Insights and Analysis from Veterans, Recruiters, & Hiring Managers
November 2014

7TH EDITION
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# Veterans Talent Index

## Table of Contents

- Introduction .......................................................... 3
- Methodology ............................................................ 3
- Summary ............................................................... 4
- Newest Veterans Report
  - Progressing Job Conditions .................................... 5
- Veterans Confident in their Skills
  and Employment Options ............................................ 6
- Career Confidence Index ........................................... 6
- Important Considerations for Veteran Job Seekers ............. 8
- Job Search Activity Index ........................................... 8
- Increasing Veteran Retention ....................................... 9
- Region Conditions .................................................... 9
- Successfully Recruiting Veterans .................................. 11
- Employer Hiring Index .............................................. 11
- Employers Give Positive Evaluations of Veterans .............. 12
- Looking Ahead ........................................................ 13
INTRODUCTION

Monster and Military.com are at the forefront of helping connect veterans and employers. For the past three years, Monster and Military.com have been monitoring employment conditions for the newest group of veterans, those who served since 9/11, left the military in the past several years or plan to leave within the next year. Responses to a bi-annual survey provide an ongoing and quantifiable metric and drives the three indices that compromise the Veterans Talent Index, now in its seventh edition.

This fall, the survey results reveal an increasingly confident pool of veteran job seekers, as well as an increasingly supportive pool of hiring employers. These results complement improved labor conditions reported across the country. Further, the number and breadth of veteran-focused resources continue to rise, giving the newest veterans and the employers that hire them a cache of resources to lead them successfully through the recruiting terrain and hiring process.

While veteran hiring conditions are improving, the number of veterans seeking employment will continue to rise. Employers can benefit by designing veteran opportunities and resources, serving to attract this group of skilled talent.

METHODOLOGY

Monster and Military.com have a deep and rich legacy in working with the military and veteran communities. Monster is the worldwide leader in connecting people to job opportunities. Military.com, a Monster subsidiary, has been dedicated to serving active duty personnel, veterans, spouses, and families for more than 15 years by providing its ten million members with information and resources that support the entire life cycle of the service member from recruitment through promotion of VA benefits to career transition. Monster’s veteran resume database contains more than 970,000 resumes and grows daily. We are at the intersection of the private sector, the public sector, and the military and veteran communities, and thus uniquely positioned to provide the insights contained in this Veteran Talent Index.

In order to gain insight into the current situation of service members transitioning from the military and employers looking to hire veteran talent, Monster and Military.com focused its analysis on veterans who have been out of the military for less than five years, active duty service members who plan to leave the military within the next year, and employers who have hired at least one veteran in the past year.

Accordingly, in August 2014, Monster surveyed military professionals, HR professionals, and hiring managers across the nation. Questions from the survey were used to compute indices which capture the sentiment of both employers and veteran job seekers.

1 United States Department of Transportation’s “DOT Expands Program to Help Veterans Get Jobs as Professional Truck and Bus Drivers.” 7/25/14.
1. Post 9-11 veterans are increasing in the workforce and have reported decreased unemployment rates. In September 2014, there were 21.1 million veterans, including nearly 3.3 million Post 9-11 veterans, defined as those who served from September 2001 to the present. The Post 9-11 veteran population is growing by double-digits and now represents 16 percent of all veterans and 24 percent of all working veterans. Unemployment rates are improved for all veterans (4.7 percent, September 2014) and Post 9-11 veterans (6.2 percent).

2. Transitioning service members are young and educated relative to all veterans. Over one-half (52 percent) of Post 9-11 veterans are age 25 to 34. Nearly one-third (31 percent) have at least a Bachelor’s Degree and 44 percent have some college experience or an Associate’s Degree.

3. Veterans are increasingly confident in their career skills. The Career Confidence Index is 58 out of 100, up from 53 in the spring of 2014, reflecting a stronger confidence in their skills and the ability to find a job if they need to find one. Nearly 70 percent of measured veterans feel at least very confident they will be successful in a civilian job.

4. Veterans’ top job search challenge remains the ability to communicate military skills in a way that employers can understand and utilize. Two-thirds of surveyed veterans said that while they were prepared for their career transition out of the military and they felt hiring managers do not understand their skills and experience.

5. Veterans seek military-supportive employers. When these transitioning service members are searching for a job, they seek an employer which markets itself as veteran friendly and currently employs veterans. Thirty-six percent of surveyed veterans would consider leaving their job if management was not supportive of veterans and the military.

6. Hiring conditions vary in each of the four regions of the United States. Unemployment rates have improved in each region, while the Midwest has the lowest rate (5.7 percent, September 2014) as well as the smallest percent of experienced veterans (18 percent have more than 15 years in the military). The Northeast reports the strongest Career Confidence Index while the South has the highest Job Search Activity Index.

