel or water tank trucks.

# Roles for Enlisted

## Vehicle, Machinery, & Other Technicians

Conduct preventive and corrective maintenance on aircraft, automotive and heavy equipment, and powerhouse station equipment. These workers typically specialize by the type of equipment that they maintain:

- *Aircraft mechanics* inspect and service various types of aircraft.
- *Automotive and heavy equipment mechanics* maintain and repair vehicles, such as Humvees, trucks, tanks, and other combat vehicles. They also repair bulldozers and other construction equipment.
- *Heating and cooling mechanics* install and repair air-conditioning, refrigeration, and heating equipment.
- *Marine engine mechanics* repair and maintain engines on ships, boats, and other watercraft.
- *Powerhouse mechanics* install, maintain, and repair electrical and mechanical equipment in power-generating stations.

***Examples: Aerospace Ground Equipment, Crew Chief, Light Wheel, Heavy Wheel, Abrams Tank System Maintainer, UPS Technician, Prime Power Production Specialist***

# The Enlisted ranks can be a guide for employers about suitability for various roles

E-1 through E-3	E-4	E-5
<p>Often provide great development talent in the most junior roles in a company.</p> <p>They are the “doers” in the service, working well in teams to accomplish daily missions using their hands-on skills.</p> <p>May include roles such as maintenance technician, network administrator, or driver.</p>	<p>Often make great supervisors for teams of three to eight individuals.</p> <p>Have a few more years of experience and have developed a level of maturity that -- when combined with their technical competence -- makes them an excellent choice for field-service or route-sales type roles.</p>	<p>Bring a bit more practical and formal leadership training to the table.</p> <p>Typically, they have completed multiple enlistment periods in the service and attended leadership schools each of the services operates.</p> <p>These junior leaders perform well in small team (around 10 to 20 members) leadership roles.</p> <p>High-energy individuals at this level perform well in sales roles that require a high level of activity and persistence.</p>

# The higher Enlisted ranks have significant leadership experience

## E-6

Typically have served between 10 and 15 years.

Are in leadership roles with teams of 7 to 15.

May also be key members on operational staffs with specialized individual skills.

These service members have great impact in individual contributor technical roles and team leader or first-line leadership roles.

## E-7

Typically have served between 12 and 20 years.

Are the quintessential small unit leaders with teams of 15 to 40 individuals.

These leaders have proven effective in production supervisor, site manager, and maintenance leadership roles across a variety of industries.

They are strong individual contributors in key positions such as sales roles.

## E-8 and E-9

Have a great depth of experience and typically have served 20+ years in the service.

Have often served at a more strategic level, but yet maintained excellence at driving tactical results.

Have leadership of organizations ranging from hundreds to thousands of service members.

Because of their diverse and deep experience, are well suited for key leader roles, consultative specialty roles, and other positions where strategic thinking and hands-on leadership will drive results.

# **Understanding Officer Skillsets**

# Active Duty Officers Also Span a Variety of Occupational Roles



# Roles for Officers

<b>Combat Specialty Officers</b>	<p>Plan and direct military operations, oversee combat activities, and serve as combat leaders. They may oversee tanks and other armored assault vehicles, artillery systems, special operations, or infantry units. This group also includes naval surface warfare and submarine warfare officers, combat pilots, and aircrews.</p> <p><i>Examples: Sales, Project Management</i></p>
<b>Engineering, Science, &amp; Technical Officers</b>	<p>Responsibilities depend on their area of expertise. They work in scientific and professional occupations, such as atmospheric scientists, meteorologists, physical scientists, biological scientists, social scientists, attorneys, and other types of scientists or professionals.</p>
<b>Executive, Administrative &amp; Managerial Officers</b>	<p>Manage administrative functions in the Armed Forces, such as human resources management, training, personnel, information, police, or other support services. Officers who oversee military bands are included in this category.</p>

# Roles for Officers

## Healthcare Officers

Provide medical services to military personnel in order to maintain or improve their health and physical readiness. Officers such as physicians, physician assistants, nurses, and dentists examine, diagnose, and treat patients. Other healthcare officers provide therapy, rehabilitative treatment, and additional healthcare for patients:

- *Dentists* treat diseases, disorders, and injuries of the mouth.
- *Nurses* provide and coordinate patient care in military hospitals and clinics.
- *Optometrists* treat vision problems and prescribe glasses, contact lenses, or medications.
- *Pharmacists* purchase, store, and dispense drugs and medicines.
- *Physical and occupational therapists* plan and administer therapy to help patients adjust to injuries, regain independence, and return to work.
- *Physicians, surgeons, and physician assistants* furnish the majority of medical services to the military and their families.
- *Psychologists* provide mental healthcare and also may conduct research on behavior and emotions.

# Roles for Officers

## Human Resources Development Officers

Manage recruitment, placement, and training programs in the military:

- *Personnel managers* direct and oversee military personnel functions, such as job assignments, staff promotions, and career counseling.
- *Recruiting managers* direct and oversee recruiting personnel and recruiting activities.
- *Training and education directors* identify training needs and develop and manage educational programs.

## Media & Public Affairs Officers

Oversee the development, production, and presentation of information or events for the military and the public. They may produce and direct videos and television and radio broadcasts that are used for training, news, and entertainment. Some plan, develop, and direct the activities of military bands. Public affairs officers respond to public inquiries about military activities and prepare news releases.

# Roles for Officers

## Protective Service Officers

Responsible for the safety and protection of individuals and property on military bases and vessels. Emergency management officers plan and prepare for all types of disasters. They develop warning, evacuation, and response procedures in the event of a disaster. Law enforcement and security officers enforce all applicable laws on military bases and oversee investigations of crimes.

## Support Services Officers

Manage military activities in key functional areas, such as logistics, transportation, and supply. They may oversee the transportation and distribution of materials by ground vehicles, aircraft, or ships. They also direct food service facilities and other support activities. Purchasing and contracting officers negotiate and monitor contracts for the purchase of equipment, supplies, and services that the military buys from private industry.

# Roles for Officers

## Transportation Officers

Manage and perform activities related to the safe transport of military personnel and equipment by air and water. They operate and command an aircraft or a ship:

- *Navigators* use radar, radio, and other navigation equipment to determine their position and plan their route of travel.
- *Pilots* in the military fly various types of military airplanes and helicopters to carry troops and equipment.
- *Ships' engineers* direct engineering departments, including engine operations, maintenance, and power generation, aboard ships.

# The Officer ranks are also a good guide for employers about suitability for various roles

## O-1 through O-3

Known collectively as former junior military officers, or JMOs.

Have served from 3 to 10 years in tactical leadership roles.

Typically suited for civilian roles as operations supervisors, territory managers, process engineers, and other mid-level leaders.

## O-4

Typically have served 10 to 15 years, or 20 years if they were enlisted personnel before becoming officers.

In addition to tactical leadership experience, have gained significant staff/planning experience.

Able to pick up specific industry knowledge quickly.

Fit well into senior manager and director-level roles.

## O-5 and O-6

Former senior officers that have served 20+ years at the highest levels of strategic leadership.





Have led hundreds or thousands – or tens of thousands – of troops.

Able to move into high-level executive positions in Corporate America.

Employers in defense-related industries especially like such candidates because of their depth of experience.

# Summary

Now that you better understand how military skillsets relate to your organization's needs, we can help connect you with America's best talent – its veterans.

-  Veterans represent a wide variety of skillsets that are directly applicable to civilian positions.
-  Military Occupational Specialties can be confusing, but many have a direct correlation to the civilian world.
-  Many veterans have Bachelor's or Advanced college degrees.
-  Enlisted and Officer ranks are related to level of experience and leadership role in the military.

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