7. Most veterans are willing to relocate (83 percent) and feel it is important to live near a VA medical facility (86 percent). The Northeast has the highest share of veterans willing to relocate (90 percent) and those noting the importance of living near a VA medical facility (94 percent).

8. Employers value veteran talent. The Employer Hiring Index, which measures employers’ motivation to hire veterans as well as an assessment of veterans overall performance in the workforce, is stable at 71. Over two-thirds of employers report they have special talent needs which a veteran candidate would be more qualified to fill than a non-veteran candidate due to their specific military knowledge, experience, or skills.

9. Employers leverage veteran-specific employment resources. The majority (93 percent) of the surveyed employers have utilized veteran-specific resources to hire and retain veterans. The programs most often accessed are USTechVets.org and Hiring Our Heroes followed by Yellow Ribbon, Joining Forces, and 100,000 Jobs Mission.

10. Employers provide an encouraging assessment of veterans. Employers give a positive evaluation of veterans they have hired. Nearly all stated that veteran workers perform their job about the same or better than non-veteran workers. Further, a majority of employers rate veterans about the same or higher when it comes to specific attributes such as career advancement, job turnover, and retention rate.
NEWEST VETERANS REPORT PROGRESSING JOB CONDITIONS

The population of Post 9-11 veterans, which reached nearly 3.3 million in September 2014, is expanding by double-digits, averaging an 11 percent year-over-year expansion in the first nine months of 2014. The smallest yet fastest growing group, Post 9-11 veterans currently represent 16 percent of all veterans in the United States and will continue to rise in numbers and in share as a result of the continued draw down of military forces.

In addition, Post 9-11 veterans’ share of the veteran labor force is expanding by double-digits. With a higher percentage of working-age individuals, this group now represents nearly one-quarter (24 percent) of the veteran labor force.

Unemployment rates continue to descend for both veterans and non-veterans. In September 2014, the unemployment rate for Post 9-11 veterans fell to 6.2 percent compared to 10.1 percent a year earlier. Veterans reported a 4.7 percent and non-veterans a 5.7 percent unemployment rate in September 2014.

Veteran unemployment rates by age, though improved, reflect steeper rates for the younger Post 9-11 population. The higher rates for the 18 to 24 year-olds could be attributed to veterans who are using the GI Bill to go to school.

While veterans skew older than the non-veteran pool, Post 9-11 veterans are much younger than both groups. Sixty percent of Post 9-11 veterans are younger than age 35, compared to nine percent of veterans and 32 percent of non-veterans.
Thirty-one percent of Post 9-11 veterans have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher and 44 percent have some college experience or an Associate’s Degree.

Current market conditions reveal an improved hiring environment for transitioning service members, who benefit from being a relatively young and educated group.

Not only have hiring conditions improved, but the surveyed veterans, those who left the military in the past five years or plan to leave in the next year, appear to have strengthened confidence in their abilities and skills, as reflected in the indices and survey responses.

The Career Confidence Index, which measures transitioning veterans’ confidence in finding a job and in their skills, is 58. This is the highest score in the indices three-year history.

The Career Confidence Index is buoyed by a jump in veterans feeling confident that they could find a job if they really needed to find one. This confidence stems from improved hiring conditions. Only 13 percent of measured veterans are not confident that they could find a job. This leaves 77 percent of veterans somewhat to extremely confident about finding a job.
Not only are veterans confident in finding a civilian job, these veterans are optimistic in the success of their employment. Nearly 70 percent are extremely and very confident that they will succeed in a civilian job.

Veterans’ confidence appears tied to their feelings about their skills and experiences. Seventy-three percent of surveyed veterans feel that their military skills are relevant to civilian careers, and 68 percent feel that they should receive preferential job opportunities.

The challenge for transitioning service members lies in being able to communicate their military skills in a way that employers can understand and utilize those skills. Two-thirds of surveyed veterans report that they were equipped for their transition out of the military (66 percent) and feel that hiring managers do not understand their skills and experiences (65 percent).

Learning new skills serves to increase confidence and open doors. Veterans would like to obtain additional training in the following areas:

1. BUSINESS
2. FOREIGN LANGUAGE
3. TECHNOLOGY
4. PERSONAL (TIME, STRESS MANAGEMENT, ETC.)
5. FINANCE
6. ARTISTIC/DESIGN
7. COMMUNICATION
8. MEDICAL
9. TRADE
10. SCIENCE

In addition to gaining new skills, veteran job seekers can leverage the many resources that exist online today, such as skills translators, resume builders, interview tips, and advice networks, in order to convey their experience more effectively to hiring companies.
IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR VETERAN JOB SEEKERS

While their confidence levels are solid, transitioning service members have reported a declining likelihood of searching for a job, which correlates with a constricting pool of unemployed veterans. Of the surveyed veterans, those who have been out of the military for less than five years and those planning to leave in the next year, those reporting they were unemployed fell to 21 percent compared with 28 percent in the spring of 2014 and 37 percent in the spring of 2013. Reduced searching is reflected in the Job Search Activity Index, which fell in 2013 and remained stable at 74 in 2014.

When applying for a job, veterans believe it is critical to consider companies that market themselves as veteran friendly (89 percent) and currently employs veterans (83 percent). Veteran initiatives, support groups, and mentoring are also appreciated resources.

Among surveyed employers, 58 percent do not have a veteran retention initiative in place. Over one-quarter (27 percent) have veteran affinity or support groups and 21 percent have a veteran-specific mentoring program.

Employers across the nation can take simple steps to create an appealing environment for veteran workers by joining a national veteran initiative or developing a corporate veteran network. Showing the importance of veteran-focused initiatives, over one-third (36 percent) of measured veterans would consider leaving their job if management was not supportive of veterans and the military.
INCREASING VETERAN RETENTION

According to a recent Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) and VetAdvisor survey focused on veteran retention, 43 percent of measured veterans were in their first post-military job for 12 months or less. This figure climbs to 48 percent for enlisted personnel and drops to 27 percent for officers.

What would have made these transient workers stay at their first post-military job? Sixty-one percent said increased salary/benefits would have made them keep their job and 45 percent noted increased opportunities for career advancement/promotion.

These results show that veteran job retention, especially for those ranked lower than an officer, is a critical issue for employers.

2 Source: Syracuse University Institute for Veterans and Military Families’ and VetAdvisor’s “Veteran Job Retention Survey Summary” 10.01.14

REGION CONDITIONS

Hiring conditions, including unemployment rates, veteran sentiment, and available job postings vary by geography. The Midwest has the youngest group, with only 18 percent of surveyed veterans having over 15 years in the military, while the South has a much more experienced base, with 37 percent having over 15 years of military experience.

The improvement in the national unemployment rate, which fell from 7.2 percent in September 2013 to 5.9 percent in September 2014, is mirrored in rate declines in the four regions. The Midwest has the lowest unemployment rate, at 5.7 percent in September 2014, while the West has the highest at 6.5 percent.

The top five cities with available jobs across the United States are New York, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, and Atlanta and are as listed for each of the regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>Indianapolis</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>Seattle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Denver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>Milwaukee</td>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>Phoenix</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: WANTED TECHNOLOGIES, SEPTEMBER 2014

LENGTH OF FIRST JOB BY RANK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Officer</th>
<th>Enlisted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5+ years</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 years</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-12 months</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-6 months</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is my present job</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REASONS VETERANS WOULD HAVE STAYED AT FIRST POST-MILITARY JOB

Increased salary/benefits | 61%
Increased opportunities for career advancement/promotion | 45%
Increased opportunities for professional development | 34%
Quality of work (meaningful, challenging, influence, etc.) | 33%
Work environment/culture | 31%
Satisfaction with co-workers/Manager/supervisor | 30%
Job security/employment status | 30%

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY U.S. AND REGIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>SEPTEMBER 2013</th>
<th>SEPTEMBER 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, SEPTEMBER 2014
Despite having the lowest unemployment rate, the Midwest has the lowest Career Confidence Index. On the other hand, the Northeast has some of the most confident veterans among the regions, with half (50 percent) confident that they could find a job if they needed to find one.

The South has the greatest share of veterans likely to search for a job, evidenced by a Job Search Activity Index of 75 and a high 59 percent of surveyed veterans reporting they are likely to search for a job in the next twelve months.

Accustomed to mobility, surveyed veterans appear ready to move. A high 83 percent are willing to relocate for a job, the highest percentage measured to date. Most are willing to relocate within their state (54 percent) and 45 percent would consider relocating either anywhere in the United States or within their local area if the right opportunity was presented.

Out of the four United States regions, the Northeast veterans are most willing to relocate (90 percent) and the Midwest veterans least willing to relocate, with only 78 percent that would consider relocating for the right opportunity.

When it comes to where they choose to live, three-quarters (75 percent) of surveyed veterans agree it is very or somewhat important to live near a military base while an even higher percentage, 86 percent, say the same for a VA medical facility.

Veterans in the Northeast feel particularly strongly (94 percent) about the importance of living near a VA medical facility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important to live near...</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military Base</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA Medical Facility</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

83% OF SURVEYED VETERANS ARE WILLING TO RELOCATE FOR A JOB
SUCCESSFULLY RECRUITING VETERANS

Employers recruiting veterans are increasingly supportive of veterans and veteran hiring. Nearly all (89 percent) of surveyed employers hire the best talent regardless of veteran status, but 82 percent have a personal commitment to hiring veterans and over two-thirds (68 percent) agree their company has a stated commitment to hiring veterans. Each of these commitment measures has reported a growing employer response over the past several years.

Employers hire veterans primarily because they are the best qualified in the candidate pool and due to their prior work experience. Secondary motivations show strong veteran support from both the company and individual’s perspective:

- 44 percent of surveyed recruiters are motivated to hire veterans because “my company wants to show its support of veterans” and 38 percent because of the candidate’s prior military experience
- 32 percent want to show their company’s sense of patriotism and 31 percent want to demonstrate a strong veteran culture
- 21 percent of recruiters want to show their own sense of patriotism

Each of these measures has strengthened over time.

Reflecting the increased employer support, surveyed employers have reported a rising sentiment that corporate recruiters respect those with prior military experience and they feel that companies should provide preferential job opportunities to veterans.

EMPLOYERS: INCREATING VETERAN SUPPORT

The Employer Hiring Index, which measures employers’ motivation to hire veterans as well as an assessment of their work, is a stable 71 out of 100 points.

EMPLOYER HIRING INDEX

68% OF SURVEYED EMPLOYERS AGREE THEIR COMPANY HAS A STATED COMMITMENT TO HIRING VETERANS
Over two-thirds (39 percent) of employers who recruit veterans say their organization has special talent needs that a veteran candidate would be more qualified to fill compared to a non-veteran. Companies note specific military talents such as working on a military weapon or software program or knowledge of the military community. Other employers seek typical veteran talents such as persistence, self-discipline, leadership, attention to detail, or technical skills.

Only seven percent of surveyed employers have yet to leverage one of the multitude of veteran-specific recruiting resources. USTechVets.org (47 percent) and Hiring Our Heroes (33 percent) are the programs most often used by surveyed recruiters.

EMPLOYERS GIVE POSITIVE EVALUATIONS OF VETERANS
Recruiters give a positive assessment of veterans when comparing them to non-veterans, reporting that 99 percent of veteran workers perform their job about the same or better than non-veteran workers. They recognize that most veterans exhibit strong discipline, work ethic, and dedication. Almost all (98 percent) of measured employers recommend hiring veterans. Excluding those who responded “I don’t know”, a majority of employers agree that veterans and non-veterans are “about the same” when it comes to career advancement, job turnover, and retention rate. Over one-third believe veterans advance faster (38 percent) in their careers and are least likely to leave their job (46 percent) than non-veterans.

While nearly half (48 percent) of measured employers do not have a worry when hiring veterans, some recruiters worry about them fitting into corporate culture (28 percent), post-traumatic stress disorder (24 percent), and transferring their military skills to corporate ones (23 percent).

Eighty-three percent of employers believe veterans’ military skills are relevant to civilian jobs.

Employers list of top skills that veterans bring to a civilian job:

1. SELF-DISCIPLINE
2. TEAMWORK
3. ATTENTION TO DETAIL
4. RESPECT
5. LEADERSHIP
6. ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
7. FOLLOW DETAILED ORDERS
8. CALM UNDER STRESS
9. CONFIDENCE
10. READINESS TO ACCEPT A CHALLENGE
11. WILLINGNESS TO HELP OTHERS
12. LISTENING SKILLS
13. MEET DEADLINES
14. PHYSICALLY FIT
15. DECISION MAKING

Most of these skills are named by veteran job seekers as the top skills acquired while in or since leaving the military.
LOOKING AHEAD

The recruiting landscape is complex and is especially so for the nation’s newest group of veterans. These veterans work to not only resettle their personal lives, but also to forge a civilian career path.

Many groups, both private and government-sponsored, have now taken the challenge to help this population by providing a wealth of resources and encouraging employers to consider this able-bodied group. Their work is reflected in employer survey responses: 67 percent believe that veterans are prepared for their career transition out of the military, up from 51 percent a year ago.

With the economy slowly improving and resources increasing, transitioning service members and growing number of employers should continue to encourage each other and work together to create a win-win recruiting environment.

67% OF EMPLOYERS BELIEVE THAT VETERANS ARE PREPARED FOR THEIR CAREER TRANSITION
ABOUT MONSTER WORLDWIDE

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ABOUT MILITARY.COM

Military.com is the nation’s largest online military destination serving over ten million members, including active duty personnel, reservists, guard members, retirees, veterans, family members, defense workers and those considering military careers. Military.com enables the 30 million Americans with military affinity to access information about their benefits, advance their careers, enjoy military discounts, and stay connected for life. Military.com develops efficient affinity marketing and communications programs for government agencies and companies serving this market. Military.com is a business unit of Monster Worldwide, Inc. More information is available at www.military.com.